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# SAGESSE INTERNATIONALE



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# BE MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD'S LOVING PRESENCE IN THE WORLD

Editorial Sr Rani Kurian

Soon we will start the many preparations for the Christmas celebration. However, the time of Advent invites us to journey towards Christmas by preparing our heart and mind to welcome *the God among us and within us*.

## **Do not be afraid**

Eternal Wisdom, desiring to show the unconditional love of God, became human and became one among us. A humble beginning in simplicity, uncertainty, suffering and insecurity. A manifestation of God's love and joy in total vulnerability, non-welcome and poverty.

In a world marked by sufferings, violence, forced migration, ecological crises etc., as Daughters of Wisdom desiring to witness to the Reign of God, welcoming **"God hidden in our neighbor"** once again we are invited to turn to God to hear him saying **"Do not be afraid"**. Yes, **"do not be afraid"** to open our hearts to welcome the Spirit of God who fills us with God's love and compassion. In the Gospel, we see that God's presence is often announced with an invitation to let go of the fear within, to respond to the call of God leading to inner transformation and change. At the invitation of Pope Francis, we have begun a journey towards a Synodal church of communion, participation and mission. In this walking together in a shared search for Christ in Scripture, prayer and common life as Daughters of Wisdom, let us begin a new

journey in faith to contribute to the work of creative Wisdom. RL-8---

## **God with us**

God continues to manifest his loving presence in the present reality of the World. But as Richard Rohr writes "we're almost always somewhere else. We are either reprocessing the past or worrying about the future. If we watch our mind, it doesn't think many original thoughts. We just keep thinking in the same problematic ways that our minds love to operate."

**Don't forget to make space in your life to recognize the richness of your basic nature**, to see the purity of your being and let its innate qualities of love, compassion, and wisdom naturally emerge. Nurture this recognition as you would a small seedling. Allow it to grow and flourish. . . "[1]

Unless we open our hearts and mind to see the present reality captivated by the love of God we will miss to respond to it and to be a loving presence to our Brothers and Sisters in need.

## **Joy to the world**

May the celebration Christmas fill us with the joy of once again offering the total gift of ourselves to God by letting Incarnate Wisdom grow within us, in order to be the Good News of love and compassion for humanity whom God loved so much.

## AN ECUMENICAL GROUP OF FRIENDS OF WISDOM IN GBI

Five Friends of Wisdom of G.B.I give their testimony.

### **Andrea Wooldridge :**

A leaflet at Wisdom House, Romsey caught my eye with the question: **“Our journey in life, is it a Wisdom journey?”**, those interested in exploring that question with some of the Daughters of Wisdom were invited to a meeting. In the meantime, of course, the global pandemic intervened and meeting in person with our fellow pilgrims was no longer possible but, undaunted, the Sisters quickly engaged with **modern communications technology** and our first meeting of Stage 1 of the programme took place via Zoom on 20th July 2020. Since then, a small but committed group has continued to meet virtually each month, growing in friendship and deepening our understanding of the power of love and wisdom, as exemplified especially by the lives of Fr. de Montfort and Marie Louise Trichet.

***For me, it has been a journey of self-discovery, sometimes painful but always valuable,***

and the consolidation of some truths that were always there on the periphery of my thinking but are gradually moving onto the central ground of my being – that is very much work in progress but it is never too late and there will be no turning back.

### **Fiona Jenvey:**

Belonging to the Friends of Wisdom has been an organic outgrowth of my work as Manager of Wisdom Centre and an expression of a bigger spiritual journey. About 10 years ago in Romsey, Louis-Marie de Montfort’s statue was visible by the clear night sky. At the gates I saw the sign ‘Daughters of Wisdom.’ I was unaware of the presence of religious sisters in Romsey, I came back the next day and discovered the labyrinth. On that day ten years ago, little did I know that I was about to meet ‘Wisdom at the Crossroads’. My life and work was in need of a miracle and that the labyrinth would become my daily meditation.

***Around a year later, I did receive a miracle which gave me my Christian faith,***



although I recognize now that Wisdom had been calling me for a long time, (Proverbs 1:20-33).

Quiet days at Wisdom House became place of discernment, kindling interest which led me to complete an MA in Christian Spirituality with focus on contemporary expressions of Monasticism a journey which encouraged me take steps on a journey towards a vocation, Ordained (Anglican), Manager of Wisdom Centre and now Friend of Wisdom, and part of the Friends of wisdom community.

***I feel I have a specific calling as a Friend of Wisdom to make Wisdom known, to include and welcome those on the margins and to reach out to the unchurched.***



***Pat Angell :***

I work at Wisdom Centre as catering officer. My experience as A Friend of Wisdom has been challenging but rewarding. I have enjoyed learning what

Wisdom Spirituality means and I hope this will reflect in my everyday life. I am doing this through being a Friend of Wisdom, through our meetings, learning about St Louis De Montfort and Marie Louise Trichet. I will do my best to support and help The Daughters of Wisdom whenever I can.

***Janet Sayers :***

I was aware I had little sense of purpose in life and was spiritually floundering. During the time we have been meeting ***the group has become an increasingly important part of my life.***

The framework of the programme, the individual course work, and the group sharing has spiritually nourished me. Also I have gained some understanding of Wisdom spirituality, learnt about the lives of St Louis Marie, Marie Louise and the Daughters of Wisdom of which previously I had little knowledge. I have recognised that Wisdom's values of inclusivity, care of creation, gentleness, justice and hospitality are values to aim for in my own life.

The journey has been exciting, interesting, confirming and ***the group full of warmth, love, compassion and understanding.***

I enjoy being part of the group, spiritually it is enriching my life and I feel more nourished and rooted. I feel I have companions on the journey. There has been considerable sharing in the group and through this, the programme work, bible reading and prayer I am gaining deeper understanding of 'self' and the importance of listening to God's word.

**Krissie and John Tallack :**

Over ten years ago, my husband and I strolled round the garden of Wisdom House Romsey

***I was delighted to see a labyrinth and prayerfully walked the meditative path.***

Then about five years ago, I attended Quiet Days and felt completely at home with **the inclusiveness and warmth of the welcome and hospitality.** By this time my loving wise husband now 92 years is bearing his six physical and neurological diseases with a calm dignity.

The whole Wisdom Community enfolded my husband in love, warmth and acceptance, truly valuing him as a special being with gifts of his own to share. That meant the world to me. It was like returning to our travels where we were embraced by the love of complete strangers from differing cultures.

***It also gave us a deeply meaningful opportunity to refocus on our spiritual lives and continue on our journey of inner enrichment and transformation by the love of Jesus Christ, Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom.***

This time, not as a team of two, but as part of an International Community of Friends of Wisdom, sharing their way of life, thoughts and inspirations, worries and fears, eating, praying, singing, laughing, crying and grieving with them all, while being enriched by Wisdom every step of the way....



**Karen Peters :**

Having worked with the Daughters of Wisdom for fifteen years,

***I feel I have become a part of their family, sharing in their work and ministries.***

There have been many changes over the years and each new experience has deepened my work relationships and personal friendships with so many of the Sisters.

To join the newly formed **Friends of Wisdom in GBI** seemed a natural step for me and an opportunity to expand my knowledge of the lives of Louis Marie and Marie Louise. It also provides me with the opportunity to join with others on the journey alongside the Sisters.

***Being part of whole Daughters of Wisdom family has become a significantly meaningful and fulfilling part of my life.***

## **THANK YOU SISTER MARIE-CLÉLIE**

Sr Jeannelle Daigle, Clamart, France

***"Love is made of a thousand things. Love is made of a thousand nothings, A thousand words, a thousand gestures. Love is made of a thousand loves."***

From August 2018 to July 2021 Sr. Marie-Clélie gave generously of herself to provide several services within the formative community at the International Francophone Novitiate in Clamart, France.

Joyfully, while humming, she prepared the meals while being **attentive to the needs of each one**. She knew how to prepare particular menus that are appreciated at the time of the multiple feasts celebrated together: birthdays, Christmas, founders' day, etc. To please the novices, she adapted herself to the variety of cultures by cooking dishes agreeable to the tastes of Congolese, Malagasy, Haitian and French women. To achieve this feat, she often shopped at L'Exotique grocery store... a delicacy of her loving heart.

In addition to the meal service, she was in charge of the linens : laundry, ironing, sewing as well as preparing the rooms for the visitors.

***She also lent her beautiful and rich voice during the Eucharistic celebrations by preparing and singing the hymns. She created friendships with the parishioners whom she knew how to call upon for the readings and even to initiate the psalmody of the psalms.***

As the decision to close the Novitiate was taken, the last months in Clamart were intense in that she worked very hard to prepare the move and especially to prepare the containers for Congo, Haiti and Madagascar. **Bravo and thank you Sr. Marie-Clélie for the enormous work accomplished!**

Through your humble and discreet service, through your availability lived daily, through your joy of humming melodies while working, we have seen the love of Wisdom at work... Yes, we have seen it in Sr Marie-Clélie, and we affirm it: Love is made of a thousand things... a thousand gestures, a thousand words, a thousand loves.

***Merci, Mèsi ampil , Melesi mingi, Misaotra, GraciasSr Marie-Clélie***



Sr Marie-Clélie and Sr Rani, Superior General

## **BLESSING OF A PLAQUE TO COMMEMORATE A MIRACLE IN G.B.I**

**Sr. Mary Turner - G.B.I**

Sr Gerard was born in 1899. When she was 18 years old Sr Gerard became a convert to Catholicism and 5 years later sought admission to the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom. Whilst in the novitiate in France she became seriously ill with intestinal pains and immediately after her religious profession she came to Romsey in 1924. The following year she had surgery in Romsey hospital to remove a tumour and was told she had two years to live.

Sr Gerard was in constant pain, her tuberculosis had spread and she lost the use of a finger. In early 1927 it was generally accepted that her death was imminent. On April 8th 1927 in her own words: "It was just after I made my final vows, the sisters had gone to Benediction in the chapel and Mother Provincial said she would just go down for the blessing.



Sr. Marie-Clélie presents the good meal she prepared for a party at the novitiate

As she opened the door, it seemed to let in a cloud of incense. It seemed to shine and the form of Our Lady was in the midst. I heard her distinctly say, “**Child, what is it to be?**” Something made me turn and there by my bed, outside the cloud, was the figure of Fr de Montfort with his hand raised. I said “**Father, give me your blessing**”. I closed my eyes and blessed myself with his relic. On opening my eyes, I saw nothing except the mist which seemed to be clearing. The pain had gone and the bandages fell from me as I jumped on the bed. The useless finger was bending, clasping the relic

***Sr Gerard was fully cured and 6 years later went on to work in Malawi for 40 years. She died in Chorley, England in 1986, 59 years after her miracle.***

The miracle of Sr Gerard was used for the canonisation of Fr de Montfort in 1947.

***The statue of Montfort outside Abbey House in Romsey was gifted by the father of Sr Gerard in thanksgiving for her cure.***

On 20th July 2021 a plaque commemorating the miracle was inaugurated, in front of the statue, to inform the many visitors, who come to our gardens, about the miracle.





## IN THANKSGIVING TO SR. VIMALA GNANAPRAKASAM

The newly professed sisters of Asia-Oceania

July 13, 2020 the group of second year novices arrived in the International Novitiate house in the Philippines. Joining our voices with our mother Mary who sang **"my soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior"** We praise the Lord Jesus Wisdom. For all His goodness. We thank Him in a special way for the presence of Sr Vimala who welcomed us at Novitiate house.

***We journeyed with Sr. Vimala, for the first year of our novitiate time.***

As a formator, she helped us to be transformed and changed to become a better person. It was a beautiful and meaningful journey that we have had with her. She was a gift for us who colored our journey with her wisdom, love and support. **We acknowledge her courage, kindness and patience to live and guide us in the midst of the pandemic**, where we had the difficulty to attend the classes. She tried her best to make everything possible for us to have zoom classes including online masses. We were happy because we did not miss our formation program. We are so grateful to God for giving us the opportunity to meet her in our journey.

We the novices of 2020-2021 from the Delegation of Asia-Oceania would like to thank our dear Sr. Vimala for her generous availability in the mission

that was entrusted to her as our novice mistress at the International Novitiate. May God continue to bless her in her new mission and grant her all the graces that she needs in her journey.

***We wish a good health and all the best"***

***"LIBEROS, Women as free as the clouds that sail high above the earth, filled with the dew of heaven and moving without hindrance according to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."***

With the grateful heart, we thank the Lord for the gift of Sr. Vimala in our lives especially in our formation for one year. We are so grateful for having her as a guide as well as a companion on the journey. **Being with her we experienced joys, laughter and we share our lives together.** Our experiences with her have helped us to be strong and to know who we are in our vocation as Daughters of Wisdom.

She is a woman of courage and love to guide the young ones who are looking for the meaning in their lives.



**She was always there to company us whenever we need her,** and always encouraged us to have the spirit of openness in order to grow and to be courageous woman. She really gives herself to the mission that God has entrusted to her.

We pray that “May God continue to bless her and give her all the graces that she needs in her life as she continues to live the mission of God in the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom. **May she be the bearer of God’s love to those who will meet her wherever she will be.**



## MISSIONARY CROSSROADS

### In collaboration with the Kent Community - Canada

Let's discover the mission at this intersection that is the Côte-des-Neiges neighborhood.

The Côte-des-Neiges neighborhood is the multicultural area in Montreal. It includes at least **75 ethnic groups and 120 different languages are spoken**. The following statement from the borough's documents appeals to all humanitarian groups dedicated to the status of this district.

"The impression of social injustice is omnipresent and must lead us to reflect and above all to act on what we wish to be collectively as a society: a society that closes its eyes to the fact that a part of its population lives in humanly unacceptable conditions or a society that will organize itself to eliminate the exclusion and the idleness that it generates?" Wasn't an answer needed...discreetly, the Daughters of Wisdom bring theirs through a daily collaboration.

Where is this intersection? You won't find it on the map, even the map of Montreal, because it's only known to the less fortunate and those responsible for helping people to move. In the Côte-des-Neiges district of Montreal, Quebec, a house similar to the others hides a basement full of clothes and miscellaneous objects. A real mess awaits you. What comes in bulk will have a special place at some point so

that similar items come together. We receive non-perishable food, many different breads in tote bags. For a better sanitary presentation, we have to wrap them.

***Our mission is possible thanks to the connections we have established with various organizations in the neighbourhood.***

Events speak for themselves, they say. So it was for the Kent Avenue community. About 12 to 15 years ago, a lady asked Sister Doris to become a member of a committee of "Entraide missionnaire" and invite her to get involved with immigrant families in the Côte-des-Neiges neighbourhood. If one of us gets involved, the community is considered a stakeholder in the project. For the immigrants, this project becomes a welcome, a patient listening especially during phone calls and orientation to services for their different needs. **Their language not being ours, the understanding on both sides is often painful, difficult.**

The work even extends beyond the borders of Haiti, Burkina Faso and Congo, as some people seek to help their fellow human beings. Shipments are reserved for them. These intermediaries take care of collecting and forwarding them.

For some people, immigrants can become a clientele to whom we offer services. This is not our situation. The following event will prove it.

For a better understanding, let's first set up the situation of this woman of African origin. She gives birth to a 6th child. The latter is recognized as having Down's syndrome by medical science. The family and the people of her village want to make the mother and the child disappear because they accuse them of being possessed by some evil spirit.

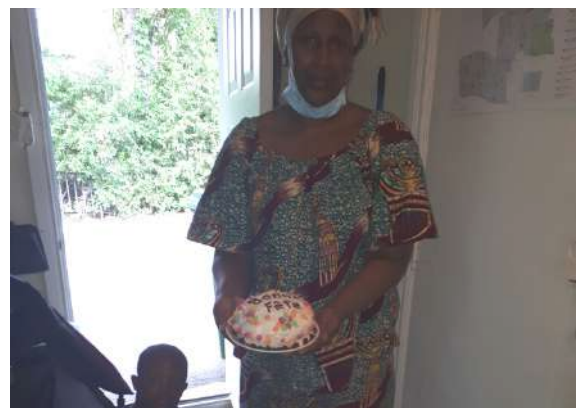
***The mother hides with her child for a few months and manages to escape to Canada.***

At the Elliot Trudeau airport in Montreal, the child was in such a poor condition that he was sent directly to the children's hospital. The mother and her child will stay there for at least 3 months.

One day, finally, she hears about our work! She came to see us. From that moment on, "L'entraide missionnaire" of the district, through the intermediary of our sister, Sr. Doris, grants her a voucher for food. However, she has to pay for



housing and manage the other expenses that the government subsidies give her. Currently, **the mother often has to go to the hospital for this child whose** situation is gradually improving. The Community of 5 Daughters of Wisdom knows the condition of the mother and her child. On her birthday, the community reserves a nice surprise for the mother in the basement of the house: a home-made cake. The four Sisters, present at the house that day, sing her the "appropriate Happy Birthday". **She is 42 years old and receives for the first time in her life, she says, a birthday cake.**



For her, it was a pleasant moment of forgetfulness of her sufferings. As for us, what a consolation and support! It was a new impetus in the pursuit of our mission here in the neighborhood where the insalubrity of the housing and the poverty of the income are recognized.



***Among Montreal's neighbourhoods, Côte-des-Neiges ranks first in terms of the number of people who are not Canadian citizens, with 26,875 people, or 28% of the total population, compared to 13% on the island of Montreal. 72% of the population (69,275 people) are Canadian citizens, compared to 87% in Montreal and 94% in Canada. According to a steering and planning committee made up of 9 members (Portrait in 2017)***

Sisters Doris Rodier, Hélène Laverdure, Annie Langlois, Céline St-Pierre and Marie-Rose Turcotte, Fdls

## **CONCERT: HANDEL'S MESSIAH**

Sr Marie-Laure Paillet, France

***« Wonderful counsellor, the mighty God ! The ever lasting Father The Prince of Peace »***

With what fiery force these words of the prophet Isaiah resounded within the walls of the Châtelet theater in Paris on Sunday, November 14!

***"Love Without Borders!"***

Volunteers in the service of a noble cause: research on schizophrenia and autism, in partnership with the Federation for Brain Research, to which all contributions are donated.

All? **850** choristers, **4** soloists, **50** professional musicians from **13** countries interpreting Handel's Messiah, under the baton of Gildas Harnois (titular organist of the cathedral of Orléans).

What a perfectly successful challenge '**Venite Cantemus**' has taken up for the 5th time: 1 concert, 1 rehearsal in the service of the Messiah!

Isn't also the human challenge of our Congregation to combine all our talents in the service of the Messiah?

A musical challenge: certainly! The joy of interpreting the excellence of this unique work.

A singular spiritual adventure, rare and surprising!

**« Thanks be to God who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus-Christ ! »**



"The love of beauty leads to heaven," said Plato. Of course, it does not make us forget earth and the drudgery of life, but it opens the eyes of the soul to what has value. The experience of beauty has indeed this particularity that it calls upon gratuity and unselfishness. Shared, it creates a bond between those who experience it, that unites and liberates. And even if the experience of beauty does not succeed in overturning misery, it is nevertheless the only light that illuminates relationships darkened by greed and spiritual poverty.

**Can it be otherwise when it comes to interpreting Handel's Messiah?  
To set our vocation to music?**

Faced with the loss of his creativity after a stroke, Handel felt depressed, finished. Like **St. Louis-Marie**, in his spiritual night in the Rue du Pot de Fer, the biblical texts (sapiential texts for our Founder, the books of Isaiah for Handel) are the foundation of a resurrection...

At the heart of their night, God came to visit them and raise them up.

In the 18th century, Handel created this oratorio whose Alleluia is sung by all the world.

In the 18th century, Louis-Marie and Marie-Louise left us this treasure: "Do all things with Love and for Love", interpreted by our lives on the 5 continents.

**The public life of Jesus lasts 3 years...  
Handel creates his oratorio in 3 weeks...  
The interpretation of his work is given in 3 hours ....**

Isaiah announced the birth, passion, death and resurrection of the Messiah.

The sublime musical meditation of this Word of God guides us daily from our misery to joy in order to accomplish all things '**with Love and for Love**'.

***"Hallelujah !And he shall reign for ever and ever ! King of kings and Lord of lords !"***



**"Will beauty save the world?"** asked Dostoyevsky. Wisdom, she is beautiful and resplendent; she will save the world! On the way to Christmas, this is our faith ....

## **THE TWILIGHT OF A GIANT**

**Sr. Esther Nubia Duque,  
Colombia**

On March 17, 1924, the Institute of Our Lady of Wisdom was born under the direction of **Mother IVES DEL SAGRADO CORAZON**, a religious of French nationality, who, in collaboration with other Daughters of Wisdom, began an arduous work that quickly spread throughout Colombia and crossed national boundaries (Panama and Venezuela).

The Institute of Our Lady of Wisdom was the first in the country to implement **special education for the blind and deaf** with the Daughters of Wisdom (Sr. Agnes Parenteau of Canadian nationality specializing in teaching the blind and Mother Ives of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, specializing in teaching deaf children)

***This gave life and hope to parents who had children with this disability in their family.***

Encouraged by the apostolic zeal of the first admirable nuns, others joined with the same ardor as the first. **Sister Rose Mary Gafnef** directed the educational work for many years and trained the teaching staff as well as the young religious inclined to special education.

The Institute of Our Lady of Wisdom **has done pioneering work in the devotion to children with disabilities**, it has always been in the forefront, to update its programs and offer quality and competence. The religious headmistresses with which it relied, never spared efforts to seek resources to improve every day the quality of education, training of the poorest and most vulnerable of society.

All the sisters who have worked there have always done so, animated by the spirit of dedication, selflessness, unconditional love for the poor and marginalized, in an agile and dynamic way following the example of the Founders.

***We never forget the importance of the family in the progress and formation of the child and the young person,***

for this reason the school for the parents, the periodic meetings, the inclusion of the parents in the catechesis and in general in all the important events, has always been for us a priority.

We are aware of the good that has been done for 97 long years, of the love and admiration that this beautiful work has awakened in all those who have known it, who have appreciated and received its benefits. **We are witnesses of the extraordinary efforts that have been made at all levels to avoid its closure,** the corporate name has been changed (formerly "Institut Notre-Dame de la Sagesse for deaf children") into simply "Institut Notre-Dame de la Sagesse", this in order to allow the inclusion of the persons with different handicaps. This also gave the possibility of entry to regular education students (without any

disability) and non-enrolled students in agreement with the Ministry of Education, but this plan failed because the parents could not meet the commitments made and did not pay pensions.



**Maintaining the work became really impossible** due to the high cost of the salaries of the teaching and administrative staff, of the general services, of the maintenance of the building, of the payment of the services (electricity, water, telephone, internet). And other expenses that were always arising made it necessary to carry out thorough and





conscientious studies on the possibility of continuing, or not, the work as we had done. And with pain in our souls, as we say colloquially, we had to say NO to continue.

***It is impossible to swim against the tide.***

We are eternally grateful to the General Administration, which for so many years has reached out to us and allowed us to make the work work. The fruits remain and will be perennial. All the students who have benefited from this training, are useful people to themselves, to society and to their families. Again a thousand thanks on behalf of each of them and their families.



For God, all efforts are worthwhile and we are sure that the lives of the Sisters who worked so **lovingly to leave traces of Wisdom and enjoy God's Presence in heaven today**, are a source of blessing for all of us who continue to walk in the building of the Kingdom and sow the seeds of hope wherever we are.

## HISTORY AND BASIC PRINCIPLES OF "JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

### International JPIC Committee

Where does JPIC come from? We will share with you some aspects of the first formation module proposed by the International JPIC Committee to the JPIC Animators.

The acronym JPIC expresses a vision of reality in its complexity and interconnections that exist for the transformation of the world in the spirit of the Gospel, through actions of justice, peace and care for the integrity of Creation in our world.

This vision is rooted in :

- **The project of Jesus which is to establish the Kingdom of his Father:** "To the extent that He succeeds in reigning among us, social life will be a place of fraternity, justice, peace and dignity for all" (Evangelii Gaudium n° 180).
- The values of justice, peace and integrity of Creation are Gospel values, are intimately linked, so that one cannot fully live one of them without living the other two at the same time.

One cannot be an artisan of Justice and Peace without taking care of Creation, of the **"common home"**.

- **The institution of the Justice and Peace Commission:**  
During the Second Vatican Council, the bishops saw the need for the Church to be more involved in the world, that it needed to look at the world and understand what was going on, **in order to work for justice and peace on a global level.** Gaudium et Spes, addresses this theme: "Considering the immense misery which still afflicts the greater part of the human race today, **in order to promote justice everywhere and at the same time** to kindle Christ's love for the poor, the Council, for its part, considers it highly desirable that an organization of the universal Church be created, charged with encouraging the Catholic community to promote the development of poor regions and social justice among nations. "  
(Pastoral Constitution "The Church in the Modern World", no. 90)

At the Synod for Justice, held in Rome in 1971, the bishops discussed how the Church should work for justice and peace. Toward the end of the Synod, **the bishops decided to establish a Pontifical**

### **Commission for Justice and Peace.**

- **The growing awareness of the "Integrity of Creation" dimension,**  
The European Ecumenical Assembly in Basel in 1989 whose theme was "Peace with Justice" and the Ecumenical Assembly of Churches in Seoul 1990 whose theme was **"Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation"** emphasized the links between ecological problems and the promotion of Justice and Peace. They helped popularize the term "Integrity of Creation".

A third crucial moment was the publication of Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato si', subtitled **"on the safeguarding of the common home"** (2015). It is the first magisterial document devoted entirely to the safeguarding of Creation. It advocates an "integral ecology" - in the words of the pope - that reconciles human ecology with classical holistic ecology. The encyclical is addressed **"to all people of good will,"** and "includes the concern to unite the whole human family in the search for sustainable and integral development.



...you these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.  
"Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

- **The Social Doctrine of the Church**

Since the late 19th century, Popes, the Vatican and Bishops' Conferences have observed what is happening in the world and have applied the teachings of Scripture to what they have seen. These guidelines provide us with a guide for living our faith in an ever-changing world. In light of these texts, the goal of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation ministry is the transformation of society. The spirit of Christ moves us to **work for justice and peace for all and for the preservation of our common home.**

One of the methods used by JPIC is the pastoral circle or "See, Judge, Act" based on the four components: commitment, compassion, community and competence

***May we apply this in our search for justice, peace and the preservation of our common home.***

## **THE NEW VOCATION AWARENESS TEAM**

Sr Maria Pushpa - India

The Leadership team has formed **Vocation Awareness** Team for the province of India. The team consists of a co-ordinator and seven sisters in-charge for different state/ province of India based on the language. Each sister presents her yearly program of visiting the province/ state.

### ***Our Steps..Steps...***

This mission opens our eyes to look towards new horizons, echoes the new voices from afar to our ears, enforces our hands to carry necessities to extend the hands of friendship to the unknown, attaches the wheels to our feet to move taking risk towards the promised land where a little ray of light shone with a hope of labourers for the vineyard of the Lord. We go to the senior schools, parishes and villages. We keep in touch with the school faculties, parish priests, families and friends.

Often, our focus is in the countryside. On our visits to the places, we address the young women,



interact with them within the allotted time by the faculties, where we share about the Congregation. The mission is challenging yet life giving.

***The mission is challenging yet life giving.***

We also use the social media to reach out the young women by advertising about the Congregation in magazines.

***Called To....***

The response of the young women and support of their family are amazing to know God's wonderful works amidst modern time. He still chooses the chosen ones to follow Jesus.

***The 'Yes' of these young women to religious life, gives hope to the Congregation.***

It is a ray of hope that the vine planted by our holy Founders would not wither away. Today, in our turn, we are called to help these young hearts to feel the desire to find the joy and free will to fall in love deeply in Jesus' love in order to follow Jesus' wisdom who calls and chooses them to be his disciples and living witness in days to come.



## FATHER DE MONTFORT IS MOVING

### Delegation of Belgium

The Delegation of Belgium is currently undergoing great changes. The house in Brussels, the community of the Delegation (Montfort community) having been sold, the Sisters are gradually moving to the Vertefeuille's Residence in Tournai.

With the departure of the Sisters, Father de Montfort, who was enthroned in the interior courtyard, also decided to leave the place to find a more shady place near the Virgin Mary whom he loved so much.

***So he joined the sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in Jette.***

The Sisters of the Delegation of Belgium are very happy with the outcome of their contacts with the Rector of the Shrine, Father Philippe Nauts, who is in charge of the pastoral unit of the Olive Tree was happy to welcome Father de Montfort. The statue is now installed in the garden of the shrine under an archway of roses.

A commemorative plaque will be placed next to the statue to let pilgrims know who Montfort is and to recall the presence and the work of the Daughters of Wisdom in Jette, in the parish of Saint Peter.

Thus, in Jette, as in Lourdes, Banneux and Beauraing, Father de Montfort has found his place in a Marian shrine that is well frequented.

***In fact, many pilgrims from Brussels and elsewhere come every day to pray at the grotto.***

Before the final departure of the Sisters, a mass of thanksgiving will be celebrated at the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes. Most of the Belgian Sisters, the Friends of Wisdom and others close to the Sisters will participate.



The Belgian parish priest who welcomed the statue of Father de Montfort

## FRATERNITY IN THE MONTFORTIAN FAMILY IN THE DRC

Sr Valérie KADIELA and  
Sr Virginie BITSHANDA, RD Congo

Fraternity cannot be bought, but it needs to be cared for, nourished, and warmed in order to consolidate and develop it.

In the DRC, the Montfortian family tries to care for the bond of brotherhood between the three Congregations in order to consolidate it.

**For this reason, it is developing overall activities as a means to promote this fraternity.** Here are some of them:

### PRAYER AND CELEBRATIONS:

For a very long time, the Montfortian family has been in the habit of praying together around the feast of Father de Montfort and Mother Marie-Louise de Jésus (the prayer from one Feast to the other).

***It is a rich moment of meditation, of reflection, of sharing missionary experiences in the footsteps of Montfort.***

It is also a time for making firm decisions for the concretization of the fruits of this spiritual journey. In addition to the

members of the Montfortian family, friends, neighbors and acquaintances are invited. This time always ends with a great Eucharistic celebration followed by a fraternal meal. It is a way of consolidating our friendship and of sharing the Montfortian spirituality with those around us.

This year, we concluded the time of prayer with a wonderful decision : **The members of the Montfortian family made a financial or material contribution** to assist the most needy. A punctual committee was set up and some hospitals, a central prison, and elderly people benefited from this contribution.

### RELAXATION DAYS:

In our Congolese culture, **children from the same family socialize, know each other, fraternize, eat and drink together.** They reconcile in case of disagreements. In this same spirit, the Montfortian family of Kisangani, has initiated for some years, the day of relaxation at the beginning of the year. During this day, there is a time to get to know each other by introducing new members (aspirants, young professed, young priests, ...). The elders present themselves and their respective missions. There is a time to give each



other news, a time to play, eat, dance, ... and that's it. It is very relaxed, fun and fraternal.

### **MEETING OF THE LEADERS OF THE THREE CONGREGATIONS:**

In turn, the three Leaders have initiated a fraternal meeting. They share the joys and challenges of their missions, the orientations, visions and dreams of their Entities. They encourage and challenge each other when necessary. It is a new experience, rich and to be continued.

### **ANNUAL RETREAT:**

Last September, the Montfortian Family in Kisangani and Isangi experienced a beautiful retreat in Isangi, at the house of the Daughters of Wisdom; animated by Monsignor Dieudonné MADRAPILE, Bishop of the diocese of Isangi, with the theme: "**Following Jesus, with Mary**". It was a very beautiful moment, with times of instruction, solitude, and prayer well-paced by several melodies. As in a real Congolese family, we put our hands together in the same spiritual plate to feed ourselves with the word of God.

***The meal offered with love by our young people in formation and the cook, allowed us to fully live our retreat time and with serenity.***

To conclude, the Montfortian family in the DR Congo is committed to love, to serve, to consolidate relationships and to work at building our religious family for a more credible witness of our consecration in the footsteps of Montfort and Marie-Louise.



## A LONG JOURNEY OF WELCOMING COMES TO AN END

For forty years, Sr. Mary Stiefvater, 81 and Sr. Christine Scherer, 77 would come home every day from their ministries and their work would not be done. By day, Sr. Mary was a Pastoral Associate and Sr. Chris a Director of Religious Education. During all other times and days of the week, their work continued in their home with the women who were sent there for safety and to start a process of healing and personal redemption. **The women came from all over the world:** Africa, India, Pakistan, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and the United States, but were delivered in the same vehicle driven by a clever trickster.

***Initially, Sr. Mary and Sr. Chris provided emergency shelter to women who were victims of domestic abuse, and then to those who were either trafficked for sex or labor.***

For most of them, the circumstances under which they arrived at Sr. Mary and Sr. Chris' doorstep were similar: promises of a better life, a career, money- all deceitful ploys.

By providing a "safe" home, one with a nonthreatening and demanding agenda, the women were able to begin to find purpose and become empowered. Over the years, the Sisters opened their door to thirty-five women of all ages. **Many of the women who arrived broken at their door were indeed a challenge.** Most typically they all came afraid for their lives, there were language barriers and cultural differences that needed to be understood and respected.

***But in the end, they came to share their stories, their cuisine, the progress of their lives, and for many enduring friendships.***

With continued healing through counseling, education, and direction for career paths, coordinated by a network of agencies working together, the Sisters said they had numerous success stories and several of the women maintain contact with them.

Earlier in the year (6/27/21) the Parish community of St. Matthew's RC Church in Brooklyn, NY, gathered for a special farewell Mass and reception for Sr. Chris and Sr. Mary. Now both retired, the Sisters have relocated





to the Islip Community on Long Island, NY. The Mass presided over by Rev. Frank Black, recognized the sisters for their faithful service to the church and community and encouraged them to embrace their future calls. From senior members to the youth who grew up in the congregation with Sr. Chris or Sr. Mary as their teacher, spiritual guide, or friend, gratefulness abounded and remarks that

***“had it not been for them, they did not know where they would be today.”***



## COMMITMENTS IN THE CONGREGATION

### First profession

<i>Haiti</i>	Sr Evenyde Petit-Homme	August 22nd 2021
<i>Indonesia</i>	Sr Getrudis Taeng Sr Elisabeth Nuryati Ijo Sr Elsiana Yetin Sr Yasinta Berty Ma'ar Sr Yovita Missa	September 8th 2021
<i>Madagascar</i>	Sr Marie Madeleine Harilantoniaina Solofonirina Ramarovelo Sr Céline Olivà RAHARINIRINTSOA HERINJANAHARY	September 8th 2021
<i>Malawi</i>	Sr Grace Ndalama Sr Mary Liyaya Sr Loveness Steven	September 25th 2021

### Perpetual Profession

<i>India</i>	Sr Salim Sujata Bhimsen Kerketta	August 22nd 2021
<i>Haiti</i>	Sr Jacqueline Philomène Pierre	September 8th 2021
<i>R.D. Congo</i>	Sr Judith Tshiata Bilifwala	September 26th 2021
<i>Malawi</i>	Sr Ellen Chagunda	Octobre 30th 2021
<i>France</i>	Sr Bernadette Coche	November 21st 2021

## NEW PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF ITALIE

The Provincial Council of Italy  
began their function on **October  
7th 2021**. It is consists of:

**Sr. Natalia del Redentore, Provincial Leader**

**And of the Councillors:**

- **Sr dell'Incarnazione**
- **Sr Maria dell'Immacolata**
- **Sr Maria Teresa di Gesù**

*We wish them a fruitful mission.*



Sr dell'Incarnazione

Sr Natalia


Sr Maria dell'Immacolata

Sr Maria Teresa di Gesù

## GENERAL TEAM CALENDAR FORECAST JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2022

Month	Date	Activities	Who
January 2022		Reflection of the General Council among others Preparation of the Wisdom Year	General Council
	7 – 9	Visit of the sisters of Belgium *	Pierrette et Marie-Reine
	16 – 23	Visit of Maria-Luisa *	Rani, Antonella et Isabelle
	24 - 28	Change of government – Maria Luisa	
February	1st	Preparation of the process for the change of government for the Province of France	General Council
		Arrival of Srs Symphorose and Karuna, responsible for the Wisdom Year	Antonella
	5 - 20	Canonical visit of the Delegation of the Republic of Congo *	Pierrette et Isabelle
	10 – 28	Change of government of Canada	Rani, Marie-Reine, Antonella

\* If the sanitary conditions allows for travel



**My dearest Sisters, I join the  
General Council in wishing you a  
Merry Christmas and a Happy  
New Year full of promise and  
satisfaction.**

Xavier Le Roux  
Communication officer