



# Sagesse Internationale

*Through its "Going Forth" out of itself, the Congregation is born again.*

Since its origin, the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom has lived the movement of "going forth", which required adjustments to the often unexpected projects of . Surely, throughout history, "the hand of God" has never ceased to accompany the Congregation.

Marie-Louise, first Daughter of Wisdom, was called by Wisdom to leave her native town of Poitiers for St Laurent in Vendée, an unknown land for her. Then, always moving forth, the Daughters of Wisdom spread across France, then beyond the borders to Belgium and into distant lands: Haiti, Canada, Colombia ...etc.

The movement of "going forth again and again" which characterized the history of the Daughters of Wisdom was particularly celebrated in 2020 with the Tercentenary of the arrival of Marie-Louise in St Laurent in the unprecedented context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current health crisis gives us the opportunity to reinvent new ways to live the orientation of the General Chapter 2018. The movement of reconfiguration and interculturality which leads us outward has slowed down with covid-19. However, the orientation of the Congregation carries an inner inspiration which cannot stop because "love is always a going out of oneself towards the other" [1]. Is this not the meaning of love without borders?

Covid-19 has upset the planning of the General Council for the implementation of the "Love without borders" orientation. But it does not take away from us the capacity to love "with a heart without fear and without borders" [2], even if we have to live in confinement.

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1.Fratelli Tutti n° 88

2.Orientation of the General Chapter 2018 p.4

The borders of nations are closed, but doesn't Wisdom call us to open the most inaccessible borders within us and to continue to live the movement of going forth towards others?

The dynamics of going forth and going within, experienced in the Congregation, resonates with the invitation of Pope Francis to be "a Church which goes forth" [3]

Faced with the Covid-19 pandemic, so many great charity initiatives are born, between neighbors of the same building, between different Congregations that have learned to collaborate more and more in videoconferences, with the dedication of caregivers all over the world, without neglecting the important advances of scientists to find the vaccine against Covid-19. They are all signs of hope, and encouragement to continue to live our mission to love without borders.

Thus, "from going forth to going forth", the life and mission of the Congregation continues as can be observed by reading the first issue of the year 2021 of the Sagesse International Bulletin.

Sr. Pierrette Bwamba, DW  
Congregational Councilor

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3 Evangelii Gaudium , novembre 2003, p. 20-24.



## VOCATION AWARENESS

**"If you do not risk anything for God, you will never do anything great for Him." (Letter 27)**

Me, a nun? Who would have thought? Yet, against all odds, this unpredictable God has invited himself into my life. It was love at first sight that changed my personal and professional projects! As a woman consecrated to God, I am inhabited by a strong desire to receive and pass on happiness as it is offered to me every day.



But, let there be no misunderstanding. I am not an extraordinary Sister, a Superhero able to confront all the challenges of Life with Super powers as those who do not know religious life might imagine. My Super power is called "Wisdom". That Wisdom took on a human form in the person of Jesus-Christ.

Jesus himself made me aware that giving oneself completely to Him goes against the grain of our current society pushing us towards individualism and consumerism. Fortunately, the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience that I made at my initial commitment in the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom, are a way of freedom and it is a precious help in actively responding to God's calls. The vows allow me to have a heart available for the mission, so as to proceed serenely through difficulties.

I will share a secret with you. In order to experience the folly of the Gospel every day, nothing beats a little bit of humor, because I was surprised to discover that God himself has humor and love! I can also count on the presence of the Virgin Mary discreetly but surely helping me. In fact, my life is embodied and written in the steps of Christ and of all those who came before me starting with the Founders of our Congregation, Saint Louis Marie Grignon of Montfort and Blessed Marie Louise of Jesus. I like to say that all vocations are beautiful, each with its own features, most importantly that they are constantly turned toward the Creator.

As a former sommelier-wine merchant, if I had to choose an image of this vocation as a woman consecrated to God, I would choose that of the vine which patiently allows itself to be pruned by its Creator. It takes patience and active perseverance, for God does nothing without us. But what joy at harvest time - understand my daily revisiting - to collect, share and savor the harvested fruits which bear the sweet names of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, loyalty, gentleness and self-control.

*Sr. Christine Pichery, D<sup>W</sup>  
France*

## *Christ in our Hearts*

Christmas 2020 is a Christmas like no other. The darkness that the pandemic has brought could not dampen the brilliant light of Christmas that is ever permeating at the heart of the suffering world. We have had our share of trying times over the year; however, we cling to the source of life – Emmanuel- *God is with us!* It is a heartwarming reminder to focus our attention on the true reason for the season. Hope, peace, joy, and love is what we need to spread - without borders!



Our story begins in the silent night of Christmas Eve when we gather as one community in the chapel to welcome the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord. The prayerful ambiance, meaningful rituals, and grateful disposition have set our hearts to pray. When December 25 comes, we highlight our festivities with Holy Eucharist celebrated online while wearing our national costume. We are from Indonesia, Malawi, Congo and Philippines.

After being nourished spiritually, we prepare ourselves for the vibrant and fun-filled intercultural activities organized by our dear novices. Everyone is as busy as a bee cooking their favorite food, preparing their cultural presentations, and other preparations. Fun games, and gift-giving also enliven the whole group. Time flies so fast when everyone is having fun. Indeed, the active participation of the community members makes the entire celebration successful and meaningful. We conclude our Christmas festivities with a lovely smile in our hearts - joyful and grateful!

May Jesus-Incarnate Wisdom continue to dwell in our hearts every day, may our lives reflect Christ's presence, and our communities radiating God's peace. With the abundance of faith, hope, and love, we will all get through this crisis together. There is always a light at the end of the tunnel. Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

*International Novitiate  
Philippines*

# ***One Day at a Time***

*The God of all Majesty  
came in our humanity  
to be one of us. Hymn 57*



***Novices of Clamart***

We lived Christmas with more interiority, marked by creativity and joy in community. A community meeting allowed us to express our desire to welcome Jesus among us. Several ideas were put forward: to hold a draw where each member was assigned an invisible friend for Christmas, to fast on Saturday nights during Advent and to participate in the parish food drive. The beautiful celebration helped us to go deeper into the Mystery of the Incarnation, the very heart of our spirituality.

Nevertheless, in this period of pandemic, we conjugated the verb to be confined in the past, present... and in the future tense. There were concerns about the virus but we welcomed this event in faith and sisterly support. We approached the elderly, the isolated, the sick and prepared for them greeting cards as a token of friendship. We had the opportunity to take part in the Christmas mass with the parishioners. What a gift! So many people are deprived.

Yes, we will remember Christmas 2020. So many memories! After mass, in the well decorated house, a recreational evening was planned: relaxation, conviviality, joy and surprises. We expressed the richness of our differences through song, dance, music, poem, stories. The fact of sharing a gift with an invisible friend, brought another depth to our celebration. We received with joy tools to continue what we learned in DIY (handy work).

At lunch on December 25th, we shared a song close to our hearts: "One day at a time" because, to live better in faith, we need the courage and the hope that the presence of Jesus brings.

*The International Novitiate  
France*



## Covid 19 and Discernment

December 3rd, 2020 was a significant day in the life of the Province of India, with the installation of the New Provincial Council. Due to Covid-19, the discernment process for the change of Leadership followed the signs of the times. The General Council members could not be physically present due to travel restrictions. The absence of their proximity was felt by the Sisters. But the unavoidable situation was understood and the process was accepted with serenity. Thus, the Province of India had the privilege to be the first Entity to experiment discernment using technology and modern means of communication. Though it was a lengthy process, it was successful and the fruit was the birth of a new Council.



**Sr. Genebiba Parbala Ekka**  
Provincial Leader



**Sr. Jain Benitta John**



**Sr. Lydia Antony Cruz**



**Sr. Mini Uremese Menachery**

The new Provincial Council of India was nominated on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for a mandate of four years. It was installed on 3<sup>rd</sup> of December during the Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Joseph SMM, Vice Provincial of the Montfort Fathers. The members of the Council were invited to make their commitment to the Sisters of the Province, recalling the governance according to Wisdom. They received four oil lamps in a single plate, signifying their individuality as members and their journey together as Council for the next four years. The new Council was also given a relic of Mother Marie Louise, the statue of Mary carved by Montfort and a Key. Sr. Rani Kurian, Superior General and her Council guided us in the way of Wisdom, to move forward smoothly and definitely.

*Thanks to WISDOM for all that has been, for all that is, for all that will be!*

*Sr. Lilly Joseph, DW*  
*India*

## ***Formation in Madagascar***

The passage into a new stage of formation for young women in Madagascar was preceded by a spiritual preparation with Sister Florentine and Sister Berthe Léa. The day before entering the novitiate and the pre-novitiate, Sister Symphorose, Provincial Leader, took the time to meet individually with the young people.



**Novices and Sr Marie-Agathe and Berthe-Léa, Responsables**



**Pre-novices and 2 Sisters in charge**

On Wednesday October 7th , 2020, 3 pre-novices entered the novitiate during a Eucharistic celebration presided by Father Adolphe smm. Also, the entry to the pre-novitiate took place. The Sisters of the three communities of Antananarivo joined the formation community to participate.

In his address to the novices and the pre-novices, Father Adolphe exhorted them to take advantage of the time of formation which is a time of grace and to welcome it with all its requirements, as a means of growth. He invited them to actively participate in their formation as the first agent of their formation, with an open attitude. The Father blessed the signs of the stage of formation that would subsequently be offered to novices and pre-novices after their commitment by the Provincial. Each novice presented her symbol which reflects her journey: a young plant, a bouquet of flowers and a notebook.

Sister Symphorose, Provincial Leader, addressed words of encouragement and congratulations to the novices and pre-novices for daring to go out into the open sea to respond to the call of Christ Wisdom. She then thanked the 4 sisters appointed as formators and assistants for their “yes” in assuming this responsibility so delicate and difficult. She encouraged them to intensify collaboration among themselves for the success of their mission.

Sister Berthe-Léa is the one in charge of the novitiate and Sister Agathe, her assistant. Sister Florentine, the one responsible for the pre-novitiate and Sister Marie Yolande, her assistant. The 4 formators (are) committed themselves to accomplishing the mission entrusted to them. After the mass, there was the sharing of the meal in an atmosphere of joy manifested by songs and dancing.

*Sr. Marie Agathe Savavy, DW  
Madagascar*

# A Novitiate "à la Marie-Louise"

## Sign of the times

The consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic have disrupted the proper functioning of the formation of novices at the Francophone Novitiate in Clamart. The General Council had to take an appropriate decision, that of organizing the novitiates in the Entities in order to allow the continuity of formation. I welcomed this decision by giving meaning from the celebration experienced in 2020, the 300th anniversary of the arrival of Marie Louise de Jesus in Saint Laurent. I read in the decision of the General Council a sign of the times, as Mother Marie-Louise had done when she went to implant Wisdom in Saint Laurent. I was happy to return to Congo to provide this service of formation to the novices in our Delegation.



## As in Saint-Laurent

On October 7, 2020, 4 pre-novices entered the novitiate and 6 aspirants also entered the pre-novitiate. The conditions of welcome of novices are modest and we give meaning to them by thinking of the beginning of the foundation in Saint Laurent. However, we realize that we are better equipped than this first community.

## Significant event

During ten years, there have been no entry into the novitiate in Congo, since the novices left for Clamart. The entry of this year was a milestone for the Entity. The parents of the novices and acquaintances were invited and witnessed the celebration.

## A stage of formation with others

The current novitiate in Kinshasa is part of the Marie-Louise community which is already the pre-novitiate. We find there: three Daughters of Wisdom, 6 1st year pre-novices, 4 2nd year pre-novices, 4 novices and 3 aspirants at the "Come and see" stage. Despite these different stages of formation, the novices have their own little house, with an oratory well suited for their time of silence as well as a room suited both as a refectory and classroom. This requires an exercise in organization, which is not always easy to follow but which we live with joy, courage and determination. As novices, it makes us experience simplicity and adaptability to circumstances .



Novices of 1st year and Sr Patience Bolunda-



I thank the General Council for the guidance it has given to the formation of novices in the Entities and I thank you for its support and for its trust. I am grateful to the Council of the Delegation of Congo, who welcomed us with joy and who accompanies us in this beginning of formation of the novices upon the return of the novitiate stage to the Entities.

There is a good mutual support and collaboration with the sisters in the community; we follow the compass of Wisdom in our daily realities to recognize the signs that Wisdom is giving us at this time in our history as a Congregation. We try to do everything “with love and out of love”, like Marie-Louise of Jesus. The train of formation for the novitiate in Congo has departed.

*Sr. Patience Bolunda, DW*  
*Congo*

## *Commitments in the Congregation*

### *Perpetual Vows*

<i>Asia-Oceania</i>	Sr. Berlinda Yande (Papousie Nouvelle-Guinée)	11/22/20
<i>Madagascar</i>	Sr. Félicité Indalana	12/27/20
	Sr. Charline Narindra Raherinantenaina	12/27/20
	Sr. Justine Razanadranivo	12/27/20
	Sr. Maminiana Albertine Razafiarimino	12/27/20

# Small Secret Calls

My name is Sr Teresa of the Sacred Heart, Daughter of Wisdom, born Ghislaine Pierre-Antoine, September 30th , 1930 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. I made my religious profession sixty-five years ago and taught for 69 years.

I have been in a nursing home since 2019 after a fall. As I had wished to stay as long as possible in teaching to make Christ known and loved, to educate, to teach in the footsteps of our Mother Marie-Louise, my wish was fulfilled. I stayed at the school until the age of 89, sometimes as a classroom teacher, sometimes as a school Principal.

Let me describe a first experience from the age of nine. In 1939, the Good Lord called to Himself one of my cousins. Her mother, sitting near the coffin, kept repeating: "And to think that my daughter was going to become a nun!" I thought: "Religious life is a good thing; I will replace her." (First secret call).



Four years later, the teacher asked to write a great joy that will come to us in the future. My heart resonated. (Second secret call). Two years later, another teacher asked me if I was attracted to religious life. My spontaneous response was a "no", whereas that day, for me, was a confirmation of the call. My heart vibrated even harder.

From then on, I went to mass every morning in order to watch the DW Sisters. It was for me a real pleasure to see them walking in the street as I contemplated their collected attitude and their costume different from that of the world. Everything revealed God to me. Without saying a word to them, I went to see the Chaplain to tell him about my vocation. I never stopped thanking the Lord for choosing me as his bride. It is for me, a great joy every time.

In my life as a Daughter of Wisdom, I discovered that the "I" must always be in second place. As Father de Montfort said, Jesus must always be first. This is what I try to live and communicate to the younger members of our religious family.

*Sr. Teresa du Sacré-Cœur, DW  
Haïti*

## Woman of Faith and Action



Marie-Louise once said, *“Do everything with love and out of love”*. The same words resound in the hearts of every Daughter of Wisdom who lived the Wisdom Year between 2015 and 2020, particularly the 2019-2020 cohort as this was their theme.

It is again a special year because Sr. Berthe Léa Razanarisoa, assistant mistress, finished her 5<sup>th</sup> term of service for this program. We appreciated the work that our dear Sr. Berthe Léa did with us at the Mother House .

Her willingness to give her time to God and others, revealed what it means to be a Daughter of Wisdom. Sr. Berthe Léa, from the Province of Madagascar, joined the community of the Wisdom Year in 2015. Her simplicity and positive disposition contributed in creating a lively atmosphere for the Wisdom Year community .

Like Mother Marie Louise moved from Poitiers to La Rochelle, Sr. Berthe Léa accepted to leave her Entity to be with Sisters from other Entities, and to serve them. Indeed, she has widened the space of her tent and went beyond her borders. She has shown love, humility, simplicity, detachment and a spirit of discernment, self-emptying for the love of God Alone. Seeing her dance to the Malagasy songs was one of the beautiful experiences at Wisdom Year. It gave us a feel of her beautiful culture. What else could we do but join in the dance?

Sr. Berthe Léa, your life will always remain vivid in our hearts and will forever be remembered. You have left an indelible mark on our lives that will never be erased. Thank you so much for accepting to share your faith and Wisdom Spirituality with us.

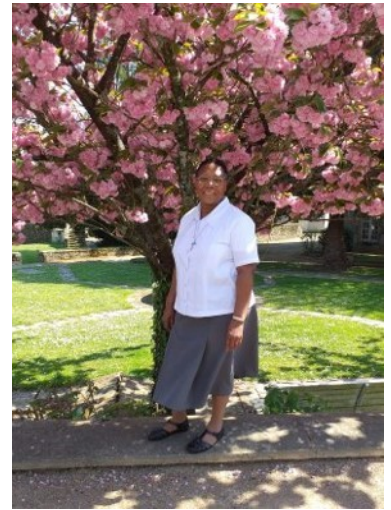
We wish you a fruitful mission in Madagascar. May our Mother Mary accompany you in all your activities.

*Sr. Gladys Machokola, DW  
Malawi (for Wisdom Year)*

# A New Missionary Impulse

“If we don't risk something for God, we won't do anything great for Him” (Montfort L.27) At the call of the General Council in 2014 to become responsible for the Year of Wisdom, Sister Mary Immaculate Makina, of Malawian origin, risked something for God. In 2015, with the move to Rome, she continued her mission at the Mother House.

From 2014 to 2020, Sr. Mary Immaculate accompanied 50 Sisters from: Philippines, Madagascar, India, Italy, Haiti, Congo, Malawi, Argentina, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea.



We are the last to journey with her. Also, this experience allowed us to deepen the Charism and Spirituality of the Congregation and gave us a new missionary impulse. By her accompaniment and the testimony of her life, Sr Immaculate helped us to deepen our total gift to the Lord in the footsteps of the Founders. Her presence was like a beacon that showed us the direction to take at the different turns of this long pilgrimage from head to heart. An active, dynamic, competent and available accompanist, she knew how to use simple methods to make our intercultural experience a space where love, joy and peace were at the heart of life. A tireless woman with a listening ear, she found words that touched every one.



Through the various sessions given, she led us to go further in our choice and to consolidate our commitment as free, responsible, daring and available women. Her faith, serene presence, simplicity and courage, nourished our hope on the journey. In August 2020, Sr. Immaculate completed her tenure as Wisdom Year Leader. In the name of all those who were able to benefit from her benevolent support, we express a warm thanks for her service to intercultural formation. May our Holy Founders accompany Sr. Immaculate in her new mission.

*The Sisters of Wisdom Year  
2019-2020*