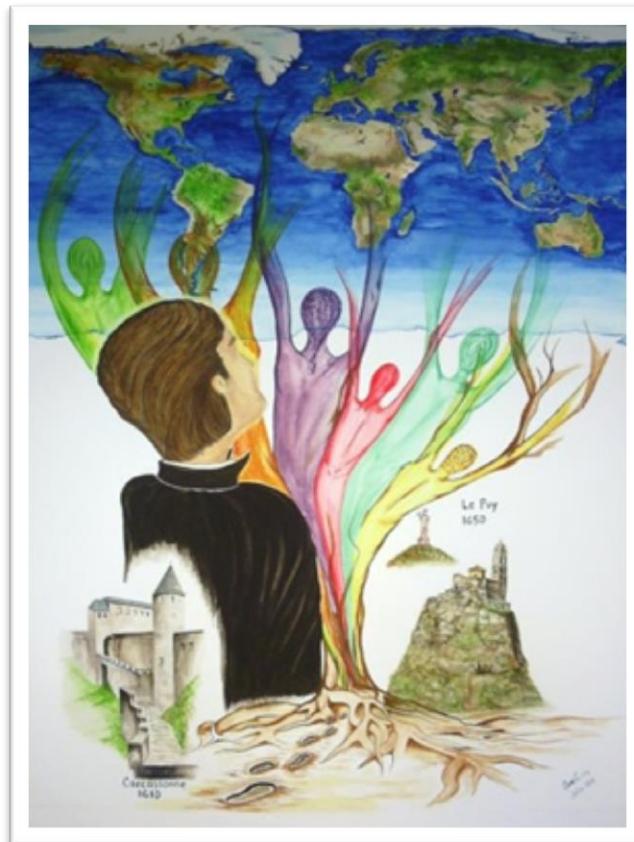


**DECEMBER 2020**



*That life may flow...*

*Pour que la vie circule...*



*Para que la vida circule...*

Congregation Website : <http://www.stjosephlyon.org>

## **"AND NOW, GENERATE ANOTHER WORLD? A SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITY!"**

It's the title of a conference given by Bruno Regent, SJ, at the end of the year and as we are about to welcome the New Year.

He wrote: "Another world is not a perfect world... we have to learn to see today's world with the eyes of God who has declared it good..." (Gn.1)

Many people and nations are waiting for another world after this difficult year. But it will not happen magically! We are beginning to understand that next year will still require a lot of patience, a lot of lifestyle changes, and a lot of imagination to create a world where every person can be recognized.

During a Zoom meeting organized by the UISG in Rome, Fr. John Dardic, SJ wrote: "Our context today is a growing narrative of divisions, many ideologies, violence, and wars that have oppressed people instead of liberating them. And yet we live in a world full of care, love, and tenderness.

Our call to prophecy is born in this varied and difficult context. Our spirituality and faith must be oriented towards liberation. Hope exists and we must seek it and build a new scenario. There is a call, a call to change, and a call to move from competition to care. The mission is loving care for everyone, especially the poor."

Yes, our humanity is suffering: misery and contempt must be changed. We must fight 'human nature's enemy,' the enemy within ourselves. No political or technical system will save us, but an inventive faith that finds ways. It is this world that is entrusted to us and it is here that God invites us to build relationships. We must not be dreaming of another world, there is no need to look for any external means: it is the human person's heart that must be changed. 'The problems of our times come from a lack of love,' writes Thomas Merton.

At this time when we celebrate the coming of Christ to share our humanity, let us welcome within us some of Pope Francis' words (*Fratelli tutti* N°277):

« We Christians are very much aware that "if the music of the Gospel ceases to resonate in our very being, we will lose the joy born of compassion, the tender love born of trust, the capacity for reconciliation that has its source in our knowledge that we have been forgiven and sent forth. If the music of the Gospel ceases to sound in our homes, our public squares, our workplaces, our political and financial life, then we will no longer hear the strains that challenge us to defend the dignity of every man and woman". Others drink from other sources. For us, the wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. »

May the grace of Christmas renew in us the desire « to sustain hope, to be a sign of unity, to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation » (*Fratelli tutti* N°276) and may it strengthen our mission of communion!

Merry Christmas!



## **'Responding to Life with a Joyful Simplicity': Fr. Médaille's Call and Our Challenge**

In early October the Circle met face-to-face for the first time since January. Our agenda -- to reflect and share on two elements central to our General Chapter Orientation: *our common life together and our missional life with others.* (At the 2017 General Chapter our new governance structure was approved. Along with becoming a *sector* and having one *sector leader* the structure included what we call a Circle: a volunteer group of sisters convened by the leader from time-to-time for support, reflection, and discernment).

Our first sisters used the habits and customs of their times to gather in community and to be about the mission. We picture them around the kitchen hearth making lace while they shared 'the state of the heart'. And then we see them going out in small groups to 'divide the city' in service to and with their neighbors.

We are now fourteen sisters in Maine: seven in residential care at Mt. St. Joseph and seven in small apartments in an area with a population of around 20,000. We are still called to create community life together and to be about the mission, but what does that look like *in a pandemic?*

Many sisters are writing more cards and making more calls than ever before, but how do we 'gather around the hearth' today to share community and pray? Like most of the world, we have turned to technology. Thanks to our sisters' willingness to learn, and the Mount's staff being willing to help, every sister who wants to has been able to take part in a new, weekly, one-hour community gathering via Zoom. At first we'd exchange news, check in on each other, and share our experiences of God and our prayer intentions. Now we are also all reading a book together which explores the deep roots of racism in the US. Sharing on this book will take us until just before Lent, which will be a perfect time to move into exploring how we can take restorative action to dismantle our own and our system's racist structures. Also starting on Founders' Day, Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>, we will begin to have a monthly gathering (with some at the Center, others Zooming in from the Mount) to pray, learn, and reflect as well as enjoy a meal and some social time together.

As for our mission with and to our neighbors, individual sisters have been finding safe ways to reach out to and to support their neighbors. As a community we opened up our St. Joseph Center to groups who share our mission and to programs we might have initiated but which now are led by laity or teams of mostly lay leaders. Over time we have found safe ways to continue meeting: some groups are now meeting via Zoom, others have a limited number of people meeting at the Center with the rest Zooming in via a large TV monitor.

Most of these groups serve those on the periphery: the LGBT community and their loved ones, the family and friends of the incarcerated, agencies who work with trafficked women and girls, a ministry which provides support and healing after abortion, a newly formed non-profit dedicated to serving hot meals to the needy. There is also a dedicated group of local laity who meet weekly to explore each Sunday's Gospel reading.



At the end of their sharing the Circle surprised themselves, I think. Rather than agonizing over what we can no longer do, due to age and health as well as COVID, or feeling an anxious need to put things on the calendar, the body was at - what I'd call - 'attentive peace'. One by one they shared about feeling called to live this moment fully, being attentive to God's constant call, being open to the Spirit's invitation in each encounter etc.

Our common life continues, and the mission continues! We are emboldened by Fr. Medaille's words, '*Respond to life with a joyful simplicity and with a sense of contentment in service. Needless worrying and complexifying solves nothing anyway.*' (Maxim 71, adapted from Love's Design by Marcia Allen, CSJ)

**Sr. Judy Donovan,  
Maine Sector**

## **JOYFUL JOURNEY WITH THE DARING SPIRIT OF FR. MÉDAILLE**

**"Life becomes meaningful when we journey with the poor and the suffering.  
Let us open our hearts so that we become a ray of hope to the least in the society."**

I am ever grateful to our entire SJL family, the leaders of St Joseph Province and my sisters at Anugraha community for giving me the opportunity and entrusting the great mission to journey with the Migrants for the past 18 months to work in collaboration with the Jesuit Chennai Province at Chennai, Tamil Nadu, through the organization Jesuit Refugee Service.

First and foremost, I am indebted to the providence of God and the unfailing love of Fr. Médaille, SJ and Mother St. John Fontbonne. I can see the visible values in this mission, orienting our service for refugees with the General Chapter Orientation" **Go to the Peripheries, not only in our mission but in the whole of our lives, with courage and passion."**

**HOLISTIC FORMATION... and Care for the Soul... (Pastoral Care)** I work for the education of children, empowerment of women, legal assistance, getting entitlements, health care and rights of migrants who live in the construction sites, brick lines and who work in the companies for the daily wages. I journey with them by listening to their stories, providing them counseling, motivating them for just wages and accompanying them in their struggles. I help Catholics to participate in the Holy Eucharist, teach catechism, and guide them to reconcile with one another, especially among the young couples. It makes me realize that I share the joy and peace of the living Christ with the migrants. There are quite many happy, uncertain and difficult moments that I have experienced during this memorable journey. I would like to share some of my experiences.



#### **AN EMPTY HAND WITH A BIG HEART**

***“Being with the poor makes me more authentic, human and enables me to live a Christ centered life”***

Accompanying and Journeying with migrants (inter-state and intra-district) at Chennai, witnessing their struggles in terms of wages, living conditions, work place hazards, poor sanitation, hygiene and exploitation in work places are heart breaking and painful experiences for me. Because most of them live with severe restrictions and live in a small shed, thatched rooms with the minimum: women, children and men all sharing the same place for refreshing themselves. But wherever I could I made arrangements with the officials to build toilets exclusively for migrant women and children. Though the process was tough, God accompanied me and made things possible for the neglected and voiceless in the society.

#### **HEARING THE SILENT CRY OF THE POOR**

On March 22, 2020, eight boys in Chennai at the time of lock down, raped a migrant girl. They beat and tortured her, locked her inside the room, and threatened her life. She tried to escape several times without success. Finally, she escaped but did not want to complain to the police or proceed with the legal process because she feared that they would kill her. Moreover, she was depressed. If her parents discovered her situation, they would reject her and the whole family would commit suicide. I helped her come out of her depression and assured her that we are there for her.

#### **“THE WORLD STANDS IN NEED OF LIBERATION”**

Covid-19 has left my brothers and sisters to be deprived of all the basic necessities. In the name of St Joseph province, I joined with the team of Loyola College for the distribution of dry ration materials for the migrants. **Thanks to Sr. Cecily and the council for contributing one Lakh Rupees from St Joseph province to help 100 migrant families at Thiruvallur and Chennai Districts.**

I was moved to tears seeing the pathetic condition of women and children during lock down. It was a saddening and heartbreaking moment for me when I saw the children without any safety measures, walking barefoot along with their parents with shabby clothes on the red mud cemented body and with dirty long hair. I realized this in brick lines when I wanted to empty my bladder. I could not manage a day but how my sisters of young and old are able to live in this situation?

Throughout this Journey I deeply feel that the Lord chose me as a weak instrument to show my solidarity and feel like one with them. At this juncture I remembered the words of Jesus “**whatsoever you do to the least of my brethren you have done it to me**” (*Mathew 25:40*)

#### HUMAN WITH HUMANE

I have become more human getting into the shoes of the marginalized by keeping the flames of St. Ignatius, Fr. Médaille, SJ and Mother St. John Fontbonne, alive in my heart with the MAGIS spirit (More and More) in the service of the least and the last. I have learnt to balance my mission and community life. I struggled due to language barriers, cultural differences, yet God is my only refuge who gives me hope and confidence to be with the least on the periphery. My journey continues in the spirit of our Founder “**ALWAYS TOWARDS THE MORE**”...

*“If you can’t feed a hundred people,  
Then feed just one” – Mother Teresa...*

I continue my journey by a word of gratitude to God saying “**THANK YOU.**”

Alosiya Adaikkalam, SJL  
St. Joseph Province

#### PROVINCE OF EUROPE

*Some Sisters of the province chose to share their way of meeting their brothers and sisters at the “peripheries” as requested by the third Orientation of the General Chapter.*

Sister Alice Poncet explains:

I have been exposed to immigrants for a long time. Already in my professional work, I had discovered and learned much about their lives. Ties were forged that still remain, which makes me say that every person, whoever he/she is, is a brother/sister.

Today, it is foreigners who come to us from different countries: Iran, Iraq, Cambodia, Senegal, Ukraine, Romania, etc., and for some, carrying a heavy past of suffering.

They must first learn French to insert themselves in a country whose language they do not know. This is how I meet them. It is a great richness for me, through the exchanges among all of them, of different nationalities and customs. Little by little, in spite of the language difficulty, we manage to understand one another.

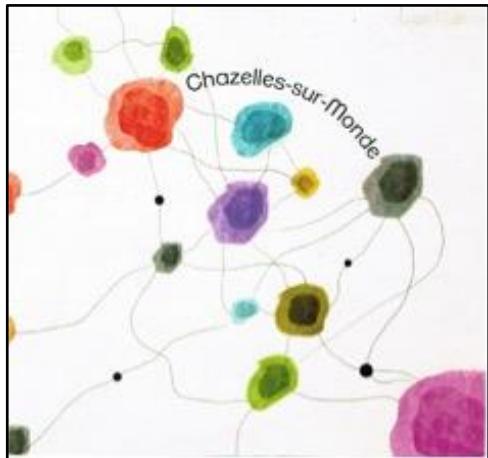
These French courses are given in the framework of the Social Center, which has made it possible to create many projects. Here are some of them:

-Production of a booklet, where each one brought a recipe from her country.

-**Organization of a theater** with a group of young people from the M.J.C. (House of Youth and Culture), based on a meeting with these people from different countries.

- **Production of a C.D: "Chazelles-sur-Monde."** For this, each person chose a song from their country and we sang them together, in each language. The people who participated in this project were radiant with joy in the studio on the day the songs were recorded.

This year, another project was started, but due to "COVID" we could not complete it. We hope it will occur later.



All the means that are deployed in these courses allow these immigrants to create links among themselves, and to feel less isolated, which also helps their integration.

I will conclude by saying that for me it is an opportunity to meet people whom we do not see in our churches, but that life brings together in those "peripheries" of which our Pope Francis speaks to us and which the Chapter Orientations invite us to join.



*Life in the community of "Sablonat" in Bordeaux is very different from that of a small town, but it is the same concern for the "periphery" that animates our sisters.*

**"To go towards the peripheries, both in our missions and in our lives, with courage and passion.**

**Going towards the "peripheries"**... for us, the residents and the staff of the EHPAD... is "**going... on the spot...**" to meet each other, through taking time for sitting and listening, sharing a free smile, the loving gaze, the small gestures of mutual help... Among ourselves, in community, we try to live this same loving gaze on each one and by each one. It is every day that we are invited to this...

**Our prayer:** Here we are Lord, connected to each one in the Congregation, sharing life at the Sablonat with all... Give us to draw our energy from You and from the strength of Your power. (Eph. 6:10)

## **Compassionate Presence for the Life of the World**

We, as a community, return to the source to deepen the prophetic dimension of our spirituality during this pandemic. We keep the suffering world very close to us through our prayers, especially in our daily Eucharistic Adoration. The most compassionate presence to the suffering people is through our selfless service. One of us, Sr. Jolly Abraham, working at Holy Cross Hospital in Ambikapur would like to share with you her personal God experience.

I am profoundly proud to be part of a noble Nursing profession, filled with care, sacrifice, courage, and risk-taking for the sick and suffering, especially during this pandemic. The

experiences are now like a nightmare to me, because a few months ago this could only have been imagined as happening somewhere in the world, but today, it is an everyday reality for me.

On August 18, the first Covid 19 suspected patient came to the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) where I am working. The patient came with a history of shortness of breath and the saturation was below 60%. Since the patient was suspected of being positive for Covid 19, the doctors refused to do the intubation, which is a life-saving measure. As I saw the patient struggling for breath, I took the risk to intubate the patient and put her on the mechanical ventilator. I felt compassion for this patient. Then I experienced inner joy and satisfaction. By evening, the patient's results were positive. Then I experienced fear and anxiety and I was restless but I felt the Lord's providential protection. It was quite unfortunate that the patient passed away within a few days of struggling. It was the first Covid-19 death in this hospital. The ICU nurses and the caretakers were stressed and fearful as they were in contact with this patient. We in ICU use PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) which really causes suffocation, discomfort, and within a few minutes, I sweat as humidity accumulates in the mask causing it harder to breathe.

On 10th October I woke up at 2 am with diarrhea, headache, sore throat, and dry cough. I took deep breaths and gargled with a butadiene solution. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, I was exhausted and on the following day, I went for the Covid test and the report came back as positive. Seven other ICU staff also were diagnosed with Covid 19. We were soon shifted to an isolation room with symptomatic medications. During 18 days of isolation, I experienced a lot of loneliness, fear, and anxiety. I had high temperature and severe sore throat for a few days. I was suffering from stomach pain and vomiting and couldn't take anything orally so I was with IV drip (Intravenous Fluid). As I was in bed, I thought of the people who suffer and die with Covid 19 and I really experienced the fear of death, which kept me awake for a few days. I am grateful to God for his healing touch.



With a grateful heart, I remember all our sisters and friends in the Josephite family especially my community sisters who stood by me during these dark moments of my life even though they couldn't be physically present. Each day, the community supported me by their phone calls and strengthened me through their ardent prayers. The Holy Cross sisters took care of me and I am also grateful to them.

370 years ago, our early sisters who risked their lives in caring for the epidemic outbreak of cholera, became victims of it. Today, we as a community, continue the same mission during this pandemic. It is our time to ignite the light of our Founder and Foundress, to be a compassionate presence for the world.

**Jolly Abraham  
Nava Jeevan Province**

P.S. We just learned that a young Holy Cross Sister from Ambikapur who had been preparing for final profession was tested for Covid 19 but died prior to receiving her results, which were positive. May God, who is all love, welcome her into his kingdom!

## **SHARING ON THE ORIENTATIONS OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2017**

During the year 2019 and this year, as a Province, we have retaken the first five orientations of the General Chapter. We did so with the help of the documents prepared by a commission; we worked on them at the personal and communal levels.

We share with you some expressions that resulted from this work.

### **Return to the sources...**

We feel that our Mission and Charism open us to broad horizons, which allow us to go further. We feel called to deepen our Trinitarian being, based on a new theology and a new spirituality. We keep our communities open to young people and to people who wish to live an experience of faith and mission. At the global level, we have strengthened our roots through international, Latin American and national encounters that have enriched us greatly and identified us as the Family of St. Joseph.

### **Re-read and question our community life...**

In the context of the global crisis that we are experiencing as a result of the pandemic, questioning our community life has been a great opportunity to recapture our entire lives, because we cannot remain the same. Returning to what is our center, to the essence of our choices, helps us to see what is meaningful to our existence and to value the little things of each day, today, the relevance of gestures and expressions of solidarity, starting with those who are closest and going to the wider world. This also helps us to be more aware of our connection with the world, with creation, with the most vulnerable people and with our belonging to the Congregation. In the communities' daily life, we have strengthened community prayer and sharing the state of the heart, and we have made an effort to render life a little more loving. To communicate at the Province level, we have a What's App group. This helps us to know the situation of the communities (health, apostolic services...) and to encourage one other.

### **Go to the periphery...**

Despite our minority reality, we continue to wager living "on the outskirts," to face our fears and our "set-ups," to meet victims where life is threatened. At this time when the ETA and IOTA hurricanes have struck Mexico and Central America, we have been mobilized, especially in Honduras, to offer support in solidarity with the victims in shelters: food, medicine, donations. We also helped the people in Tabasco through donations. Through Zoom, we accompany vulnerable groups and people to encourage them to live in hope.

### **To deepen our mission among the laity, men and women...**

We have launched new experiences, by sharing life, work and the mission with others. These experiences are particularly with the Saint Joseph Family (lay men and women.) We have opened spaces for volunteer work. Through our College, solidarity networks have been set up: in an outlying area of Mexico City (The Villalpando Children), in Tierra Blanca (Migrants), in Xalapa (food aid and in other areas), in Pajapan and before in Soteapan (aid in allowing people to sell their handicrafts), in Honduras (help to the hurricane victims).



Celebrations for the 370th anniversary of our foundation, with the Saint Joseph Family.



In collaboration with the laity, distribution of food aid to San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

**Mexico-Honduras Province**

### **“GO TO THE PERIPHERIES”**

Go to the peripheries, in other words “Go Forth” ....I am sending you to the place where you are needed ...was the call of God for me when I was searching for deeper meaning. I just grabbed it ...I never planned or dreamed of being a missionary but there was a genuine openness to God’s will. This enabled me to accept the invitation and to surrender to His plan. Truly, I am happy to be sent to the peripheries. This theme reminds me of the events that occurred during Christ’s birth. Yes, God reaches to the people on the peripheries. We find God, working through the angels. Yes, shepherds could be referred to as the people on the margin; they were on the periphery.



Shepherds were almost like the outcasts of society where Jesus was born. They lived a rough and difficult life, spending their time in the countryside, sleeping outdoors, protecting their sheep. They weren't very educated, nor wealthy and important people. But they were the first to receive the message that the Son of God had entered human history, had become part of our human family. God first sent this message about Jesus to people on the margins, to the poor, the rejected.

Yes, this was also my experience as I began my mission. I felt these people had been neglected, ignored and had gone through very difficult situations in their lives, but they had deep faith in God. I am privileged to be part of their life journey. I sense that these people need persons to listen to their heartaches, which they experienced during the war and the tsunami. The situation allowed me to be transformed inwardly, to joyfully serve them, especially by listening and conversing with them in a positive manner, and above all, being supportive to them in all their undertakings. Reaching out to people in need was rather easy since they are always around us, but to teach them to climb the next step was a challenge. I was sorry to see that the youth did not value education. It was difficult to motivate them and yet, sowing the seed for education in the hearts of the younger generation through our voluntary service to the High School, Nursery, Elocution classes and oral English class, gives me great joy. From time to time, through the parents' meetings and house visiting, we are able to reach the people.

"Life can only be understood backward, but it must be lived forward." I keep moving forward, continuing my service to the people of God on the peripheries. In every move, I strongly feel God's inspiration and guidance.

**Jayanthy Roselin, Sri Lanka,  
St. Joseph Province**

### **The Ear Apostolate: Listening and Welcoming A Path to the Culture of Encounter**

The introduction to the orientations of the 2017 General Chapter invites us to respond in a relevant way to the challenges of our time and to be witnesses of Hope and Joy for this world. Along the same lines, and in the light of this Chapter, the orientations of our Lebanese Sector urge us to develop the "culture of encounter" within our society full of silent cries and unalterable wounds.

We are going through an extraordinary period, starting with the revolution of October 2019, going through the hard and crushing economic crisis, arriving at the August 4th explosion, etc. This very rapid, almost radical socio-economic change has even influenced our apostolate and reoriented it towards new places and new ways of acting.

It all started with family visits to Beirut. Our goal in visiting the explosion victims was to support and accompany them during this period. The material needs remain profound and numerous. But our mission has shifted towards an apostolate of listening and welcoming, as Pope Francis has already pointed out on several occasions.

We are a group of priests and religious men and women who devote our time, each according to his or her availability, to visit the people in Beirut, to listen to them, to have a moment of sharing, to detect their needs and to discern how to redistribute the gifts we receive. We are in constant contact among ourselves. Quite simply, through a WhatsApp message, we ask each other if anyone is able to respond to a particular need or if are available at a particular time. This allows us to enter a world that really needs life. With confidence we observe each day that this path of encounter is one of miracles and healing. Here are a few examples of our daily experiences:

We visited a 75-year-old woman. She has lived all her life in a small room, sharing the toilets and the kitchen with her 5 neighbors. She lost everything in the explosion and there is absolutely nothing left, not even her room. After the explosion, she found a home in her village within a three-hour drive from Beirut. This woman wakes up at 4 o'clock in the morning to take the bus, arrive to the capital and follow the work in her small room, even begging associations to help her continue the work. The day she lost hope of being able to refurbish her room, we received a phone call asking us to visit her. Hélène, a simple, gentle and joyful woman, has always believed that the Lord will not abandon her. She kept her confidence and was able, thanks to this call, to begin the work to bring back life to her room.

Another call directed us to a house of three women whose physical and psychic health is affected. The explosion further complicated their mental health. Together with a group of young people, we helped to organize their house, put away their things, make this place more livable, even though they will not remain in this state for very long.

A young 24-year-old man welcomed us in a house without walls, windows, and even a door! A complete disaster! This house had really gone to pieces! He had only one desire: to complete the reconstruction as quickly as possible in order to relocate his mother and his father, who suffers from Alzheimer's and has great difficulty adapting to his temporary home.

Colette, a young mother of two children, seriously affected by the explosion, told us what she experienced on D-Day. Her work at the port of Beirut was impacted by the disaster. She does not know why, but on that day she was allowed to leave work earlier than usual (which is very rare). At the time of the explosion, she and her husband did their utmost to ensure that their severely injured child and her brother did not see the consequences of the disaster (the dead and injured in the streets, blood...). A few minutes later, Colette realized that her head was swollen and that she couldn't bear the headache because she had been hit very hard. Her husband took care of their children and encouraged her to go to the hospital as soon as possible, located a 5-minute walk from their house. On the way, she loses consciousness and wakes up, to



her great shock, in the morgue. Colette stops at this point in her story and can no longer continue: her tears flow abundantly! With psychological help, human and spiritual follow-up, she tries, as best she can, to continue her life. We assure her regular visits.

One day we received a phone call from a family who needed blankets to survive the winter. With confidence, I told them not to worry, promising them that I would do everything I could to provide for them. While I was busy looking for the blankets, a woman walked by me and said, "Sister, I know you can help me, I have three blankets for the winter, and I want to give them to a family in need. "Imagine my surprise at that moment! With a heart full of gratitude, I cry out thank you Lord! Another call came a little later in the day, telling us that they needed a refrigerator. The day was not over when we received one and a living room set for the families involved.

In each house, behind every wall, a story awaits us. We begin the visit with a brief sharing of August 4, soon discovering the need for personal accompaniment.

A phone call is supposed to be brief, however the interlocutor at the other end proves to be inexhaustible, sharing about a childhood wound. In addition, I would like to share some quotes that summarize what we hear during our mission:

"Please, can you return? I need to speak. »  
"I felt that the Church has not abandoned us.  
"I lost everything, my job, my home... I thought it was all over, but no, your presence gave me hope! Can you come back? »  
"I'm not asking you for anything, just that you come back for coffee. I need this visit. »  
"Truly, the joy of receiving you softens our unhappiness...»  
"We feel God's presence and His support through your presence...»

I refer to St. John's Gospel: (John 20:30) « Jesus performed many other miracles in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. » The Lord's miracles will never end.

The August 4th explosion was not just an external factor and the damage is not just material. It exposed all the repressed wounds and hidden suffering.

To conclude, we can confirm that our mission has truly been converted into an apostolate of the ear; it invites us not only to listen, but also to welcome a new reality in order to build a culture of encounter, a value that has become a primary need for the life of our world today.

**Raymonda Saadé  
Lebanon Sector**

## **Rooted in Christ, with Compassion and Creativity for the Life of the World with Special Reference to the Pandemic.**

***We are mutually responsible and called anew to return to the source to deepen the mystic and prophetic dimensions of our spirituality and allow ourselves to be seized by the charism.***

The present situation, becoming differently normal all over the world had compelled each one of us to go through a complete or partial lockdown for the past eight months and more. For us the members of St. Joseph community Baikunthpur, this new experience compelled us to fall back to the source of our lives and brought us closer to God and the “dear neighbor” especially those who suffered due to Coronavirus. This was manifested through our different devotions like chain adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary, mercy rosary, sacrifices, and almsgiving. During May, devotion to our Blessed Mother became more real, especially in our helplessness during the pandemic. An inspiration came to erect a statue of her beside our convent so that whoever enters our campus may experience her motherly protection. Along with the sisters our co-workers also irrespective of their religion gladly collected and arranged every stone with much devotion. It is worth mentioning that some of them came forward to share the expenses like the widow’s mite.



*Go to the peripheries, not only in our mission but also in the whole of our lives, with courage and passion.*

During the lockdown, we could not go to the peripheries and look for the needy, but God blessed us with an opportunity to be very close to the migrant laborers who were returning to their home place. For two months our school classrooms were made available for their quarantine with all the amenities free of cost, as they could not afford the paid quarantine. Our school buses were used to reach other migrant workers to their location after a tedious journey by different means. We also could share our food items with the less fortunate in our locality. *Care for our common home, compelled by the urgency for interdependence between human beings, society, the environment, and all of creation.*

- As a result of ecological awareness among ourselves, especially during this lockdown time, the community was trying to go to every corner of our garden and bring certain orderliness and cultivate possible crops. We continue to fight for a plastic-free environment.
- Maximum use of the vegetables from our own garden, and we gladly shared with our neighbors and workers who could not afford to buy them from the market those days.
- Awareness of ecology was diffused among the staff, and as a result, they motivated students to plant saplings in their own garden or the common places. Thus, they celebrated World Environment Day on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June with the theme “Time for Nature.”
- Groundwater is part of the overall water system with precipitation. We channeled the rainwater to feed one of our wells.

We as a community and part of a congregation of the great love of God, continue to live consciously this unique time with complete trust in the Lord, praying that everything may be peaceful in His time.

**St. Joseph Convent, Baikunthpur  
Nava Jeevan Province**

***“Go To The Peripheries Not Only in our Mission  
but in the Whole of our Lives with Courage”***

This Orientation has spoken relentlessly to me while in ‘lockdown’ in our Retirement Home.

I was asked to support in any way I could a dear friend of our Community who was also a special friend to me. We have known each other for over sixty years and we have shared holidays, family tragedies, illness, long absences, meetings, new paths in life. Her family contacted me urgently as she was unhappy, suicidal, about some news she had received. I was allowed to visit and stay with her provided I went into isolation on my return. By profession my friend was a nurse but it is said that nurses do not make good patients. However, when you are alone with someone you trust, love, your heart opens and great depths of you are revealed.

She was diagnosed with an aneurysm which was inoperable and a cyst that was cancerous. She was told the doctors could do nothing.

Alone, our conversations led us into truths, honesty, searchings. She is of no religion but declares herself a basic Christian, but adheres to no particular denomination. Together we spoke about our hopes, how we had developed and how we came to rely on each other’s life experiences.

She shared quite simply about her fear of dying and of dying alone. She wondered if God would have time for her as she gave no time to him in her colourful life. She asked if I would hear her confession and I said ‘let’s make a confession together. We’ll ask God to forgive us both for all the hurt and pain we have inflicted on anyone’. So we talked to God and for the hours I spent with her we laughed, cried and agonised together. She wondered if God really knew her and I was able to say through my Faith that God knew and loved her long before I ever did.

We realised how wonderful friendship is especially realising that a friend is someone who knows all about you and is still your friend. We realised that by friendship God opens our eyes to many of the beauties of this world, particularly when we share thoughts and emotions with reverence and trust.

Since my return to the Retirement Home, I contact this lady every day by using the tablet. She tells me about her day and how she is resigned to accepting what will happen. We always end our conversation with a Prayer and something jolly and I receive a smile and words of confidence, gratitude and love.

And I usually end my day by thanking God and the Congregation for creating an Orientation that tells us... 'live your life with courage and passion'.

**Anne Marie Eden  
Anglo-Irish Sector**

## **Summary of JPIC REPORTS, JULY-SEPTEMBER 2020**

### **EGYPT REGION**

- Participation in the illegal immigration campaign to prevent Egyptians from immigrating abroad (National Council of Women, in Minya.) Two-day seminar on this topic, followed by visits to families to train them on this theme.
- Initiatives to support the Covid-19 victims.
- Creation of employment opportunities for some young people and families to travel to other department that offers work, in cooperation with officials of the 'Business Development Authority.'

### **NAVA JEEVAN PROVINCE (INDIA)**

- Awareness of the Covid-19 pandemic and its risks.
- On-line courses with adequate resources for poor children.
- Formation of adolescents on their role and responsibility in their families and in society.
- Protests and attempts to close liquor stores.
- Legal advice to people whose homes have been demolished due to road construction, as well as to victims of industrial accidents.
- Mediation before the government so that people can obtain citizenship documents.
- Preparation of organic fertilizers.

### **SAINT JOSEPH PROVINCE (INDIA)**

- Through the pandemic, discovery of a simpler and more sustainable lifestyle.
- On World Anti-Trafficking Day, work with a group of 227 people (men and women) to raise awareness of this scourge and create a sense of urgency and understanding.
- Celebration of the Season of Creation, inviting us to consider the integral relationship with the Earth, and ecological, economic, social and political forms of life.
- Praying the Rosary in communities to ask the Virgin Mary's help in renewing nature.

- Participation in the prayer vigil organized by the Jesuits, to ask, together with the indigenous people, for the protection of the three lungs of the Earth: the Amazon, the Congo Basin and the forests and nature of Asia.
- Peaceful demonstration to ask for the release of Father Stand, a Jesuit unjustly imprisoned for defending the most oppressed tribes.
- Demonstration to condemn the rape of a young woman in Uttra Pradesh (India). In 2019, there were around 88 rape cases per day.
- Celebration of the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si:" an invitation to ecological conversion, with the emphasis on the need for the Earth to rest.

## **PROVINCE OF EUROPE**

Those responsible for JPIC sent a letter to all school supervisors asking for a report on how the schools are educating students about ecology. Due to the pandemic, only St. Joseph's School in Libourne responded.

## **LEBANON SECTOR**

The Sisters continue to be close to the people affected by the Beirut explosion: listening, visiting and accompanying them. Purchase various items according to the needs of families and respond to emergencies.

The situation in the country is very dangerous and people's hearts are filled with anguish and sadness.

## **PROVINCE OF MEXICO-HONDURAS**

In Xalapa, Veracruz:

- Support for the Covid-19 victims through the St. Joseph Family Laity of the French College of Pedregal.
- Some families looked at what they had in their homes and offered what was no longer useful to them, and other things, which other people might need.
- Working in collaboration with another religious congregation with the poorest people in the neighborhood.

## **MAINE SECTOR**

13 of the 14 Sisters are part of the 'vulnerable population,' which is why almost all the activities (community, pastoral, JPIC) are done within the house and through Zoom. Here is what they have been doing during these three months to live out their commitment to peace, justice and the Integrity of Creation:

- Parish volunteer work: phone calls and letters to parishioners who live alone.

- The Sisters and Associates reflect as a group on current events and possible actions. Many suggestions for action come from the JPIC initiatives of the CSJs' American Federation and/or LCWR (Leadership Conference of Women Religious) to support or oppose certain initiatives that are related to the poor, women, children, immigrants, etc.
- At the end of May, when George Floyd was murdered by police, they took action in several ways: prayers and readings on racism, participation in local demonstrations, letters to local legislators and law enforcement officials urging them to examine their practices, reading a book on the roots of racism in the United States. Through a group of parishioners, they have contacted all the people who attend their Center, to find each other via Zoom. Help for people who do not know how to use Zoom. Became aware of the great "digital inequality" that exists.
- Support with various initiatives for a new ' Restaurant of the Heart.'

**We entrust our dear deceased Sisters to the Lord and we give thanks for their testimony and their service of the Kingdom.**

**"My sheep listens to my voice and I know them, and they come after me.  
And I give them Eternal Life ". Jn 10, 27- 28**

**September - December 2020**

S. No	Name		Place	Age	Date
1	VERDENNE	Marie Magdeleine	Vernaison, France	92	20. 09.2020
2	FERRIE	Marguerite Marie	Vernaison, France	106	22.09.2020
3	SAÏD	Jacqueline	Deir-El-Harf, Liban	81	28.09.2020
4	FOUGERAT	Claire Elisabeth	Vernaison, France	91	18.10.2020
5	GUYOT	Henriette	Francheville, France	89	20.10.2020

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

**AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

