



# Sagesse Internationale

## *The Gospel Comes Alive Today*

How does the Gospel come alive today? Revisiting our lives, how many people have allowed us to meet the Lord! How many times have we experienced His Presence! Perhaps, as with the disciples after Jesus' Resurrection, our eyes did not recognize Him right away, we needed a gesture, a word, a sign... Then, with a heart full of joy, we exclaimed: it is the Lord! (Jn 21:7)

In this Easter season, we remember all the times when we have been witnesses of the Risen One through small, simple, daily gestures, thus revealing the love of Wisdom for each human being, manifesting His desire to meet each one of us and to weave bonds of friendship. Conscious or not, we have been His face, His voice, His heart... for the people we have met, in community and in mission. It was not grand gestures that allowed the disciples to recognize Jesus but a bread broken, an invitation, the fish cooked on an open fire...simple gestures which are like a spark that reveals the presence of God. *So too, the Gospel comes alive in our own day, whenever we accept the compelling witness of people whose lives have been changed by their encounter with Jesus. For two millennia, a chain of such encounters has communicated the attractiveness of the Christian adventure.*<sup>1</sup>

The personal encounter with Christ is a transforming, life-changing experience. Allowing ourselves to be touched by His love, refocusing our lives on Him, leave space for God to be God in us and for us to be authentic Christians. This personal relationship can only be contagious, it can only broaden horizons, lead to the weaving of bonds, but it requires a self-emptying to go towards the other. The “other” is God and the «others» are our sisters and brothers.

We are witnesses of the Risen Lord because we have experienced his love, He who even from the grave brings forth life. *The tomb is the place from which he who enters does not come out. But Jesus came out for us, he rose for us, to bring life where there was death, to begin a new story where a stone had been put.*<sup>2</sup>

In our historical context, the Gospel has come alive so many times by our witness and commitment and those of others. Together, let us continue, with all the people who have committed themselves in favor of life by pouring the fragrance of compassion, tenderness, goodness, peace, beauty, friendship... Let us continue to incarnate-reveal Wisdom in today's world so that others may meet Him.

In this issue of the International Bulletin we will be able to "contemplate" how, the testimonies of life trace furrows of light, signs of new life for the world. Enjoy reading our sacred family history.

Happy Easter to all of you,

Sr. Antonella Prestia DW  
General Councilor



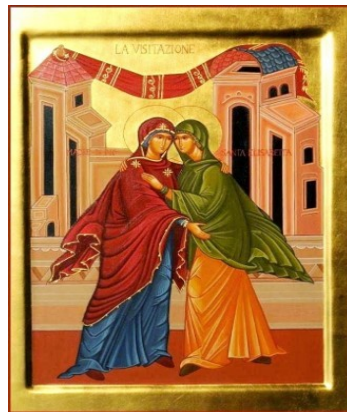
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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, Message for the 2021 World Communication Day

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis, Homily of the Easter Vigil 2020

# The Visitation of Elizabeth

Covid 19, you will agree, has turned our world upside down and the General Council has not been spared. However it taught us to be creative and live new ways of solidarity and fraternity. Rather than the General Council visiting the Entities, the Entities are invited to initiate a visit. What joy to be welcomed by our Sisters of various communities for an impromptu visit. We share news, good wishes and joyful conviviality. It is a beautiful testimony of the bonds that unite us and of the fraternity that we want to nourish. The General Council thanks the Entity Leaders for this initiative and that of the Entity Leaders who have been in touch with us giving us regular updates on the situation of our Sisters, various missions, and the country.



*The General Leadership Team*

The joy of meeting each other in person!



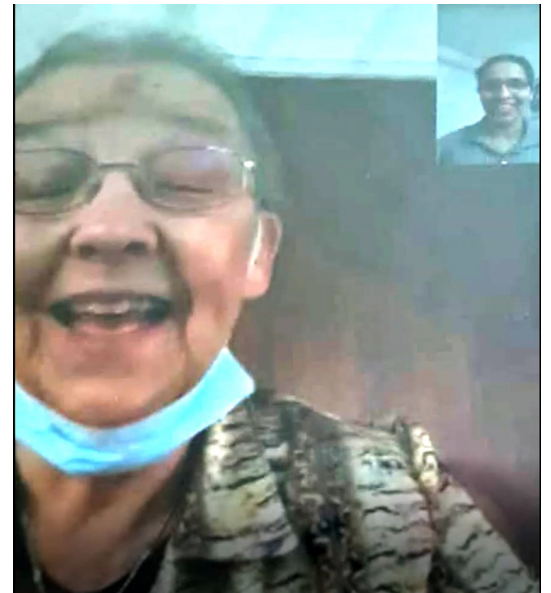
The Sisters of the Province of Italy



## The Sisters of GBI



## The Sisters of the Maria Luisa Delegation



## Sr. Maria Pacelli -Sisters of Holland



## The Sisters at Brussels, Belgium



## JPIC Spirituality : a Life Style



A lifestyle is a set of behaviors or attitudes that people develop. It occurs to me that throughout my life, these attitudes and behaviors have been formed especially during my first encounters with Wisdom through different experiences. It is true that our first encounters can become deep and significant elements in our lives, as was for me, the first encounter with Wisdom through the Daughters of Wisdom in Cerro de Pasco, Peru. I have seen women coming from another continent as missionaries to announce the Kingdom of God, working for justice and defending human rights, accompanying people in their struggles and protests, encouraging women to be the architects of their own destiny. These images did not fade in my mind and inspired me to continue the fight for justice and the defense of human rights, and to promoting women.

The origin of JPIC goes back to Vatican II, when the Church had centered its reflection and its magisterium inward in reaction to the rationalist era which left little room for the experience of faith, of religious manifestations and spiritual dimension of the human being. The Superiors General of both female and male Congregations established a team to work with the Pontifical Commission in 1974. In 1993 a full-time executive secretariat was created to coordinate and enlighten the International Commission "Justice, Peace and Integrity of creation." (JPIC).

In our Congregation, JPIC made me recognize the depth of this spirit which became a style of life for me. It is an authentic way of being a religious, a disciple, a missionary of Jesus Christ, which implies a constant openness to the Spirit of Jesus and therefore requires a change of mentality, of attitude and of the way of carrying out actions in service. *For the Committee, JPIC: "...is a way of revealing the love of Jesus Christ, Wisdom incarnate, in prophetic gestures which already announce the presence of the Kingdom. It is a way of living according to the values of our spirituality, manifested by simplicity, gentleness, compassion, hospitality, relational justice, love without borders, following Montfort, Marie-Louise and of our predecessors*<sup>1</sup>.

"Participation in the International JPIC Commission invites me to further deepen the work carried out in the Congregation and in my Entity. This interest in going deeper has led me to participate in the JPIC commission of the Ecuadorian Conference of Religious (JPIC CER), which allows me to better know the history, spirituality and work of this commission. JPIC CER is organized into three work groups, as follows: First group: Migration, Human Mobility and Refugees, second group: Talitha Kum (Against Gender Violence and Trafficking in Persons) and third group: Integral Ecology and REPAM (Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network). I am a member of the second group, where activities for the defense of women's rights are carried out.

This Covid -19 pandemic shows us the damage we have done to our common home and has made us aware of it. Each of us, human beings, peoples and cultures, enrich each other by our diversity. As Pope Francis tells us: *"If we consider that the human being is also a creature in this world, that he has the right to*

*live and to be happy, and who, moreover, has a very specialized dignity, we cannot fail to consider the shortcomings of the degradation of the environment, of the current model of development and of the culture of waste in people's lives.”<sup>2</sup>*

"He shows us the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves with SOLIDARITY, especially with the most vulnerable. It is amazing that such a small virus could cripple us and make us reflect on our inner being, which was so empty and shallow. This reality shows us the power of faith and hope, the strong bonds that unite us as believers, recognizing that the love of Jesus unites and reconciles us. *It is true that a global tragedy like the Covid-19 pandemic has awakened, for a short time, the awareness of being a global community that sails on one boat, where overnight sickness is common. Let us remember that no one can save themselves alone, that it is only possible to save ourselves together*<sup>3</sup>.

He shows us that God's plans go beyond our own. Our Wisdom spirituality invites us to discover the face of Jesus in the most vulnerable and to respond to our reality of today, through gestures of help that are creative and concrete wherever we are. "Our apostolic commitments promote the integral growth and liberation of the person through education, health, social action, pastoral work and other activities related to our charism. In response to new challenges, we are working to promote the development of peoples so that they “become the artisans of their own destiny.” (RV 3)

Currently, the Sisters in community are looking for creative ways to show solidarity : by distributing food to families and groups of women, by providing diapers and clothes for pregnant mothers as well as some routine laboratory examination. I also work for women and children in obstetrics care in medical consultations at the Holy Spirit Medical Center which is administered by the Congregation of the Carmelite Missionaries. We have also carried out campaigns of Paptest screening for cancer of the cervix of the uterus.

In this way, responding to the concrete clamors of In our time, we will recreate the spirit of JPIC in life and mission, “Love without borders”.

*Sr. María Cristina Tucto Vilcañaupa DW  
María Luisa*



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<sup>1</sup> Mandat du Comité JPIC International 2020

<sup>2</sup> Encyclique Laudato Si, n° 43

<sup>3</sup> Encyclique Fratelli Tutti, n° 32



## GUIPAVAS : A Long Page of the History of the Congregation is Turning



Our long history in the Finistère began at the Marine National Hospital in Brest where the Daughters of Wisdom arrived in 1777. Indeed, thanks to the support of the Navy, many Sisters continued to care for the sick and the wounded during the Revolution (*Le Doigt de Dieu*, Tome 1 p. 27), which enabled the Congregation to rise up and respond to new calls.

Later - according to our records - at the request of the City Council and supported by the parish priest at the time, three Daughters of Wisdom were sent to Guipavas on January 3, 1860 for the education of children and young people, care of the sick and the poor, pastoral and social action ... a vast mission. As the number of students rapidly grew, the Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur school building was constructed in 1884. At the same time, the Sisters settled in a large house located nearby. There, they set up what was called at that time an "Asylum", name given to a nursery school that welcomed children from age two.

During the separation of the Churches and the State in 1905, with teaching being prohibited, the Daughters of Wisdom continued to be very active and to adjust their mission at the social and parochial level: management of an orphanage, care for the sick, opening of a Juniorate for young girls; several of them entered at La Sagesse in St Laurent sur Sèvre.

In 1940, teaching was again possible and the Sisters returned to their Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur school. But, gradually, the community became a community of elderly Sisters in premises that were much too spacious and not very functional. This is why in 2008, the Provincial Council of the time considered the departure of some of the Sisters to a more suitable dwelling in order to allow them to continue their mission, including, at times, hosting the Sisters inserted on the island of Ushant when they came to the mainland.

Thus, for the past ten years, the Daughters of Wisdom have been providing a discreet and fraternal presence, regularly visiting isolated people and those in Establishments for the Dependent Elderly (EHPAD), investing in support services at the parish (ensuring continual presence, sacristy, etc.) until a sudden health problem quickly led Sr. Bernadette RICHARD to the Mother House.

The community, constituted then of two Sisters, could not be maintained and renewing it or strengthening it was not possible, given our demography in France. Therefore, the Provincial Council was forced to take the decision to close it. These are always difficult discernments! All the more so as through the community of Guipavas, the Congregation left its last establishment in a region (Finistère) and a diocese (Quimper and Léon) from where many vocations came.

On Sunday December 13, a Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated in the Parish - not without emotion. And, despite the strict health instructions, the Guipavasians came in large numbers to surround Sr. Anna MONOT and Sr. Christiane LARREUR, in the presence of Sr. Marie-Françoise VIVIEN, Provincial Leader.

I only quote, among so many other testimonies of gratitude, this intention of Universal Prayer: "We thank you, Lord, for the inheritance left to us by the Daughters of Wisdom, present at Guipavas since 1860. Generations of little Guipavasians learned to read and write with the Sisters at Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur and, thanks to them, had the chance to know Jesus Christ."

Yes, let us be sure that what has been sown in simplicity, discretion and availability, by several generations of Daughters of Wisdom, will still bear much fruit.

*Sr. Thérèse Fabien, DW  
Provincial Councilor  
France*



# Sicar Community

*Do everything out of love!* These words of Marie-Louise Trichet embody the reality and the very work of the Friends of Wisdom. Groups of the Sicar Community are present in the south of Italy: Canania, Adriano, Enna and Reggio Calabria. In each of these places, faithful to the spirituality of Montfort, with the Daughters of Wisdom, the Friends of Wisdom (FW) seek Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom, concretely, revealing the Lord's love for humanity.



In Catania, Friends of Wisdom (FW) are present in two parishes on the outskirts of the city, Librino and Monte Po, where for decades, the Daughters of Wisdom have lived and carried out their mission. Here, fully integrated into the life of the local parish communities, the FW fulfill their vocation by putting themselves at the service of the poor and the families on a daily basis, particularly in the Caritas parish and diocesan canteen. Some FW are extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist who are dedicated to the elderly and the sick, often isolated at home.

Other FW respond to Jesus' call to dedicate themselves to catechesis with children as well as to youth ministry. Still others prepare the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and mostly take care of the animation of the Mass, from choir to decorations.

The charism of Father de Montfort is thus expressed in Adriano, Enna and Reggio Calabria. Even though in these places, there is no longer a permanent presence of the DW, the FW lovingly created a refuge for young mothers and a canteen to ensure nourishment for body and soul. In addition, Sisters and FW worked in the premises managed by Caritas Catania where the poor have the possibility of using bathrooms and showers. All this is a testimony of goodness and solidarity, values on which is built authentic humanity. Every month, therefore, the FW groups meet in their parishes for moments of prayer and formation. Every three months, there are days of retreat, personal and community prayer as well as spiritual formation led by a Montfortian father, who brings together the entire Sicar community.

With joy, fraternity and harmony, they have walked together for nearly twenty years, renewing and strengthening the relationship between them and with God, following the example of St. Louis Marie de Montfort and Blessed Marie-Louise of Jesus.

*Domenico and Adriana,  
Friends of Wisdom  
Italy*

# My Oratory - in Time of Confinement

**\*\*** Since the arrival of Covid-19, social distancing measures have been advocated in accordance with the World Health Organisation (WHO).) So, it's all about living differently...

**WARNING ! Hearts ignore distances !**

**Upon Waking :** Just like Marie-Louise, I wish to live precious moments in my oratory.

**Prayer:** My Dear Jesus, out of kindness for me, give me the grace to practice what you inspire me to do. I want to work at building within me an oratory for you.

**FOUNDATION :** Grounded in the faith of my baptism, my life today is in Christ who loved me and gave himself up for me. I no longer live. If I live, pray and love it is Christ who lives, prays and loves in me.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Column : TRUST

The Lord is coming

...in confinement, distancing, mask, screening, directives...

Are you free to let go all control in order to leave room for the Lord?

Trust me, I am with you.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Column : LIBEROS

The Lord is coming

...with what I live today...

What am I asking of you, Lord?

Liberos : give me a heart free of your freedom

A heart free to *Love without Borders*

Trust me, I am with you.



## 3<sup>e</sup> Column : HUMOR

The Lord is coming

...God is Humor...

Strange things happen....

All peoples on earth speak the same language...

Meeting through Zoom, speaking with Skype...

Virtual reality infiltrates everything and everywhere,  
Even masses.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Column : SIMPLICITY**

The Lord is coming...

Help me, Lord

Simply to welcome each day as God's gift

To appreciate simple things of life with humility and without sparkle

To draw my joy from Mary's Yes and to simply live my mission.



#### **5<sup>th</sup> Column : DETACHMENT**

The Lord passes by...

...create in me a space for freedom and gratuity, in order to make space for the Essential Good, for the  
**LOVE** for Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom.

God alone is my lot, my life and my wealth  
(C 52, 11).

Put your trust in Me ! Hang on ! I am with you!

**LEW 182** : The desire for Wisdom is surely a great gift from God..

**LEW 183** : I longed for Wisdom, I asked for Her, I loved and sought Her...I went everywhere to seek Her.  
(Wis 1: 2, 18)

*Sr. Lise Thérien DW  
Canada*

# Transition and Adaptation



The little town of St-François of Madawaska, New Brunswick, Canada, has been the object of love for many years, with a turnover of 51 Daughters of Wisdom committed in the service of the Congregation since its foundation on September 3, 1945. The Sisters served generously in different fields: education, home visitation and care to Seniors, parish ministry and housekeeping.

Nowadays, the last Daughters of Wisdom were present, Sr. Denise Hébert and Sr. Nicole Rousse, lived and worked there, 54 and 45 years respectively. It goes without saying that during that time, they won the trust of the endearing and sympathetic population.

Sr. Denise continued her education mission at primary and secondary level, while Sr. Nicole offered her services as teachers' aid and assistance to the children. Thanks to her teaching position, Sr. Denise became member of the Regional Study Committee for the development of the North-West (St-François and Connors). She is member of the historical Society of St-François for Education. Sr. Denise provided the direction of the liturgical animation so many times, especially on Sundays, in the parishes of Connors and St-François, in addition to commitment to funerals, weddings and other celebrations.

Time and time again, the outreach of the two Daughters of Wisdom, has been extolled, be it prayer, compassion or hospitality marked by rare quality. The lay prayer group became in the long run, "authentic witnesses of the Word" with the people. The prayer group, formed by lay people, has long been authentic witness of the Word for everyone. In the midst of the people, their presence never failed to bestow on them a wide variety of assistance.

Now is the time to leave! At 5:45 a.m. on September 15, 2020, Sr. Nicole closes the lights and the door of the house ... and symbolically, turns a page that opens on a new story. Two brave Daughters of Montfort and Marie-Louise arrive in Ottawa the same day after a very long road trip. In addition to their personal effects, they bring with them a cross of Poitiers, first Rule of Life of Wisdom. From this cross the inspiring Word will spring forth, which opens the way from death to life.

*Sr. Lise Thérien, DW  
Canada*



## I Must Love, I Must Love ! (Ct. 148)

We thank and bless the Lord for the love that Sr. Giovanna shared for 55 years as a missionary in Peru. I got to know her better in the community of Ñaña when she was director of Our Lady of Wisdom College. She was a creative and enterprising Sister. Her perseverance and spirit of prayer helped her to perceive with the eyes of God the various ways of responding to reality in missions where she served: Ñaña, Yanahuanca, Huánuco and Tingo María.

At Ñaña College, she initiated the folk dances and theater Festival. Her tenacity and her guidance fostered the love of teaching among teachers like myself. In 1993, despite the terrorist and drug trafficking situation that affected that area, I accompanied her on a trip to Tingo Maria, her new mission, located in the high jungle of Peru.



Sr. Giovanna also launched there, with a Friend of Wisdom, a program of violence prevention against children and adolescents. She also started a civil association for the protection of victims of violence and built a shelter to accommodate them. Since 2011 this Center has been a temporary refuge that accommodates hundreds of girls, boys and adolescents who have suffered family and sexual abuse. As a good educator, she encouraged another foundation: the Educational Institution "Mary Queen of Wisdom", where the sheltered victims can study.



There is no lasting economic aid from the Peruvian state. But thanks to Sr. Giovanna's trust in Divine Providence this work continues. Her courage and the collaborative work with the Sisters and the Friends of Wisdom have kept the work going. The Sisters thank Sr Giovanna for her deep desire to educate children, her great entrepreneurial spirit and her deep sense of justice in the defense of innocent children and young people. Her life? A living testimony of "I must love, that I love, God hidden in my neighbor. (Canticle 148)

*Sr. Rosa Amelia Canicoba L. DW,  
María Luisa*