



*Voices of our Sisters and the Collaborators*

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# Contents

1	Editorial	pg.	3
2	From the Archives	pg.	4
3	Spring up to Life (Thailand)	pg.	6
4	Life and mission in Rabat (Malta)	pg.	8
5	Celebration of life in Ballymote (Ireland)	pg.	10
6	Jubilees and festivities in Myanmar	pg.	11
7	New Leadership team in the Philippines	pg.	13
8	Life and mission in Addis, Ethiopia.	Pg.	16
9	New mission in Godegaon, India	pg.	19
10	Embracing the mission, Australia	pg.	21
11	Gaillac; change of Superior	Pg	23
12	Sing for Peace	Pg	24

## Obituaries

1	<i>Sister Esperance HADJIPANAGIOTOU</i>	pg	26
2	SISTER THÉRÈSE RIGAUD	pg.	28
3	Sr. Martha MURALLIS	pg.	29
4	Sr. Marion O'NEIL	pg.	31
5	Sr. Camillus TIGHE	pg.	33
6	Sister Emilia MARCHIONNI	pg.	34
7	Sister Erminia BASSI	pg	35
8	Sr. Zina SCHAKER	pg`	36

# Editorial

Dear Sisters,

*In a universe bursting with conflict where echoes of war and nature's fury resound far too often, where dark coloured shades envelopes the horizon, our bulletin emerges as a beacon of beauty amidst chaos. It is a sanctuary where the splendour of our missions' shines forth like a radiant dawn, casting light upon the darkest corners of our troubled reality.*

*Once again it is a great joy to present to you this edition of the bulletin. Within its pages, you will find news from around the world, stories of courage and resilience that inspire the soul. From the timeless wisdom of Sr. Zoe Bard, whose legacy continues to illuminate our path, to the vibrant tales of our younger Sisters navigating their missions with unwavering determination, each article is a testament to the indomitable spirit that defines us.*

*As we turn the pages, we encounter the unwavering commitment of our elderly Sisters, whose dedication knows no bounds, devotedness unto death. Theirs is a legacy of love and sacrifice that continues to inspire generations to come.*

*Amidst the challenges and uncertainties of our world, we find solace in the stories of new leadership roles being embraced, of missions being shared across distant lands, and of jubilant celebrations amidst adversity. These are the signs of life that breathe hope into our weary hearts, reminding us that even in the midst of darkness, light will always find a way to shine through.*

*As we journey through the pages of this bulletin, let us open our hearts to the echoes of hope and resilience that reverberate within. Let us honour the memory of those who have gone before us with a grateful heart, recognizing the immeasurable contributions they have made to our shared mission.*

*I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed to this edition, whose dedication and tireless efforts have brought these stories to life. May this bulletin serve as a source of inspiration and encouragement to all who read it, guiding us ever onwards on our journey towards a brighter tomorrow.*

*Sr. Renee Quadros SJA*

## *From the archives*

The Archives provides us with considerable information about the life of the Congregation which includes stories of individual Sisters. One which caught my attention was the story of **Sr Zoe Barb** located in notes, pamphlets and letters in the English archives.

Sr Zoe Bard, Leonie, was born in St Chely – d’Apcher in Lozere, France on the 21 September 1861. She entered the Congregation in Marseilles 13 April 1885, received the habit 15 April 1886 and made First Profession 23 June 1887. Her desire was to live and spread the charism of St Emilie De Vialar.

It seems that soon after First Profession she went to Moulmein in Burma where she remained for about 15 years. On returning to France around 1903 she was sent to make a foundation in Manchester England with Sr Florentine Honee. This foundation was in reply to a request by Bishop Cassertelli, Bishop of the Salford Diocese. From her time in Burma, she would have some knowledge of the English language.

An extract from a pamphlet, ‘The Golden Jubilee of Manchester’ written in 1947 has a description of Sister Zoe:

*She had a definite personality; attractive, well beloved. She was small with a bird like perkiness, active, courageous, thorough and exacting. She maintained that what one woman could do, others can. Her spirit never broke, but in her greatest hours of sadness at the seeming impossibility of progress she records with tears ‘We are almost in despair, but God is Good’.*

The day of their arrival in Manchester, 24 October 1904, was a cold bleak day. Her diary records:

*We can never forget we are in England it is always so cold there is no difference between winter and summer.*

The two Sisters initially resided with the Little Sisters of the Poor in Plymouth Gove. From here began a search for a house in Manchester which could be used as a ‘Home’ for retired ladies. A large house in Whalley Road was offered to them.

*The Home was a fine Victorian mansion standing in extensive gardens, in Whalley Road. .... but it had been closed for some years and left derelict. Grass and weeds had pushed their way up the floorboards, dirt covered everything. They were faced with unsurmountable difficulties of heat, and water supply ran black for days. Pipes were burst. Chimneys were blocked and the wet firewood was stubborn. There was no furniture at all and they had little or nothing to live on or to buy with.*



The price of the house was \$3,000 and at first, they rented it for \$100 per year with the right to buy. Fr Rowan the Parish Priest came to their rescue and encouraged and supported them. On the day of the official opening a benefactor paid for the lunch for around 50 guests. Gradually generous benefactors assisted in a variety of ways and further Sisters arrived to assist with the work. Mother Winifred of Malta assisted them in paying for the building.



*However, reading through the sad pages of the diary written in French by Mother Zoe, we can feel the deep faith, the zeal and the missionary spirit shining through the sufferings endured by Mother Zoe and her companion Sister Florentine. No one seemed to think that we were hungry and needed food. It is*

*recorded that one day they called at an office and the gentleman they had gone to see sent them in a tray of tea and delicious bread and butter whereupon Sr Florentine wept with joy. The big event finds its place in the diary in gratitude to this benefactor*

*Yet they adapted joyfully to life and were rewarded by many good friends who offered help in many ways and several outstanding benefactors. A young Dr M.F O'Flanagan offered his services free and slowly patients began to arrive as did more Sisters.*

At the time of Mother Celina Le Buffo's visit in 1909 they were caring for fifteen residents and had received twelve postulants. 'This visit gave encouragement and they were left with a feeling of great joy and peace'.

In 1914 Mother Zoe writes:

*Little by little the bird builds its nest and so we are beginning to feel a sense of protection. ... By 1917 all debts they had contracted were paid off.*

Following a visit by Mother Xavier Sorgnaird in 1926 Mother Zoe returned with her to Marseilles. Her health had deteriorated. She died in Marseilles aged 76 in 1937. Her work was to result in what became known as St Joseph's Hospital Whalley Range, Manchester opening 22 March 1931.



Mother Zoe was a heroic missionary with great zeal, deep faith, courage and love of God and self-sacrificing nature. Her years in England were characterised by poverty and much stress and strain. In the Archives in Bowden, England there is a collection of letters written by her and the handwriting is exquisite. Her frequent saying was 'God is Good'.

*What does it matter who sows and who reaps, provided the harvest is abundant.*

*St Emilie*

Sr Margaret Anne Beech

## **Spring up to Life.**

### **The Word of the Incarnation made present in my Life.**

Through my mission in Ubon, Thailand, God have shown his infinite love to me. At Saint Emilie's School in Ubon, I have experienced God's love through teaching, services in Emilie Mart and teaching Catechism in the parish. I would like to share with you my life in the school. At first it seemed like a 'full cup of water' especially the teaching. I had a dream that all the students needed to have knowledge of English at the same level as the children I had taught catechism to in Bangkok. But in reality, it was different and I felt disappointed with my situation. I started to look for ways to teach them by asking for suggestions from other teachers. I would go to the learning room with the children to see their teaching methods and watched videos about teaching English.

One day having reflected about the love of God in my life, I felt that God did not force me to do things but he allowed me to grow step by step. Teaching is one of my favorite works, as it gives me a way to share what I have received. Through teaching I acknowledge the need for patience, reflection, acceptance, hope and joy. It is here that together we continue to extend the love and forgiveness of Christ by giving students who may have lost their way, a chance. We do not leave these students behind, but instead try to help them by making them volunteers in the school. I have seen many groups of students come for volunteering work and I take the opportunity to talk with them. I listen to them speak about their life situations.

This love of Christ is shown in another part of my mission. I take care of our small minimart which we call "Emilie Mart". Here, I work with teachers who are my co-workers and sell stationary, tea, drinks, soft drinks and snacks. We do not just sell things to students as we take the opportunity to train the children in manners and enable them to be able to apply English in their daily life. So, it becomes a place of happiness as they obtain what they need for their studies along with their drinks and snacks.

We may not know exactly what the experiences of a person's life is but by listening and visiting them they can show us what their needs are. The Lord Jesus is our example, for in His humanity he understands us fully. One day when Sr. Martina Ngamwong and I were visiting the Janitor my eyes were opened to the needs of his life. I thank God for loving me no matter who I am and because of this love I am what I am today.

Sr.Maria Naruemon Lapho, SJA

Thailand

( Photos with permission)



*Know the life and Mission  
of our Sisters in Rabat, Malta.*

**CHANGES IN THE RABAT COMMUNITY MALTA**

The Rabat Community of Malta has recently undergone a transformation marked by both departures and arrivals. Some members have departed to join their Divine Spouse and receive their heavenly reward, and others have joined the community to strengthen its ranks and provide support, assistance, and fill essential roles. Unfortunately, the community mourns the loss of three beloved members: Sr Helendina Licari, Sr Maria Bonello and Sr Albert Ellul, whose absence has left a noticeable gap in the community.

However, the community has welcomed four new Sisters from the Community of Blata- l-Bajda: Sr David Borg Costanzi, Sr Alicia Collins, Sr Bernadette Gafa and Sr Esther Ellul. While their presence enriches the Rabat Community, it also signifies a loss for their former community Blata-l-Bajda.

The Rabat Community primarily consists of elderly Sisters and is well-established. We are grateful for the support provided by the Congregation. It is a sanctuary which offers a place to spend our remaining years in peace and harmony with a well animated spiritual life and our needs looked after by a devoted group of lay Careers.

We waited for the arrival of our Sisters transferred from Blata Community to revise our Missionary Apostolic Project which is linked to the Missionary Apostolic Project of our Province. We try to be as faithful and renew ourselves in the Vision and Aim proposed by the Province.

**Vision:** Living mission in a fractured world by discerning missionary priorities, by adapting missionary openness in all communities

**Aim:** To root ourselves even more in the love of Christ, to make our communities places where it is good to live in and to be a witness of reconciliation.

Our Founding words, chosen among those proposed in the Province Project are:

- “To revive the missionary spirit in the Congregation.” (Chapter Orientation)
- *“The spirit of gentleness is that of our houses: I cannot recall that I ever said a word with the intention of humiliating my Sisters.”* Emilie de Vialar
- “Today, Jesus needs hearts capable of living their vocation as a real love story which impels them to ... become messengers and instruments of Compassion.” (Message of Pope Francis on Mission Sunday 2020)



Finally, we were also happy to see that our apostolic activities are life-giving to all of us:

- 🌈 Prayer groups and retreatants, religious sessions etc. at our Retreat House
- 🌈 Weekly Catechism to children, in Nigret Parish (Rabat)
- 🌈 Welcome all who call at our Community
- 🌈 Meetings organized by IHK (Institute for Consecrated life) or other
- 🌈 Spiritual and material service in our Community life
- 🌈 Participation in pastoral activities organized by the Parish or Dominican Fathers as part of the Synodal walk
- 🌈 Visiting the Elderly
- 🌈 Participating in meetings for ex-pupils

Sent by Sr. Dorothy Vella-Zarb,

Click the link for more photos: <https://youtu.be/NkGnSNUGJOo>



For all you are  
For all you do  
Thank You

*Ballymote*

*Ireland*

**Sr. Denys Marie Byrne celebrates her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.**

*May God bless you on this milestone birthday*



## *Jubilee Celebrations in Myanmar*

### *Murmurs of the Heart*

#### **Diamond Jubilee**

**Sr. Frances Yin Maung,  
Sr. Geraldine Willis,  
Sr. Joanna Loo,  
Sr. Mary of the Rosary**

#### **Golden Jubilee**

*Sr. Mary Ann  
Stanislaus*

#### **Silver Jubilee**

*Sr. Emily Cing Khan Naing,  
Sr. Maria Zing Par,  
Sr. Lucy Thang Sen Huai.*

It was an opportune time, after the Retreat, when we were all gathered to celebrate Jubilees: three Silver, one golden and four Diamond. A thanksgiving Mass was celebrated by His Grace Archbishop Marku Tin Win and concelebrated by a few other Priests.

We entered in procession and as I knelt and took my place in the presence of Jesus, I offered and thanked Him for this day of great Blessings. God has given me 60 years of love, concern and protection. Who can comprehend or fathom the wisdom and goodness of God? Before the offertory we renewed our vows and then brought our gifts in procession. As I walked up the Isle I carried my gift, placing my heart on the gift and gave it to the Archbishop. At communion time - I became - One - united with Jesus and conversed and thanked Him.

Friends, relatives and well-wishers congratulated us and gave us little monetary gifts and other gifts. Our Sisters and girls also burst into an appropriate song. Once the Priests and Religious were seated they enjoyed a delicious Buffet. 500 lunch boxes were prepared for the people. 200 boxes were consumed. The 300 that were left were distributed to the poor in the highways and byways. Those present enjoyed their time together and in due time had to part, wishing and thanking each other. The crowd dispersed to their various homes.

As the day light faded, the moonlight and the stars took their place and made the sky most beautiful. The Children entertained us with a concert honoring the Jubilarians. After the opening song we were presented with Recognition awards and then the electric lights failed and did not come back on again. Our convent generator was out of order. By hook or by crook we had our concert with torch light for nearly everybody had a torch as we often have electrical failures over these last few years.

In retrospect as I look back on my life during which I have experienced tragedies and misfortunes - my life has certainly not been a "bed of Roses". On the other hand, as I reflected on the positive aspects of my life, I see how God carried me on 'eagle's wings' and cared for me, through the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition to whom I owe deep gratitude. Firstly, for taking care of me in my tender years, and during my adolescent and young adult years. Their love, concern and interest were shown even when I worked outside for my own living. They kept in touch at each milestone of my life. The Sisters were always there for me. Then I gave them a great "Bomb Shell" or a "Surprise" when I said I want to be a "nun". The news spread like wild fire. Mother Rose Marie - my mother during the war and at this time the Provincial of Myanmar along with Mother Theophane, "Welcomed " me with open arms. 'Here I am and this is what I am today. I will live in the house of the Lord' the remaining days of my life. I am

becoming the person God created for himself. 'I thank you for your faithfulness and love, your love O Lord is eternal.' Ps 137.

I take the opportunity to thank all those who helped to make this day so beautiful for us. Thank you, Sister M. Therese (Provincial) and her Councilors, the Sisters and girls of Mandalay, the Retreatants, last but not the least our thanks go to Sr. Augustina and company in the kitchen. All meals were Super. The feast went off without a Hitch.

By Sr Geraldine Willis, SJA



For more photos: <https://youtu.be/Ew4vcBxLPNU>

## Handing Over Celebration of Leadership

### SJA Delegation of Philippines

17<sup>th</sup> February, 2024

The SJA Delegation of the Philippines handed over to a new team on the 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2024. Assembled were our SJA Sisters, the two Nigerian Postulants and Sr. Marie Therese Phe Ling Yah, our Provincial Superior who was present virtually through Zoom. The event began with an opening prayer led by Sr. Theresa Ja Nan, and two scripture texts were proclaimed by Sr. Estela and Sr. Patricia respectively.



The ceremony continued with a greeting and letter of obedience from Sr. Monica Duellmann, Superior General, to Sr. Marina, Sr. Estela and Sr. Rose Juliet and read by Sr. Anna Cing, a Provincial Councilor. The handover was followed by the ritual – the handing of the SEAL OF THE CONGREGATION to Sr. Marina New Ni by the former Delegation Leader Sr. Esperanza. She referred to the thoughts of St. Emilie's and acknowledged the presence of the former Delegation Leaders, Sr. Estela and the first Delegation Leader Sr. Christopher. In response, Sr. Marina received the SEAL with her "Prayer of Fiat" invoking the Holy Spirit and committing herself and accepting the task of leading the Delegation.



Sr. Espie gave a report of her mandate and Sr Rose Juliet, a new Councilor, expressed gratitude to the outgoing team for their generous services over the years.







At this point Sr. Marina read a letter she had received from Sr. Marie Therese Phe Ling Yah who encouraged her and expressed trust in her giftedness. Sr. Marina thanked Sr. Espie and Sr. Patricia for their selfless dedication and for the growth of the Delegation. Furthermore, she spoke of the importance of each Sister being faithful to ones call. She then requested that each Sister be happy, healthy and holy in their individual and communal

lives and lived out in their respective missions.

She invited her team members Sr. Estela, Sr. Rose Juliet and Sr. Martha Win to work hand in hand for the life and mission of the SJA Delegation.

With trust in Divine Providence we rejoiced in the opportunity to hearken to the Words of Wisdom and inspiration from Sr. Christopher, the first Delegation Leader of the Philippines. Sr Christopher shared a brief history of the Delegation and expressed her delight at the flourishing mission and the growth of the Delegation. She expressed how her many years of lived experiences was modelled on St Emilie.

Sr. Anna Cing, as a Provincial Councilor, handed the token of gifts to Sr. Espie and Sr. Patricia, the former team members, urging them not to retire but aspire for the mission ahead.

The ceremony concluded with St. Emilie’s hymn entitled “Thou art thy children’s glory” echoing the lyrics ....   *we love thee dearest mother for all thou were and art*,  ...



We then extended the thanksgiving with a Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Paul Phromphong, TMS, a Thai resident Priest, who in his homily, encouraged the new team members to embrace the works of God entrusted to them. The celebration ended by partaking in the “Salo Salo ” (in Filipino Tagalog term) fellowship meal well prepared by the Las Piñas community.



**Together we rejoice in the Lord for His Forever Goodness and His Great Love!**

By Sr. Theresa L. Ja Nan, SJA

## SJA LIFE IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

On the 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 our Congregation completed 16 years of existence in Ethiopia. On this day we celebrated two of the major feasts in Ethiopia, the Epiphany and Baptism of the Lord in the local year 2000 since Ethiopia follows the Julian Calendar and the time scheme of the gospel. These have been years full of hope, yet also with major setbacks.

### **Our Community**

At present our community consists of four sisters and two candidates. Sr. Salomi Soren, Indian, Sr. Mekdes Alemu and Sr. Amate Osabo Ethiopian and myself, Maltese. The two candidates are Abezash Tamiru and Italem Demeke. Sr. Biruktawit is the first Ethiopian to be sent out on mission and since last March has joined the Aleppo community in Syria.



### **Places of Work**

The two young Ethiopian sisters work in different hospitals as nurses, whilst Sr. Salomi teaches in a Salesian School and Sr. Carmen as Academic Director in the diocesan school. The two candidates are students preparing for religious life.

### **Our Apostolate**

Since our arrival, the community has always prepared children who attend the International Parish Church of Holy Saviour for their First Holy Communion. It hosts African Union staff and those from the different embassies. Every Sunday after the 10 o'clock Mass for the past few years, Sr. Mekdes has faithfully accompanied groups of children from different parts of Africa for this big day in their life.





Communion Day May 2023



Formators Session August 2023

Several times a year, Sr. Carmen gives spiritual direction at weekend retreats organized by the Jesuit retreat house Galilee centre, at Debre Zeit some 50 kms from Addis Ababa. Sometimes she is also asked to give a short session at the Formation of Formators course.

Sr. Salomi teaches two courses at CMRS for the inter-congregational formation of aspirants and postulants. The community sponsors the education of young children or university students through donations given to them. Periodically we welcome small groups of voluntary workers, who come to visit the parishes in which they are helping. Early in the month of March we received the priest Director and one of his project managers for Catholic Mission Australia, who are helping the Addis Ababa diocese.

### **Life at Present in Addis Ababa**

Times have changed in Ethiopia. The Tigray war of the past two years, even if it has ended with a truce, has resulted in other unrest in the country. The largest ethnic group, the Oromo are claiming their long-denied rights. The Amhara group feel cheated out of the leadership of the country that they were used to, resulting in the formation of strong nationalistic rebel groups fighting against the government all around the capital city Addis Ababa. The roads out of the city are no longer very safe.

In contrast to this fighting and killing, the government is giving priority to the embellishment of the city, which is also the capital of the African Union. A lot of houses, buildings, restaurants and shops are being demolished to give way to wider streets, wide pavements, new monuments, large parks and museums.



### [The latest museum dedicated to the Battle of Adwa](#)

So now, many people are homeless and jobless as a result of this since no compensation is being offered. The salaries remain low even for the employed, the inflation is as high as 28%. Many necessary items are no longer in the shops as many factories have closed due to the unrest around us. We live with constant power cuts and the rationing of water supplies.

Our community has also suffered, as a result of these conflicts. From 2015 to 2020, we had a second community working for a very neglected tribe – the Gumuz – doing direct evangelization and education for small children, in collaboration with the Comboni missionaries. Unfortunately, the sisters had to leave due to the violence. Now that region is calm. The Comboni Fathers have returned, but we await more sisters to be able to return to this mission.

We thank God for the local vocations that he has granted us, to continue spreading the spirit of St. Emilie, in this country. We also thank those that support us, our provinces and benefactors and also for the people of this country which is very religious whether Orthodox, Muslim, Protestant or Catholic.

Sr. Carmen Sammut SJA

## The Challenges of pioneering a new mission

We thank the Lord for the trust God has shown us by choosing us to pioneer this new mission. We thank our Provincial and her team for sending us to this mission which is situated in a very remote place. It is where people need us most and wait for us to visit them and to provide pastoral care.

The Community has four members Srs. Neelmani Toppo, Quinita Dsouza, Leena Kolge and Raphila Xalxo. On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023, and full of enthusiasm we arrived in Godegaon, in the state of Maharashtra,



accompanied by the Provincial Sr. Thaddeus. On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2023, feast of the Holy Trinity we were officially welcomed in the Parish Church in the presence of the Bishop of Nasik, priests and religious from around this place.



It is a vast parish, with around 3200 people spread out in 74 villages. The Parish and the mission has existed since 1972 and was began by the Jesuits. At present it is managed by the diocese of Nasik.

### **The Parish Church,**

We take an active part preparing the liturgy, church choir, reading at Mass, preparation of the Altar, feasts day preparations and animating the Holy Hour for the people of this the Church. We assist in all the activities of the Church. Three days a week we accompany the Parish Priest for Mass in the remote villages where people gather from nearby villages for mass and confession. We help the people to organise the liturgy and distribute Communion during mass This gives us an opportunity to become acquainted with the scattered Christian families and help them come closer to God by our presence. On Sundays and holidays, we visit catholic families and those who are our students who are in close vicinity

It is believed that when God choses us for a mission he gives us the grace to live it. Initially it was hard for us to adjust since we do not have a house of our own. We are temporarily living in the parish house till we have our own convent, which we hope to have in the near future, if God wills. The people are very friendly, but we had to find our own way and to provide for our needs. Now in just five months' we see many positive changes in the mission. The people are coming closer to us as we get closer to them.

We also take charge of the diocesan high school which was already here. The Diocese has given us responsibility to manage this school. Since this area is poor, people depend on farming and cultivation and they are not able to afford to pay fees or at least very little. The teachers too are working for a small salary and it is difficult to get good teachers in this remote area. With what we have and what we receive we try to do the best we can with confidence that the Lord will bless our mission and will remain with us always.

Trusting in the providence of God we daily surrender ourselves and work for the greater glory of God, making Him known and loved every day through our works and deeds.

**Sr. Quinita Dsouza**  
**On behalf of the community from Godegaon**

## *Embracing the Mission: Diverse Paths, Shared Purpose*



In the context of our Delegation in WA, we comprise 23 sisters, including four who are overseas. Among us, some remain active in various missions, while others, after dedicating years in the service of the mission, now retire from active ministry and consecrate time to prayer. Our Delegation represents a rich tapestry of nationalities, including Maltese, Burmese,

Thai, Indian, Malaysian, and Palestinian.

In the bustling tapestry of our lives, each sister weaves a unique thread, contributing to the rich fabric of our collective mission. From the quiet corridors of hospitals to the vibrant classrooms of schools, our sisters embody the spirit of compassion and service inspired by the love of Jesus Christ.

Within the care group, our Sisters extend a comforting hand to the sick and elderly, visiting them in hospitals and homes alike. With reverence, they bring Holy Communion to those in nursing homes, offering solace and companionship amidst the solitude of aging. Their tireless dedication extends to driving some elderly people from the parishes to medical appointments and aiding them in daily errands, embodying Christ's love through practical acts of kindness. The homeless are not forgotten, and Sisters are also involved in Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking of Humans.

Helping the community of St. Vincent de Paul, our sisters engage in acts of charity, distributing food to impoverished families and offering spiritual guidance to fellow members. In the heart of the parish, they serve as catalysts for spiritual growth, engaging in RCIA committees, catechism classes, and pastoral ministries. Through their presence in the parish office and participation in prison ministries, they seek to restore hope to those society has deemed broken, echoing Christ's message of redemption and forgiveness.

In educational spheres, our Sisters serve in libraries, archives, mentoring youth, or teaching catechism, thus nurturing young minds and fostering a love for learning infused with faith. Their responsibilities span academia, pastoral care for those with intellectual disabilities, and advocacy for marginalized groups. Additionally, they play a crucial role in fostering communication and integration

for newcomers to the country within a multicultural college setting, providing linguistic aid, emotional support, and nurturing a sense of belonging while embracing cultural diversity.

Amidst the ebb and flow of daily life, our elderly Sisters stand as pillars of strength and wisdom, their lives a testament to enduring faith and selfless service. Through prayer and presence, they offer support to all who seek it, embracing each moment as an opportunity to live out their vocation with grace and humility.

As we reflect on the myriad ways our sisters serve, we are reminded of the interconnectedness of our mission. From the smallest act of kindness to the grandest gesture of charity, each action echoes the profound love of Christ, binding us together in a shared purpose. In our diversity, we find strength; in our unity, we find the fulfillment of our calling.

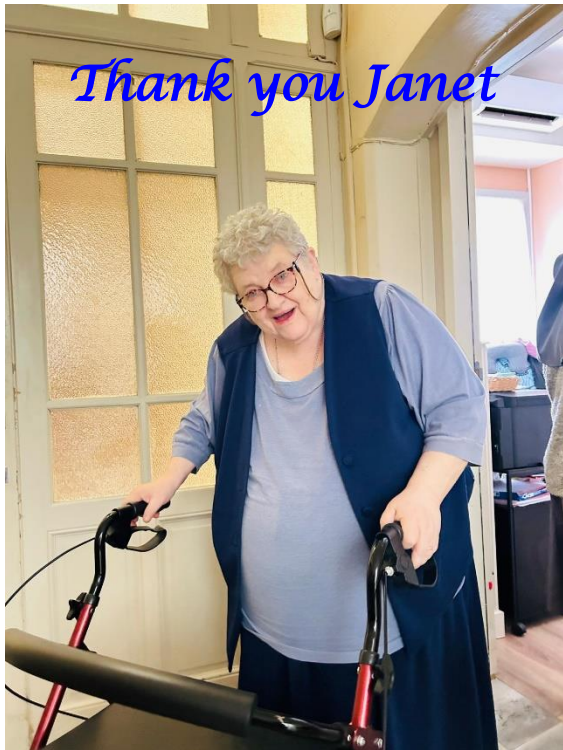
Together, we press onward, guided by the light of faith and fueled by the fire of love, knowing that in serving others, we serve the One who first loved us.

« The zeal with which God fired the heart of Saint Emilie animates the Sisters in the apostolate. By the strength of the Spirit, this zeal becomes in them passion for the glory of God, and compassion and devotedness for man and his fulfilment in Jesus Christ. » C. 94

« *Comme je suis heureuse lorsque je vois mes Sœurs animées par un véritable esprit de compassion.* »  
Sainte Emilie de Vialar



By Sr. Vicky, SJA



*The Community of Gaillac thanks Sr. Janet Arrowsmith for her services as Superior for the past three years and welcomes Sr. Marie Cho as the new Superior of the Community.*



## *“Sing for PEACE”*

It's wonderful to try to bring light into the darkness, spreading hope and love among children. This light began with an idea after the war on October 7th.

The school of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition was founded in Ramleh in 1872. Until 1972, it welcomed students of all nationalities and religions - Christians, Muslims, and Jews - all studying in French.

The school has always been and remains an open door, welcoming everyone. The atmosphere of the school feels like a warm home from the moment you enter.

The war on October 7<sup>th</sup> greatly affected the harmony among the people in Ramleh, and we, as sisters, felt it. There were feelings of fear, hatred, and rejection of others, and we felt the need to do something about it.

In the first months, we tried to heal the wounds of the families and students of the school by praying for peace for both sides. We offered daily prayers for the people of Gaza, the hostages, and the affected families. It was a hard mission because many of our students had relatives in Gaza, and they were deeply hurt.

In March, as a starting point for a new beginning and to build new bridges, we applied for a program through the municipality to do a project with an Israeli school. We aimed to create shared activities between our students and their students of the same age.

The person responsible for the program suggested football games and training, as it attracts students, but we felt it was not enough since football is a competitive game with winners and losers. We had a bigger idea: to recreate harmony between both sides. An idea emerged to form a choir from both schools that could "sing for peace." We had a meeting with the music teachers from both schools and prepared a song in Hebrew, English, and Arabic based on "This Little Light of Mine, I'm Gonna Let It Shine."

After one month of practicing separately, on April 5<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed the Israeli students and their teachers to our school for their first joint choir practice. It was a warm encounter, filled with fraternity, hope, and love. We started the meeting with an icebreaker game, then each choir performed an instrumental show for 5 minutes before singing together. It was marvellous. One of our St. Joseph students approached me and asked, "Can I ask one of them to be my friend?" I was thrilled with happiness that the simplicity of kids breaks all borders. We are excitedly looking forward to the next meeting.

By Sr. Muna Totah.





# *Obituaries of our dear Sisters*

*Sister Esperance Hadjipanagiotou*

**1928-2024**

**Died in Héraclée (Greece), on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024.**



Sister Espérance was born in Mytilene, an island in the Aegean Sea, very close to Chios and Turkey, where our Sisters were still present. It was in Chios that she encountered the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Her parents sent her at a young age to a small convent school in Chios to learn the French language and that's where the Lord was waiting for her! Subsequently, her parents sent her to Athens and then to France for over 5 years to obtain a degree, which paved the way for her entrance into the novitiate and marking the first time meeting the Congregation. There were 7 Greek novices, including one from Cyprus.

Her Orthodox family was shocked upon learning of her entrance into the novitiate! So much so that her mother arrived in Marseille, at the Capelette house, to convince her to return to Greece! It was then that the strength of her will

was revealed to us! She was 28 years old! In 1961, and this group of novices, were the last ones initiated by Sister Roselyne, to make their perpetual vows.

"Sister Espérance is a tough person whom we admire for her youthful zeal, but also for her hard work, immense love, and faith in God, St Joseph, as well as for her dedication to the life, progress, and well-being of the students," said one of her colleagues at Saint Joseph's school. Another, who also spoke at her funeral, added: "Sister Espérance had a heart entirely devoted to the students: her guidance along the path, her commitment, and her humility are values that are indispensable today."

Her intelligence and forward-thinking mindset helped her make significant decisions and seek external collaborators. In 1979, the school was proving to be too small in Charilaou Trikoupi, Athens. For a few years, preparations had been underway for new premises in Pefki: the community left the city centre, and the school was relocated to the north, where it has been operating with great success ever since.

Her involvement in the Union of Catholic Schools kept her alert so as to better anticipate the future. This is how she became the director of Saint Joseph's School for over 30 years and serving as the Provincial of Greece-Cyprus. She worked tirelessly, planning for the future of the region and the sisters.

As companions and sisters, we all held her in great esteem, and even though at times the strength of her personality seemed stern and demanding, we respected her, loved her, and accompanied her until the day of her final calling.

Sister Alberta Stephanou

Sr Alberta Stephanou



## SISTER THÉRÈSE RIGAUD (1928-2024)

**Died in Marseille (France), on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

Sr Thérèse was born in St Amancet, a small town in the southern part of the Tarn region. At the age of 9, she lost her mother, and later her father remarried. She then had the joy of having a little sister whom she always loved very much.

In her village, she taught catechism and frequented the Abbey of En-Calcat. At the age of 26, she left family and friends to answer the call she perceived, to give her life for God and others.

It is at La Capelette, in Marseille, that she undergoes her formation to enter the missionary congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition. She pronounces her first vows there in 1956.

She earns her nursing diploma; a profession she will practice all her life. Her first experiences are at the Emilie de Vialar Clinic in Lyon. She spends several years in a community in St Brieuc where she works as a home nurse. Families loved her dearly, and she made true friends.



Sent afterwards to Gaillac, she spends nearly 20 years there, initially at the hospice of the town, which mostly accommodated the poorest. The Sisters were in charge there, and despite, or rather alongside, the rather challenging working conditions, Sister Thérèse and the other Sisters devoted their time and hearts to all the people who knew how to express their joy to them.

When the hospice was closed for renovations, Sister Thérèse joined the hospital of the town. Her long and final stage would be Marseille, starting in 1990, at Maison Ste Émilie, built as a retirement home for the Sisters and gradually for other elderly individuals. She practiced her beloved profession there for as long as her health allowed.

For several years, she suffered from rheumatism, arthritis, and had increasing difficulty walking. She struggled to accept "doing nothing anymore" and asked Jesus to call her. He came on the morning of March 10<sup>th</sup>. Even though we knew she was sick and weakened, her sudden departure deeply shook us.

We remember her as a woman of integrity, sound judgment, knowing how to take responsibility and was faithful to everything entrusted to her. She had a big heart, although sometimes appearing gruff! She loved nature, good meals, cats, and flowers!!!

In recent months, her fatigue completely prevented her from controlling herself, and she became impatient quickly. But today, we forget all of that to only keep her smiling face and give thanks to the Lord for everything she experienced during her long life.

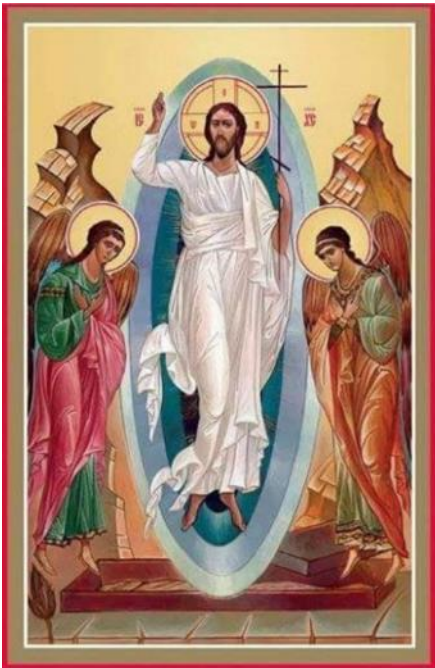
May she rest in peace, and may Mary, whom she prayed to a lot, open her arms to her.



The Sisters of her community  
14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

*Sr. Martha Muralis (Martita) Latin America*  
*Died in San Juan Sacatepequez (Guatemala),*  
*on the 13th March 2024.*

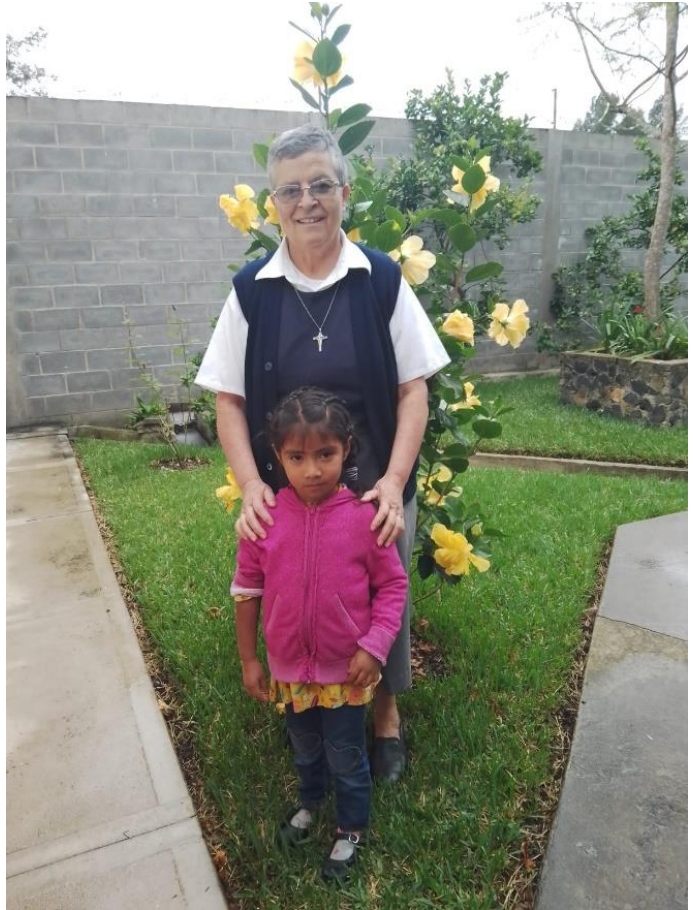
**“I am the resurrection and the life, no one can come to the Father except through me”.** John 11,25.14,6



We are grateful to the God of life, the God of the poor, and the vocation of Sister Martita. The women whom she loved so much referred to her as "the smile of God among us". It was for these women that she gave her life in every way, by a closeness and gestures which manifested the mercy and compassion of Jesus towards us. *She waited for us, forgave us and cared for us* (words of the women of San Jeronimo)

Her smile, her testimony of life was shown by her concern that women would have a plate of food for their children. No one would ever lack the necessary food, is one of the greatest gifts that she has left us. With her joy she spread the joy of following Jesus, the fullness of a life dedicated to serving others and a love that becomes life, which in turn becomes solidarity.





Thank you, Sister Martita, for the years we shared with you. Today in the company of St Emilie and our sisters, who have preceded us on the journey, you are surely already enjoying the presence of the One whom you loved so much.

We will always remember her with love and gratitude.

Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition  
Province of Latin America



*Sr. Marion O'Neil*  
*Died on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in Bowdon, England.*



*Obituary at the funeral of Sr. Marion in England*

After her Novitiate in France, Sr Marion returned to England where she trained as a Nurse in preparation for her mission. Having spent a few years in our hospitals in Manchester and Sligo she was chosen, with two others sisters (all nurses) to administer a projected new hospital in a small Peruvian town some 200 miles from Lima. But prior to joining this project there was the small matter of the Spanish language. However, this was probably

facilitated by the fact that all three were already fluent in French. Once this hospital was firmly established, the sisters passed the administration to others, as they themselves had become aware of other more pressing needs among the local population: home maternity services, childcare and nutrition, youth work. Etc.. Sister Marion's particular interest was in the creation and promotion of local women's groups, particularly in the shanty towns – her aim being to give these women a sense of their own worth and dignity as they discovered in themselves gifts and strengths that they were unaware of.

Sr Marion spent about 35 years in Peru and since her return she has always maintained a keen interest in the mission there – which continues today through the younger Peruvian sisters of the Congregation. Sr Marion had the great joy on returning to Lima for a visit in recent years, and was thus able to renew her friendship with some of the ladies she had worked with. Moreover, it was a great joy for her to see that the work she began continues today through the dedication of the present sisters. On learning of the onset of Sr Marion's final illness, the group immediately began a prayer vigil which was still ongoing at the very moment of her death.

May all our loved one's rest in peace.

Community of Bowdon, England



**“How blessed are the poor in spirit, the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God.”**

**St. Matthew 5; 3,8**

On February 19th, 1969, three missionary sisters from the Province of England arrived in Peru, in the north of the country, in Negritos. The Sisters were, Marion O’Neill, Sheila McCourt and Brenda Breen. These three sisters began their mission as nurses in the Saint Joseph Hospital in Negritos. They did not speak Spanish well, but for them the language was not a problem. They overcame it little by little whilst carrying out a beautiful mission, above all with the poorest. Sr Marion’s testimony of dedication in the ‘various works of charity’ expressed her passion for the Kingdom of God.

Since their arrival in our country I, Nimia Medina, shared many things with them. Being with them led me to discover my vocation and to respond to God's call in our Congregation of Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition.

I thank God for the life of Sister Marianita (Marion O’Neill), who gave herself totally to our people. Her sensitivity, solidarity and humanity towards the poorest and the helpless was one of her special characteristics. We will keep that memory in our hearts.

With great affection we called you “Marianita”. We feel your return to the Father, and are sure that you will intercede for us and for all our people, because your gaze was always attentive to the suffering of our people.

We all say THANK YOU MARIANITA.

**Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition  
Province of Latin America**







*Sister. Camillus TIGHE*

Born on: 21<sup>st</sup> -August 1936 -London

Died on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 in Bowdon,  
England

*Thank you for all your  
loving service and  
dedication.*

*Rest in Peace dear Sr.  
Camillus.*

*“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”*

*John 11:25-26*



*Sister Emília MARCHIONNI*  
*Died on April 8, 2024,*  
*in Cavallasca, Italy,*



I have known Sister Emilia Marchionni since my childhood, and I have been inspired by her example of life

When Pope Francis spoke about "the saints next door," I thought Sister Emilia was one of them, not for what she did, but for who she was and what she lived. She was always so absorbed in God that she seemed distracted. She prayed a lot, and from time to time, we would hear her murmuring ejaculatory prayers.

She loved the Madonna, and the rosary beads were always in her hands, so I'm not surprised that the Virgin came to take her on the Feast of the Annunciation.

She also loved Saint Emily very much, as she was truly her daughter. She knew her thoughts well, which she could repeat perfectly by heart.

In Prato, she created the group of the "Friends of Saint Emily," which still exists today.

I never heard her criticize or complain about anyone, and when we criticized, she would excuse them.

She was always ready to help us whenever we asked her for something. In recent years, illness had reduced her body, like that of Jesus, to an "Ecce Homo," and I thought that the Lord had certainly kept her like this for a long time, to associate her with His Work of Salvation.

Thank you, Lord, for giving us Sister Emilia... And you, Sister Emilia, pray for us.

*Sister Fausta Prosperi*





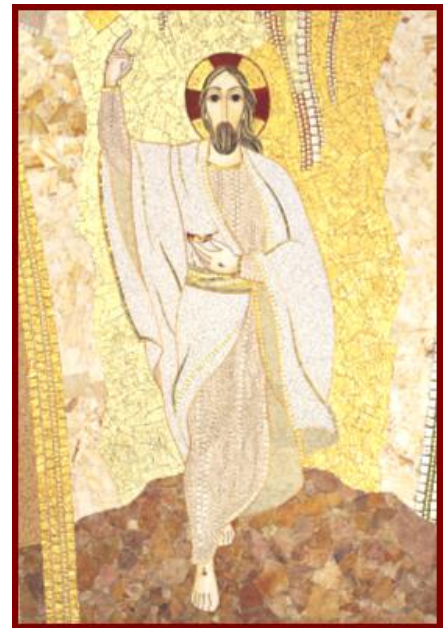
## Sister Bassi Erminia

Born on 19th January 1940 in Carlazzo, Italy  
Died on 24th April 2024 at Cavalasca, Italy.

Thank you, Sister Erminia, for your faithful response to the call of the Lord Jesus in our midst in the family of Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition. We remember the openness of your heart that led you to contemplation and Adoration of Him and the simple and beautiful things that surrounded us, such as the closeness to the Nature, the flowers, the beauty of the heart and life of each brother and sister whom you served with love, through gestures of care and tenderness.

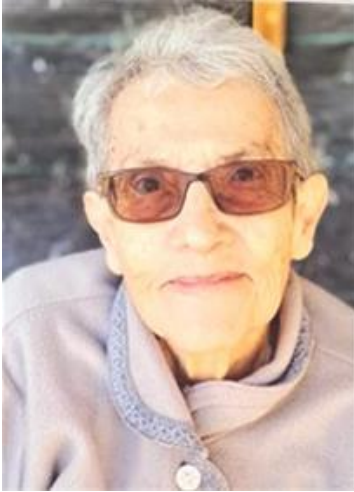
Thank you for these last days you lived in Cavallasca full of suffering and sorrow, thank you for praying with us with your gaze constantly turned to the Crucifix, invoking Mary every day and our Saints Joseph and St. Emilie.

We see them welcome you in Heaven.



The Community of Cavalasca,





*In the loving memory of  
Sr Zina Schaker*

*“Where I am they also may be with me “*

*Jn 17 : 24*

Sr. Zina was born in 1938 in Egypt. She had a brother and a sister. Her family moved from Egypt to Israel and settled in Jaffa. She joined our school, which welcomed both Arab and Jewish students.

At the school, she met Sr. Edward, who was very friendly with her. She was moved by Christianity and was soon baptized. She discovered her vocation in religious life shortly after. She entered as a postulant in Marseille in 1964, then took her first vows in 1966. She made her final profession in 1971.

She was very intelligent. She studied theology at the Sorbonne in Paris, then completed her doctorate in Lyon. She had a great love for St. Emily de Vialar, our foundress. Throughout her life, she gave many sessions about St. Emily, her spirituality, charism, writings, and spiritual works. She also led tours in France and the Holy Land after taking a course to become a tour guide.

After some time on her mission at the Foyer, she was asked by the Generalate to work in the archives in Paris.

In 2020, she returned from Paris and settled here in Jerusalem. We know her as a very intelligent, humorous, and humble person. Once she started talking about St. Emilie, she could never stop. She was very passionate about her.

We would like to thank God for Sr. Zina, our beloved sister, who loved the congregation and was a sister to all who knew her.

Sr. Valentina Sala



Let us join the universal church in praying for the success of the Synod 2024, and join Pope Francis in making the Church walk together towards being a Missionary Church.

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.

Amen.



