



*Voices of our Sisters and the Collaborators*

Casa Generalizia,  
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# *Editorial*

*Dear Sisters,*

*Greetings for the New Year 2024 that we have just begun. I wish you all a fruitful year of Communication that bridges gaps and brings us closer to each other with news from all over the Congregation and our missions.*

*This edition has many articles of the First and Final Professions that give us hope for the future. We rejoice and thank the Lord for the gift of each Sister of the Congregation.*

*I thank the Sisters who have sent articles and those that have helped me to edit and translate. Thank you for your collaboration. I encourage Sisters to freely send short articles that can help in sharing the life of the Congregation today with the rest of the Sisters, specially the elderly Sisters, who are eager to know what is happening and support the Congregation through their prayers. It gives them Hope.*

*Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today." - Thích Nhất Hạnh*

*I wish you all a grace filled year of Prayer in communion with the whole Church.*

*With all my best wishes,*

*Sr. Renee Quadros SJA*

*Pope Francis says, "We have a pressing need in the church for communication that kindles hearts, that is balm on wounds and that shines light on the journey of our brothers and sisters." This kind of communication first listens to the other without prejudice and then speaks," nurtured by closeness, compassion and tenderness ...May 5, 2023*

## *Information from the archives*

### **The Shrine of St Emilie De Vialar**

Earlier this year I received a message from a Sister asking about the Shrine of St Emilie De Vialar in St Peter's Church in Gaillac. She had come across a photo of a plaque stating that the remains of St Emilie were incorrupt. I have not been able to find any reference to this plaque. However, as a result, I undertook some research and the following is what I have discovered.

Mother Emilie died at the age of 58 on the 24 August 1856 at around 6.00pm. Her funeral took place on Tuesday 26 August in the Church of Notre Dame du Mont in Marseilles and was buried in the cemetery of St Charles.

Sr Baptistine Vigouroux writing to Sr Francoise Pezet a couple of weeks later on 7 September 1856 says:

*I have embalmed the heart of our mother; we will build a little monument in the chapel beside that of her dear mother. We pray to God before this most charitable heart who showed such great love for God and the neighbour.*



Her mother had been buried in Paris but Baron De Vialar had her heart taken to his home in Gaillac where on his death it was given to Emilie. They were placed in the oratory in the garden of La Capelette Convent. Today this urn is in the room of St. Emilie in Gaillac.

Four years after her death the body of Mother Emilie was moved to the cemetery of St Peter's. At this reinternment: *'the body was intact and incorrupt'*. (Souvenir and Documents p 215)

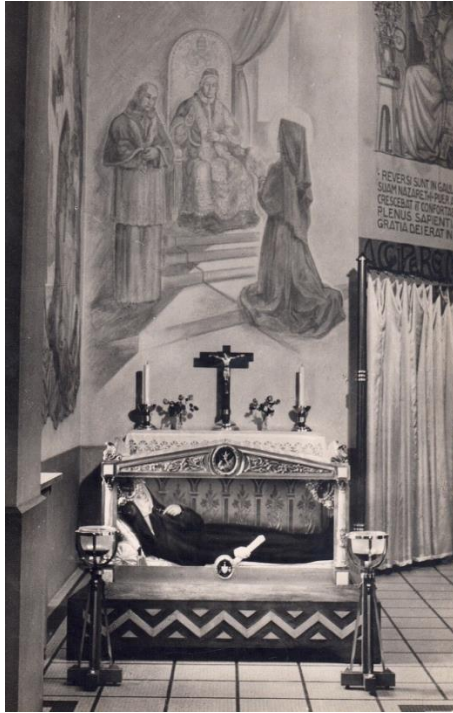
And in the book, 'Emilie De Vialar' by Sr Agnes Cavasino

*The sisters who were present had verified that the body had not deteriorated and they had easily recognised her face.*

Some years earlier Sr Honorine Picques received a letter from Sr Marie Therese Elie de Jesus, a Carmelite, passing on a message from one of her Novices who had originally entered in Marseilles and later joined the Carmelites.

*She says your venerated foundress will one day be raised to the altars. We have relayed this to you ... so that you will be able to take appropriate action regarding the body especially if it is buried in the cemetery. (A C p 218.)*

In the Mandate of Mother Celina Le Bouffo, the process towards Canonization began. At this point the Foundresses body was transferred from St Peter's Cemetery to a chapel in the garden at the Mother House in Marseilles.



*Fr Milhavet, the community's chaplain, made the official application. The request for exhuming was granted on 6 March 1914. The transfer of her remains took place on 10 March under the auspices of Canon Nouillon, Vicar General of Marseilles. The Superior General and her Assistants were present at the opening of the leaden coffin enclosing a wooden coffin in which the remains had been placed. The sisters as well as a delegation of Oblate Fathers were waiting at the Mother House. Fr Caillat celebrated a solemn mass in the course of which he gave a homily that has been preserved. He congratulated the sisters for the veneration with which they had surrounded the remains of their foundress, but above all he invited them to live with her spirit. Preserve the twofold spirit of your foundress:*

- *The spirit of sacrifice: to truly love God is painful because it is painful to go against self.*
- *The spirit of apostleship: which takes you into the*

*hubbub of cities, the solitude of deserts; which takes you towards miseries of body and soul, with your only weapons, the Gospel and the Cross. (A.C p 227)*

A plaque was attached in the vault where the coffin was placed and read:

***Here rests in the peace of The Lord, Ann-Marguerite-Adelaide-Emilie De Vialar, Foundress of the Congregation of Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition who directed it for twenty-four years with great sweetness and admirable zeal. The more her work expanded and prospered, the more she humbled herself, attributing everything to God alone. She died on twenty fourth August 1856 at the age of fifty-nine. Dear Mother may God watch over the family you have left here below and which you will not forget. (A.C. P 228)***



Dans le jardin de la Maison-Mère, se trouve un modeste oratoire, qui pendant 25 ans, a gardé les précieux restes de la Bienheureuse Emilie de Vialar déposés maintenant sous le maître-autel de la grande chapelle.

## Chapel of St Emilie de Vialar La Capelette Marseille

The coffin was again opened in May 1926 and Sr Alponsine writes on 21 May:

*There was also a doctor, a surgeon, and a representative from the funeral directors. The bricklayer, the lead worker, and the carpenter had sworn to touch nothing before the official opening under threat of excommunication. ... At last, the coffin was placed in the parlour: At the top of the coffin the beautiful head of our venerable Mother was visible. ... Next to it they put the heart of our venerable Mother. It was perfectly preserved, as though of stone. Then we filed past to touch these venerable remains with pictures, and regard these as precious relics. (AC p 228)*

An account of this occasion is also recorded in 'The Life of Emilie De Vialar' written by a Sister of the Congregation and published

in 1929.

*In accordance with paragraph 1096 of Canon Law, the members of the ecclesiastical tribunal assembled in the Mother House at Capelette on Tuesday 18 May 1926 for the identification of the remains of Emilie de Vialar. The meeting was held in the large saloon known as the parlour of St Joseph. In the front of the doorway a large crucifix was suspended. Under the crucifix was a table on which a Missal was placed. Two other tables were also prepared, one for the coffin, the other for the examination of the sacred remains.*

*At half past eight the session commenced in the presence of Rev. Father Fayilla, S.J. Postulator and the Abbe Milhavet, vice Postulator. Doctors, carpenters, masons and plumbers, whose services were required for the opening of the coffin, were also present. Mother Ida and Sister Solange, having been present at the examination of the remains some time previous, were now called on to attend as witnesses. All were obliged to take an oath on the Holy Gospels that they would fulfil their duty conscientiously. The Mother General, the Sisters, the Priests and the members of the tribunal went to the little chapel. On the coffin being taken out of the tomb, the Sisters claimed the privilege of carrying it to the parlour. Their request was granted. All were deeply impressed as the little procession wended its way to the parlour of St Joseph. There the coffin was opened. Immediately the tribunal stated that it contained only the bones of the Servant of God.*

*When the prescribed formalities were completed, the sisters were allowed to look once more at the sacred remains now placed in a new coffin. A little procession was formed once again and the coffin was born back to the chapel where the reinternment took place. A report of the ceremonial was sent to the Sacred Congregation of Rites in the first week of June. (A C p 266/7)*

In 1972 with the forthcoming closure of the Mother House in Marseilles, arrangements were made to transfer the Shrine of St Emilie to Gaillac. Sr Adelaide Zantedeschi writing from Rome on 26 September 1971 says:

*The novices are to leave Capalette, Marseilles on the 29 September and move to Paris, taking with them the heart of St Emilie.*

The Shrine of St Emilie was due to leave Marseille for Gaillac on the 9 June. However, when they came to collect it, it did not fit into the van which was to transport it. The Municipality of Gaillac provided a larger van departing for Gaillac on 14 June. There is a document in the archives in Rabat, Malta entitled 'Adieu a chasse de Ste Emilie' giving details of this transfer and states:

*The Sisters in Marseilles, accompanied it as far as the gates.*

Again, Sr Adelaide writes:

*I leave it to the Sisters who had the pleasure of accompanying the transport of the Shrine of our Saintly Mother, to give you details. I had echoes and I think you will be pleased to know how St Emilie was received in her native town/birthplace. Of course, if Gaillac rejoiced with the arrival of her remains, in Marseilles we grieved her departure, but with a grief full of hope!*

Many years later at the Celebration marking 150 years since the death of St Emilie De Vialar Sr Bernadette Galea, General Superior, addressed the assembly at St Michael's Church Gaillac saying:

*Today we have gathered here to celebrate 150 years since the death of St Emilie, but it is not a death we wish to celebrate, that would be very sad. It's a life we want to celebrate, the life of a Saint, the life of St Emilie De Vialar. It's her passing from this earthly life to life eternal which today, gives us the opportunity to thank her and to praise God for all He has accomplished through her and today He is still accomplishing through the Sisters of the Congregation she founded.*

Today the Shrine of St Emilie is in the Church of St Peter's in Gaillac. Oral tradition holds that some of the remains of St Emilie are in the cushion under her head in the Shrine. Others are in a small chest and have been used for providing relics. Numerous reliquaries can be found in the houses of the Congregation throughout the world.



Sr. Margaret Anne Beach SJA

# *First and Final Professions*

## *India*

**Happy Day to the Province of India...**



At the early hours of 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2023, the Indian Province witnessed the self-offering of six young novices - Kirti Kerketta, Rajini Kujur, Elizebeth Sofiya, Manju Lugun, Pratima Tete & Selma Dung Dung through the First Vows, and of four tertians - Sr. Suman Kujur, Sr. Anusha Antoinette, Sr. Punita Tirkey & Sr. Emilia Surin through the Perpetual Vows at Asha Nivas, Ranchi.



The Tertians and the novices were led to the Altar of God with a prayerful dance led by the Candidates. Sisters walked in procession carrying their little lamps as a symbol of Self-offering.





Most Rt. Rev. Archbishop Felix Toppo SJ presided over the Solemn Eucharist along with four concelebrants and twenty priest brothers.



The Celebrant exhorted the Professed Sisters to share the missionary task of the Master not just like servants but like friends of Christ enjoying inner freedom and deeper bond of oneness.



The gracious presence of our Mother General Sr. Monika Duellmann and Vicar General Sr. Anita Callaghan brought blessings to the great event of the Province.

Parents and well-wishers graced the event with their valuable presence and prayers. The beautifully decked hall, angelic choir and special prayers made the Eucharistic Celebration meaningful and awe-inspiring.



Followed by the solemn Mass was the time of special greeting, felicitations, cutting of the cake and sumptuous meal. A token of appreciation to our Provincial Superior Sr. Thaddeus Mary who took utmost care in the proceedings of the entire celebration.

We thank God for journeying with us on our way.....



Sr. Janet SJA

Indian Province

# *Philippines*

## *First Professions in the Philippines.*



What a wonderful blessing to our Congregation where there are young people, hearing, responding and committing themselves to the call of God in Consecrated Life. Today, 4 November 2023, four young women, **Barbara Mya Aye**, **Rosy Paul Si Si Lin**, **Mary John Hawng Nan** and **Justina Ja Ring Aung** have courageously and excitedly responded to this Call at Holy Cross Parish, Philippines.

There were 150 people, including Priests, Religious and Lay people present to witness their first religious profession and pray for their perseverance. Moreover, it was very inspiring and encouraging to see our young eighteen SJA novices from Thailand, India and Myanmar, as well as

the five Nigerian postulants. They actively participated with their angelic voices by singing, giving energy and support to their co-novices and making their special day more magnificent.

Let us be united with one another and keep our Congregation alive with the spirit of our Mother Foundress St. Emilie De Vialar. May we be full of love and zeal for God's Mission. "Go and with what you have and will receive do all the good you can". (St. Emilie De Vialar)

Sr. May Rose  
Novice Formator  
International Novitiate, Philippines



For more photos watch the Video on facebook: <https://fb.watch/ov8KyarDQM/>

On Youtube: [https://youtu.be/e\\_Tj4ccayCE](https://youtu.be/e_Tj4ccayCE)

# *Final Professions*

## *In Guatemala*

*Of*

**Sr. Ruby Jolón Quinteros and Fidelina Sequen**

On September 30, we participated in the Mass of Thanksgiving, during which two sisters from Guatemala made their perpetual vows.

We have been accompanied by our sisters from the different communities of Guatemala and the community of Peru, family members and close friends, so that together we may manifest joy, human love, and solidarity in favor of life and the poorest.

The Parish Priest Fr. Manuel de Jesus Chacon celebrated the Eucharist and invited us to reflect on the importance of our formation as we continue to respond to the realities of our broken world. He mentioned the mission that our Congregation carries out according to the example of St Joseph who changed his life project for God's project. Being a man attentive to what God was showing him he assumed, with all its consequences, an attentiveness and attitude of trust and abandonment. During his homily he invited us to trust and respond freely as St Joseph did.

As an expression of fraternity and communion, we shared together in the Provincial House.

By Srs. Fidelina and Ruby, SJA





*Congratulations!*



*Final Professions  
Thailand  
Of Srs Chiara Sineenart, Sr. Pattaravadee and Sr.  
Sutthida Khamchalee*

**“Sawatdee kha” - Greetings from Thailand**, on behalf of the three of us who have just made final vows on October 14th, 2023. I sister Clara Sineenart Tunu would love to express my sincere gratitude to God “for He has done marvelous things for us”. (His chosen ones). After hearing the invitation of a sister to join the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition I believe and am convinced that the Lord has called me to religious life. He stirred this desire in my heart.

At the age of 17 I decided to join the Congregation without knowing anything about it. I realized that I had the ‘courage to go there’. While journeying and searching for my vocation I faced many challenges and questions in life. The hand of God was there to support me along with other people and especially the sisters who accompanied me. I was impressed and experienced the simplicity and sisterly love in the community and felt attracted to the different kinds of mission in which the sisters serve.

I have been fulfilled in different ways by the formation I have experienced and where there were ‘signs’ for each step in the making of decisions. It was the Lord who prepared me and it was He who empowered me to say “yes” to Him. I also would like to thank all the formators who assisted me on this wonderful journey: Sr. Bernadette Ratre (Thai), Sr. Marion (Burmese), Sr. Assumpta Laurence (Burmese), Sr. Betty (Philippina), Sr. Martina (Thai), Sr. Jiranuch (Thai), Sr. Gracy (Indian) and Sr. Janet Arrowsmith (English). They allowed God to work in his way. I give thanks to all our friends and companions who in love gave us attention by helping, sharing, encouragement and prayer. The only thing I can offer to you is prayer so you may receive abundant grace in life and lack nothing. Please still keep us in your prayers so that we will be able to follow and imitate Christ as our mother Emilie de Vialar did. By her trust in Divine Providence, she gave us an example of how to live our religious life.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Love in Christ

Clara Sineenart Tunu SJA









*Congratulations!*

## *Final Profession In Falam, Myanmar of Sr. Theresa Biak*

An experience of being a SJA

“A heartfelt gratitude for the blessings  
all along my Juniorate religious life.”



First of all, I thank the Lord for giving me the opportunity to make my final profession successfully in the midst of many difficult situations and distractions. God protected me. When I recall the blessings of these seven years of religious life, they are unaccountable. Of course, I had many ups and downs, especially in the midst of the dark moments and departure of my loved ones. However, I could feel the great love and care that surrounded me and I still have a mission to fulfil.

How can I thank God, my parents, siblings, Sisters of the Province, the Congregation, formators, superiors' priests and friends for all their instruction, guidance, good example, support and love. Because of them I am what I am today. I thank you all, from the bottom of my heart.

After, a month's spiritual journey, I was able to make the decision to commit my life totally and entirely to God. With trust and courage in the Lord I stepped forward and came across the road with divisions. One road was with worldly possessions, another lead me to a personal crisis and another road led me to the needy. The choice was in my hands. The Lord our God indeed spoke to me saying. **“The road that leads us to a Living God is the road of faith”** which is filled with challenges.

With the words of St. Emilie as my inspiration, *‘My only desire is to accomplish God's will’* I am happy to say that, I do my best to accomplish the will of God through my apostolate and commitment.

I place the past in the mercy of God, my present in the love of God and my future in the plan of God. Continue supporting and praying for me. I will joyfully and enthusiastically serve the Lord till the end of my life.

I would like to thank again, to Sr Monika and her Councillors and Sr. Marie Therese Phe Ling Yah and all the SJA Sisters .

Gratefully

Sr. Theresa Biak Lem Ting, SJA



## *Meet our Junior Sisters in Gaillac*

A group of 14 Juniors began their Formation Programme in the Central Juniorate on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Gaillac. It was a great joy for the people of Gaillac to welcome them to Gaillac as their Sisters and daughters.

Glimpse of the day







Sister Albina Surin  
Province: India



Sister Margaret  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Lusee Toppo  
Province: India



Sr. Theresa Alita Kunaphuet  
Province: Thailand



Sister Maria Law Gei Sein  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Roshma Bhengra  
Province: India



Sister Roberta Su New Kyaw  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Naw Emerita  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Noelline Thinzar Win  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Mary Shadanhtu  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Lucia Su Myat Win  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Dibya Lugun  
Province: India



Sister Rita Htang Hein Htung  
Province: Myanmar



Sister Sarah Kathia  
Province: Palestine-Israel

## **ACRATH (*Australia Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans*) Advocacy week in Canberra**

This year, I had the opportunity to join the Advocacy week trip to Canberra with the team where I was representing Western Australia. The Canberra team consisted of ACRATH staff members, a national committee member, representatives from Victoria, New South Wales and Southern Australia. Before sharing my experience with you, allow me to introduce ACRATH briefly:

ACRATH was founded in 2005 when Louise Cleary (CSB) and Pauline Coll (SGS) met in a Queensland food court, responding to a 2001 call by Catholic women's congregational leaders. This call urged them to work together to combat the abuse, sexual exploitation of women and children, and human trafficking, which had become a lucrative multinational business. Louise and Pauline invited congregations to collaborate in the fight against human trafficking. Over time, they were joined by Margaret Ng (RSJ) and Tania de Jong (RGS), and ACRATH has since established a strong presence in five states and the ACT, dedicated to countering human trafficking and slavery in Australia.

For more information Visit <https://acrath.org.au/>

The ACRATH team typically goes to Canberra every year with the aim of fostering relationships with members of Parliament and raising awareness about their work and the necessary changes required to support victims of human trafficking in Australia.

In preparation for the four intensive days of meetings from September 4 to 7, the team engaged in training workshops on various issues. One of these workshops focused on the National Compensation Scheme for Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery, and it was presented by Professor Jen Burn, the Director of Anti-Slavery Australia.

Those days were incredibly busy, but at the same time, they provided me with a truly enriching and amazing experience. One memorable moment was obtaining the security pass to enter Parliament, which was quite exciting. Once I had the pass, I had the privilege to explore not only the public areas but also the private sections of Parliament.

Meeting with Members of Parliament for the first time, especially in a foreign country like Australia, was a unique experience. I had the opportunity to enter the

meeting square where the Prime Minister and the Opposition conduct question time and debates. It felt exceptionally special, as it emphasized the freedom for everyone to voice their opinions.

The MPs showed a genuine interest in our concerns, and I was deeply impressed by their warm welcome during our meetings. It reinforced the sense of being part of a community where individuals can freely express themselves.

The team members had meetings with a diverse group of individuals, which included the Ambassador to Counter Modern Slavery, People Smuggling, and Human Trafficking, the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, and Multicultural Affairs, as well as the Ambassador from the Philippines.

During these meetings, key policy issues were discussed, and the team emphasized the necessity for:

1. The establishment of a National Compensation Scheme for Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery.
2. The implementation of a National Labour Hire Licensing Scheme.
3. The appointment of an independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

These days in Canberra will remain etched in my memory as an unforgettable experience, where I had the opportunity to discover the power of individual voices within a welcoming and dedicated community. The meetings with the Members of Parliament strengthened our determination to advocate for the causes close to our hearts.



By Martina Naw Htoo Aye, SJA

19 November 2023  
Nicosia, Cyprus

## **The visit of the New Cardinal His Beatitude Eminency Pierbattista Cardinal Pizzaballa in Cyprus**

I am Sister Theresa Yin Nyak, Sister of Saint Joseph of the Apparition. I have been a religious sister for eleven years. I am from Myanmar and was five years in France, two years in Italy and came to Cyprus last year.

In Cyprus, we have two communities (one in Larnaka and one in Nicosia). Here in the Nicosia community, we are four sisters from four different countries: Romania, India, Haiti, and Myanmar. The Sisters of Saint Joseph have been in Cyprus since 1844. After having dedicated themselves to health care and education, they felt the need to work with Migrants. Today our main Mission is to work for the refugees and asylum seekers.

Cyprus is the leading asylum-receiving country per capita among the EU Member States and has been receiving more and more refugees in the last decade. The sisters work with the refugees especially with the unaccompanied minors under the leadership, vision, and support of the Latin Patriarchal Vicariate of Cyprus. Since 2021 we had been hosting and caring for 12 unaccompanied minors at the St Joseph's Home for Minors.

In the parish we are involved in Catechism classes for children and adults, as well as sacristy work and parish council. We open our doors to different groups from the parish for different events such as, recollections, cultural gatherings, prayer meetings, etc...

The appointment as Cardinal of H.B Eminency Pierbattista Cardinal Pizzaballa, is very significant and we rejoice and thank God, praising Him for His kindness. The significance of such an appointment is that, in the person of Pierbattista, the Holy Father has seen someone who truly serves the Church and is ready to give his life in service for others. I feel that his receiving this mission attests to his deserving of this gift.

The Cardinals have the charge of electing the next Pope. For this reason, they have a closer tie to the Pope. The Patriarch of Jerusalem is also the Patriarch of Cyprus. Therefore, I feel that the Holy Father has seen the needs of the church in Cyprus. That is to say, that the Church is turning her face towards Cyprus. It has already done so in 2021, when Msgr. George Panamthundil—now Nuncio in Kazakhstan—was appointed *chargé d'affaires* in the Nunciature of Cyprus (Embassy of the Holy See). Furthermore, Fr. Bruno VARRIANO was appointed last year as Latin Patriarchal Vicar of Cyprus, that is, the representative of the Latin Patriarch, and Msgr. Mauro Lalli as the current *chargé d'affaires*. I feel therefore, that God is preparing something important for the church of Cyprus.

During the meeting with all the Catholic religious, Latin and Maronite, he shared the situation of the Holy Land and Gaza, the fact that people are living in pain, and that there is no space to speak about their pain as it is too deep. Because of his sharing there was a stronger feeling of closeness amongst us as a Catholic Church and with the Christians in the Holy Land. As faith is a part of life and a way of living, he told us that the presence of the Catholic



religious, Latin and Maronite, working together, hand in hand, must be a positive sign, and that we, religious, as servants of God and of the Church are important for the cooperation with our other Christian brothers and sisters and outside associations.

We thank God that the Patriarch came to Cyprus to meet with all the faithful despite the many difficulties. As I understood from him, the relative calm in Cyprus as a society can be the door for

growth, that is, that he has found here light and life.

He will be in our prayers. May the good Lord bless him, guide him, and grant him good health

Sr Theresa Yin Nyak, S.J.A

19 November 2023

Nicosia, Cyprus



## *Celebration of commemoration of Canonization of St. Emilie with Associate Members*

Pyin Oo Lwin, Myanmar  
24 August 2023

*“You must all have courage: Mme de Vialar’s Congregation is the cherish flock of Jesus Christ and of St. Joseph your patron. The Congregation will not disappear; on the contrary, it will spread far and wide, because Sisters, you have been called to do much good. You are poor like your patron St. Joseph who worked all his life to earn food for the Holy Family. Your foundress will one day be raised to the altars ... ”.* St. John Mary Vianney told this passage to the discouraged Sisters after the foundress’s death.



Today, it has happened exactly as St John Mary Vianney foretold. Here, we are celebrating in Myanmar, with a group of Associates the canonization of St Emilie. Our Provincial, The Celebration was attended by four Postulants six Sisters, and sixteen Associates. During the celebration Sr Margarita read the above passage from the history of the Congregation and related some of the miracles merited through St Emilie’s intercession.

Sr Marie Therese Phe Ling Yah, started St Emilie’s Association here in Pyin Oo Lwin. We, the Sisters have discussed ‘how can we help the Associates during this time of crisis in Myanmar. One idea was to have a gathering and invite a doctor to share health care and psychological accompaniment for Associates.

Sr Anna Lun is head of Pyin Oo Lwin St Emilies Association. At each prayer meeting, we begin with hymn to St Emilie and pray five decades of the Rosary. Then a reading from ‘The Seal of the Cross’ followed by a sharing. Associates contribute to a

collection of money which is used to help the poor and sick people. We also make visits to the sick at home and in the hospital.

*Sent by Sr. Mary Win SJA*



## *Navigating Joy and Sorrow in the Midst of Turmoil*

While the festive season of Christmas is traditionally a time for joy, family, and celebration, for those who find themselves far away from their homeland due to war or conflict, it can be a poignant reminder of the challenges and emotions accompanying separation from loved ones and the place they call home.



Friends and acquaintances often express sentiments like, "You're lucky to be away from your war-torn country." However, the reality for those who have left their homes is much more complex. The distance doesn't alleviate the worry; in fact, it often amplifies it. Day and night, thoughts are consumed by concern for the well-being of family and friends left behind in the midst of turmoil.

Being away from one's country can bring with it a profound sense of loneliness, as the new environment may lack the familiar sights, sounds, and cultural nuances that make home what it is. The struggle to find someone who truly understands the depth of these emotions can be isolating, intensifying the ache for connection and understanding.

The festive season, meant to be a time of joy and togetherness, becomes a bittersweet experience for those far from home. The conflict of emotions is palpable—joy for the season's festivities and sorrow for the suffering of their people. It's a delicate dance between trying to embrace the spirit of Christmas and grappling with the heartache that stems from the knowledge of the challenges faced by loved ones.



Amid the chaos of conflicting emotions, many find solace in choosing interior joy and peace. This is not a denial of the reality of the situation but a conscious decision to focus on the positive aspects that Christmas represents—love, hope, and the potential for peace. It becomes a form of resilience, a way to endure the distance and uncertainty with a spirit that refuses to be completely overshadowed by the darkness of the world.

For those living in the shadow of conflict, the holiday season is not just a time for personal reflection but a moment to extend prayers beyond borders. The heart and prayers reach beyond the immediate concerns of their own country, encompassing the



entire world. The wish for a future marked by justice and lasting peace becomes a driving force, motivating actions and thoughts towards creating a better world for everyone.

Being away from home during times of crisis is undoubtedly challenging, and the festive season brings with it a unique set of emotions. However, in the face of adversity, individuals find strength in choosing joy and peace. The power of unceasing prayers and the aspiration for a world marked by justice and peace transcend personal borders, offering a glimmer of hope even in the darkest of times. This is the way I celebrated Christmas, remembering all those who are far from home, holding onto hope and working towards a future where joy and peace prevail for all.

Sister Vicky Giacaman  
Australia



## Adieu to our dear Sisters



**Sister Colette** has left us! For some time, she showed signs of fatigue, but she was there and knew, almost until the end, how to smile at us and thank us.

Sister Colette was born in 1926 in Asnières. At the age of 25, she made her life choice: she would become a nun with the Sisters Servants of Mary on Rue Duguay Trouin in the 6th arrondissement of Paris.

Her good health allowed her to work in girls' homes as a cook, housekeeper, capable of adapting to any requested service. Indeed, she had good common sense, manual dexterity, which allowed her to cope with the small troubles that unexpectedly arise every day in a care facility. Moreover, as one of her relatives tells us, she was also very keen on drawing from a very young age.

This is how we find her in Amiens, Toulon, Paris, Versailles, in the service of young girls. In 1970, along with all her sisters, she joined the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition.

Later, events lead her to encounter an association concerned with literacy and education for the youth of Burkina Faso. As a secretary, she participates in mobilizing friends to raise funds and find partners. She was very enthusiastic when talking about this missionary work. She was even invited to the Kourita Saint Philippe Center near Ouagadougou, a trip she cherished as an unforgettable memory.

During these years, she lives in Versailles with her mother, whom she accompanies until the end. In 2010, Sister Colette enters the Augustinian EHPAD here. She takes her place there effortlessly, participating in activities, theater, Scrabble (for a long time with Sister Janine Durantou), outings, all as long as her health allowed. Always smiling, she had a sense of humor that relaxed, that allowed to put things into perspective in any situation!

We held Sister Colette dear, and we keep her in our hearts.

Today, our Christian faith tells us that she lives in another world where there is no pain, no malice, a world of peace and love that we cannot even imagine.

Thank you, Colette, for your life, your joy, your gaze. May the Lord welcome you into this place of peace and love.

The sisters of the Community  
7<sup>th</sup> August 2023





**Sr. Giulia Camiel**

Born on 9.05.1926 in Italy

Died on 12.09.2023 in Italy

Thank you Sister Julia for your smile, your serenity that gave you a great openness of heart and goodness to all, thank you for the Spiritual Apostolic fruitfulness lived in different countries. Thank you for your witness of docility in these last years of illness. You taught us so much. .. We will always remember your daily fidelity to prayer and entrustment to Jesus to Mary and confident invocation to St. Joseph and St. Emilia, lived during these years among us. In Heaven remember all your loved ones whom you loved so much.

Born in Istrana (TV) on May 9, 1926. Returned to the Father's house in Cavallasca, Sept. 12, 2023, in her 75th year of religious profession in the family of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition. "Go and, with what you have and will receive, do all the good you can". (St. Emilia de Vialar)

*Taken from her funeral text*



**Sr. Dorothea Meneghin**

Born on 31.5.1926 in Italy

Died on 27.09.23 in Italy

Thanks to Sister Dorothea for being with us during these last years of illness. You have edified us by the time you devoted to continuous and faithful prayer, to deep devotion to St. Joseph and St. Emilia, to listening attentively to Radio Maria. With gratitude, we remember your great love for the Virgin Mary, and the many rosaries prayed every day for us, for your loved ones and for all those you met in your apostolic mission.

*Taken from her funeral text*





**Sr. Marie Celine MALA** was born on 8 September 1959 in Myanmar. Died on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

During 36 years of her religious life Sr. Marie Celine was a great missionary in Lashio, Waimaw, Kachinsu, CRCM, Pangwa. Her motto was "to be His instrument of love". She really had lived as her motto wherever and whatever she was assigned. She was an icon of love especially for the least ones, the very poor around her. She worked with determination and great courage.

She was very hospitable, welcomed all without any discrimination. She could preach with touching words and has touched the hearts of many listeners.

She was a trained nurse and she took care of the sick people with warm heart. A very distinguished virtue was her availability, always ready to offer her services to cook whenever there were big groups for retreats and sessions, she related to all with great respect.

We are grateful to you dear Sister Marie Celine, rest peacefully in God's bosom.

Sent by Sr, Margarita Thiam



### **Margaret Mary Connell**

Born: 25.12.1926 in Ireland

Died on 01.11.2023 in Bowdon, England

Sr. Margaret the only girl in the family of seven brothers born on Christmas day 1926. She spent her life tending the sick and elderly, the last fifty years of which in the Community of Bowdon. In the ninety-six years of her love and service the world, the church the religious life has changed faster than in any time in history and her generation has been shaped and formed through all those changes. Sr. Margaret saw the Sacred heart as the image above all others. She

said, God is an ocean of compassion, mercy and love in which the sinner, the sick, those in any difficulty and those so desiring to know and love God immerse themselves.

Rest in Peace dear Sister Margaret Mary.



From the Obituary of her funeral rite

## A Life of Devotion and Service,

### Sr. Helendina Licari:

7th February 1943 – 8th November 2023



Sr Helendina's early years in the Congregation were marked by a deep love for the Middle East, a place she held dearly in her heart. Her first mission in 1964 was in Lebanon. In Beyrouth she taught little children. She loved it and was loved by all. From Lebanon she developed a great devotion to St Charbel which she kept throughout the rest of her life. In 1966, Helendina was sent to Bethlehem. She spent nearly 30 years teaching English in our Secondary school with a break in Jerusalem excelling in Administration work in our hospital.

Leaving the Middle East for an even more demanding mission was difficult as she had become so much part of the Middle East. However, she did not lose contact with all she loved there and who loved her so much. Sr Helendina's dedication and capabilities led her to her next mission which became really a primary one directly at the service of the Congregation. First, as a General Bursar in France and then as a General Bursar in Rome from 1995 till 2013, a role of great responsibility and trust. After a few years at the service of the Social Seat of the Congregation in Paris, she finally came back to her home country, Malta.

There, she was given the charge of a community, where she exercised her willingness to serve wherever she was needed. She also got closer to her dear family to whom she showed profound love, care and attention. This was reciprocal! Later, Helendina was transferred to the Community of Rabat. Even in this new mission, her role as bursar continued, reflecting her steadfast commitment to the financial well-being of her community.

Beyond her professional contributions, Sr. Helendina was known for her jovial, and warm personality. She radiated joy and was cherished by all who had the privilege of knowing her. She touched the hearts of so many through her spontaneous generosity. Her life stands as a shining example of unwavering dedication, selfless service, and a heart filled with love for both her faith and her community. Sr Helendina was a remarkable figure in our Congregation.

*Text taken from the obituary of the funeral*



## Sister Odile Plois

1933 – 2023



Sister Odile celebrated her 60th anniversary of religious life in 2022 and her 90th birthday in February of this year.

It is a long life, even though, for those of us who knew her in good health, it is a shock to lose her so quickly.

What stands out to us as we remember her is her simplicity, her acceptance of who she was, with her strengths and shortcomings, her faithfulness to the gift she had made of herself to God and to all those

she encountered on her journey.

Obedience sent her on missions to different places in France: Châtellerauld, Toulon, Ajaccio, Paris, Marseille, Versailles, Tergnier... In these diverse locations, she knew how to adapt and, above all, create bonds.

As a nurse by profession, she dedicated herself entirely to the sick, particularly at the Parisian hospital La Salpêtrière, where she stayed for more than 20 years. Upon retirement, she was sent to be with our older sisters in retirement homes that also welcomed laypeople, extending her attention and skills, her fraternal affection, particularly to the most vulnerable.

Indeed, Odile knew how to be close to those she encountered, especially people going through difficult situations, and she remained faithful to them.

Her missionary spirit extended beyond the walls of her community, participating in outreach activities in Marseille, joining the JALMAV association, serving people at the end of life, integrating into parish life, and more.

Quiet in expressing her faith, she testified to the tenderness of the ONE she experienced the mercy of through her actions.

Like everyone else, Odile was not perfect. Her enthusiastic temperament sometimes led her to make decisions quickly, without enough discernment. She acted swiftly, and sometimes it was hard to keep up with her. However, she would reassess, move forward with other projects, resume listening and sharing her ideas.

Finally, her sisters in the community she has just left note a deep faith, in this time of old age where prayer matters more than action. The Saturday morning adoration hour was an important time for her and for each of the sisters.

Dear Odile, with your family and all your friends, we give thanks to God for your life as it has been.

We entrust you into the hands of the very loving Father of whom you said, 'Over the years, His intimate and vibrant presence has transformed me.



Sister Thérèse and the community of Ste EMILY



### Sister Hélène Hander

Born on 20.09.1933 in Athens

Died on: 19.11.2023 in Héraclès, Grèce

On Sunday, November 19th, Sister Hélène completed her long Way of the Cross of 12 years of suffering and illness, to join her Lord whom she served faithfully with immense patience and a profound silence into which the illness gradually immersed her.

The funeral, celebrated on the 21st at the parish church, was presided over by the Archbishop of Athens, Archbishop Théodoros KONIDIS, assisted by 5 priests and a fairly large congregation. The faithful followed the procession to the cemetery, where the President of the alumni addressed a few words to her (see below)

Sister Hélène was born in Piraeus, Greece, in 1933. Her father, a British national, worked at the English Embassy. When the Germans invaded the country during the war, he was pursued and imprisoned. The mother, her three children, and two grandmothers were taken hostage and placed under house arrest in central Greece for several months.

They endured difficult years in exile, and upon their return to the capital, they found their home ravaged and empty.

After the war, the family reunited and moved to England, except for Sister Hélène, who had already felt the call of the Lord and stayed with the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Athens.

She was found in Marseille during her training years. After her first profession, she received her assignment to Saint Maur and then to Gaillac. Upon returning to Greece, she carried out her mission in several communities, working in schools where she left a lasting impression through her testimony, her smile, her gentleness towards children and service personnel, her attentive listening, and her numerous services to all.

### ***TESTIMONY FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ALUMNI***

Her human warmth, her calm demeanor, her gentleness reflected her love for children; she was a source of comfort for everyone! The Christian values she served so faithfully were a true light for those who spent their teenage years in the classrooms of this school. Her kind smile, her immense goodness, will remain etched in our memory!

### **SEVERAL MESSAGES GATHERED FROM THE CONDOLENCES OF FORMER STUDENTS**

Sister Hélène has left us, but her smile and joy, her kindness, and generosity will remain unforgettable.

A former student

We hold in memory her immense activity that set her apart, as well as the unique connection that characterized her! She had a big heart, a constant smile full of kindness.

Kelly Aslani

A true model of goodness, patience, and discretion... following in the footsteps of Saint Joseph!

Nicolas Kambilis Teacher at SJA School

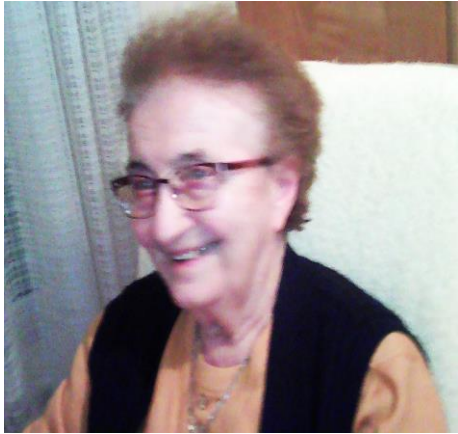
Thus, our dear Sister Hélène has passed among us! May she now rest in the peace of the Lord, like the faithful servant who walked among us, doing good.

Sister Blandine Dréan

Community of Héraclée







**Sister Anne JEHANNO**  
**1925-2023**

You were born on April 2, 1925, in Limerzel, Morbihan.  
You were 25 years old when you committed to vows in our Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition.  
Your first mission was in Syria, in Aleppo, and later at St. Louis Hospital in Jerusalem, where you worked as a nurse. After 12 years, you returned to France. You were then part of the communities in Gaillac, St Briec, Lyon, and finally in St Rambert d'Albon."

"You wrote, 'times had changed, laws too; it was necessary to move forward, launch a management association. It was a success thanks to the generosity and competence of the people of St Rambert.' You stayed there for 45 years."

"But the time comes to let go. You have to leave this mission where you belonged. You then experience the vulnerability associated with age.

You come here to the community of Plouguenast. Your health improves a bit, but soon infirmities require you to accept going to the EHPAD in St Briec with the Sisters of the Holy Spirit. You are well surrounded there until the day when a fall takes you to the hospital, and it is there that you leave us to join the One whom you served faithfully throughout your life.

**"YOU ARE THE POOR, LORD JESUS,  
IN YOU, THE ETERNAL GLORY OF GOD."**

Rest in peace.

Farewell, Anne.

Your community of Plouguenast  
2 December 2023





**Sr Maria BONELLO**  
**18<sup>th</sup> June 1933 – 26<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Sr Maria made her First Vows in the Congregation in 1953. In 1954, she was sent to England to undergo training as a teacher. Her commitment to spread knowledge and values through education became a testament to her calling as a missionary. She not only practiced her profession as a teacher but also took on the role as a Vocation Promoter. Her missionary zeal knew no bounds, leading her to diverse countries.

Sr Maria was a strong and dynamic apostle who travelled in the name of the Lord to announce the Good News and serve the Lord, the Church and all the people in many of our

Communities across the world.

Sr Maria's remarkable ability to quickly grasp the languages of the countries she served in enhanced her missionary work in Burma, (now Myanmar), Thailand, Australia, Rumania, Rome and England. So many of her ex-pupils still esteem, cherish and love her dearly.

Throughout her life, she embodied the missionary spirit of the Congregation, a legacy left by our foundress St Emilie de Vialar. In her late years she returned to her beloved native country Malta settling in the Community for the elderly Sisters in Rabat.

She completed her long journey this Tuesday morning.

May the Lord who chose her and entrusted her with such a mission now reward her for her life given and offered. May He take into account all this long missionary life, leaving us a memory and a witness of a true sister of Saint Joseph of the Apparition.

*Taken from her funeral booklet*





## *Sr Albert ELLUL*

*29<sup>th</sup> January 1944 – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024*

Sr Albert began her religious journey in 1962. After her religious Formation years in Marseilles, she made her first Vows in 1965.

Back in Malta, she dedicated herself to the mission entrusted to her wherever she was sent: Paola, Gzira, Fatima House, a Hostel for young ladies in need, Sliema School and last but not least, Rabat. She excelled in pastoral work, as a teacher of Craft, in flower decoration, music, as a cook, as a receptionist and in voluntary work.

Everywhere Sr Albert went, she rapidly touched the heart of so many people, showing them genuine interest, appreciation, affection, friendship and love. She was quickly known for her warm missionary spirit.

### APPRECIATION OF SR ALBERT ON FACEBOOK

Jacob, renowned harpist, who she got into contact with because she loved so much listening to him playing the harp, wrote;

Time to grieve the loss for a pure soul. Sr Albert of the Congregation of St Joseph. She used to write to me such beautiful profound handwritten letters, which I will cherish with affection. I am so grateful that I managed to play a concert not just for you but for all the community as a sign of Christian fraternity and gratitude for your support.

Issa hu hsiebi minn hemm fuq. (Now you take care of me from up there).

Rest in peace dear angel. Will play for you one last time during your funeral on Monday 8.30 a.m. in this same chapel.

Written by the junior School of the Sisters of ST Joseph in Sliema:: We mourn the loss of Sr Albert Ellul who passed away yesterday. Sr Albert was loved by staff, students and parents alike. Her gentle and loving ways will not be forgotten. May she rest. in peace.

Written by the Senior School:: In memory of Sr Albert Ellul who passed away. yesterday. A gentle soul with an incredible love for all our girls, Sr Albert will be remembered for her morning greetings, come rain or shine as generations of our pupils walked into school every morning. She was happiest teaching, participating in school activities and sharing our daily life in school. Her determination in the face of growing frailty was an example to all as was her devotion to Our Lady and St Emile.

Sr Albert is surely missed. May she rest in peace.

We will cherish our memories and remember her example.

Alice Anne Micallef: Fly high with the angels dear Sr Albert, because this is where you truly belong. Sincere condolences to the Congregation.

Louise Chircop: What sad news. Sr Albert greeted us at the gate everyday rain or shine until Covid struck. May she rest in peace. condolences to all those close to her.

Dianne Guillaumier: Oh Sr Albert! She was amazing. Always waiting to greet the staff and the children with her kind smile, whatever the weather. Rest in heavenly peace.

Carmen Elena Camilleri: A gentle soul, caring, kind. Always had time for everyone and never an unkind word, and ready with a smile in all difficulties. We need more like you. Sr Albert, rest in peace, resilient lady. You sure deserve it.

Elaine German: Oh dear Sr Albert, so many fond memories of her. That smile, those sweet eyes, always waiting for the children and us at the gate, always available for a chat. She had a frail body, but such a young strong spirit. May she rest in peace. She surely left an impact on us all.

Erika Scocluna: Sr Albert will forever hold a special place in my heart. She had the purest soul and I will cherish our conversations together every morning before starting the school day. May she rest in peace.

Maria Spiteri Cornish: A truly devout nun and an exemplary person. May she rest in peace.

Victoria Camenzuli: It was always lovely to meet you walking in Sliema. You always gave me a lovely smile and a lovely greeting. It was always a pleasure to meet you. Will miss you. R.I.P.



"Blessed is the one you have chosen and accepted to dwell in your abode.

**Sister Ludovica MANTOURA ISAAC**  
**Born in Zgharta (Lebanon)**  
**Died on 27.1.2024**



Sister Ludovica Dafika lived a life full of love and generosity. She entered religious life in 1951, preparing for consecration in Nazareth and later in Marseille, France. After taking her initial vows and responding to her calling, obedience became her yes in Ramallah willingly and lovingly. She devoted herself to service and the mission, making the word 'yes' to the Lord a true, everlasting love in Ramallah.

Her life was adorned with humility and sacrifice; she was a mother and sister to all. For 71 years, she never left Ramallah, known for her love, simplicity, and humility. She exemplified sharing and serving without expecting anything in return, earning the title of the humble one. Her silence and humility gave us, her fellow nuns, a perfect example of a true devoted life, carrying everything in her heart. When we search for her, we always find her in the church, adorned with her

sacred rosary in hand.

No matter what we write about her, we will never do her justice. Our beloved Sister Dafika, thank you for everything, and we want to tell you that we will miss you greatly. We mourn, knowing that you will become a saintly intercessor in heaven.

Our heartfelt condolences to all the nuns around the world and to the relatives in Lebanon and the diaspora. May God rest her soul.

From her community.  
Sent by Sr. Valentina Sala



**“Walk together. Question together.  
Take responsibility together for  
community discernment, which for  
us is prayer, as the first Apostles  
did: This is Synodality, which we  
would like to make a daily habit in  
all its expressions.”**

*Pope Francis on Sep 18, 2023*

*Together on the Way*

