



Sagesse Internationale

DARING A PASCHAL WAY OF SEEING

« This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. »¹

The Kingdom sprouts and grows without us knowing how. Looking at the state of our world, the changing climate, the natural disasters and their effects on populations, at the violence suffered or inflicted on our brothers and sisters, on Creation, we might ask ourselves where are the signs of the Kingdom sprouting and growing. ***"Indeed, behold, the Kingdom of God is among you"***, says Jesus.² Perhaps it is a question of changing the way we see our world? Perhaps it is a matter of looking at our world with a **Paschal way of seeing**, that is to say, with a seeing that does not ignore suffering or difficulties but discerns the signs of the newness of the Kingdom in the density, messiness of reality. On what condition and in what way can we recognize it?

In the text **New Wine, in new Wineskins**, Pope Francis responds by saying, "Jesus' words and gestures continuously guide towards a process of infinite openness to the newness of the Kingdom."³ The Kingdom comes about through a new way of living, a new way of being in relationship with God, others and Creation: a way of living that is counter-cultural.

In the midst of the distress of our world, the poor, the impoverished, the disaster-stricken, the hungry and people of goodwill choose cooperation over competition, giving and sharing over hoarding or

¹ Mark, 4, 26-27, *Bíblia Católica Online*: www.bibliacatolica.com.br/new-jerusalem-bible/mark/4/26

² Luke 17, 21, *Bíblia Católica Online* : www.bibliacatolica.com.br/new-jerusalem-bible/luke/17/

³ **New Wine in new Wineskins**, The consecrated life and its ongoing challenges since Vatican II, Guidelines, Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, p. 63.

self-preservation, life given over comfort, relationship over isolation, community living over individualism, dialogue and reconciliation over violence, hospitality over hostility. Are these not signs of openness to the newness of the Kingdom?

He goes on to say: *“The first step towards this openness is discernment and the refusal of all that is in contradiction with the substantial values of fidelity to God, which is manifested in openness to service.”*⁴

Throughout this past year, we have witnessed, at home and in the world, words, small and great gestures that, if we know how to discern, to see, give us a glimpse of the Kingdom in our midst. Having a paschal way of seeing, a seeing that descends in the depth of reality and that communes with it as it presents itself, will allow us to discern the newness and the progress of the Kingdom.

Humanity is one. More than ever, we need to live as sisters and brothers of the same human family and, as sisters and brothers of Creation. All is One. We are invited to open up new paths of hope for all through concrete attitudes and choices such as *“the service and the steady journey towards the poor and solidarity with the least among us; the promotion of the dignity of the person in whatever situation they find themselves living and suffering; subsidiarity as an exercise of reciprocal trust and generous collaboration of all and with all.”*⁵

When we listen to national and international news or read the newspaper, social networks, can our gaze go beyond the simple facts and detect the Mystery that is hidden there, Life that germinates and grows.



Sr Marie-Reine Gauthier, fdl
General Councillor

⁴ Ibid., p.68.

⁵ New wine, new wineskins, Since the Second Vatican Council, Consecrated Life and the Challenges Still Open, Orientations, Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. P.69-70

WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

In Circular no. 12 of June 2021, the General Council informed you that, after a time of discernment on the dimension of communication at the level of the Congregation, the mission of the General Administration and in order to prepare the future, it had taken the decision to organize a unified communication service which would be led by a person **"in charge of communication"**. Thus, the General Council is pleased to welcome Mr. Xavier Le Roux as Communications Officer.

His main tasks are to manage the various social media, the International Website and the International Bulletin. He will be responsible for soliciting texts and photos for the Bulletin and the Website, translating documents from French to English and vice versa, revising, editing and posting on the various platforms. In addition, he will be the guardian of the image of the Congregation in the social media.

We wish him a warm welcome and a fruitful collaboration with us.

A message from M. Le Roux

Greetings dear sisters,

For those who don't know me yet, let me introduce myself: Xavier Le Roux. Soon I will celebrate my 28 years and almost 5 years of experience in digital communication. I arrived at the beginning of June and was warmly welcomed by the sisters at the Generalate where I was able to witness a great spirit of union, simplicity and openness. As I like to travel a lot, I also appreciate the sense of internationality that is very present in my work place because of the presence of sisters from several continents.

I am still getting acquainted with the Congregation. I am learning a little more every day but I already have many ideas for projects that I would like to carry out to make known the Congregation and its values. Please feel free to contact me or give me your suggestions!



Xavier Le Roux

A HEART IN THE SERVICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WEBSITE

In December 2012, Sr Josiane Legrand was appointed Technical Editor, responsible for the formatting of the content and posting of articles and photos on the **Congregation's International Website**. Her first steps were accompanied by the know-how and expertise of Sisters Madeleine Malette and Lucille Deschenes of Canada.

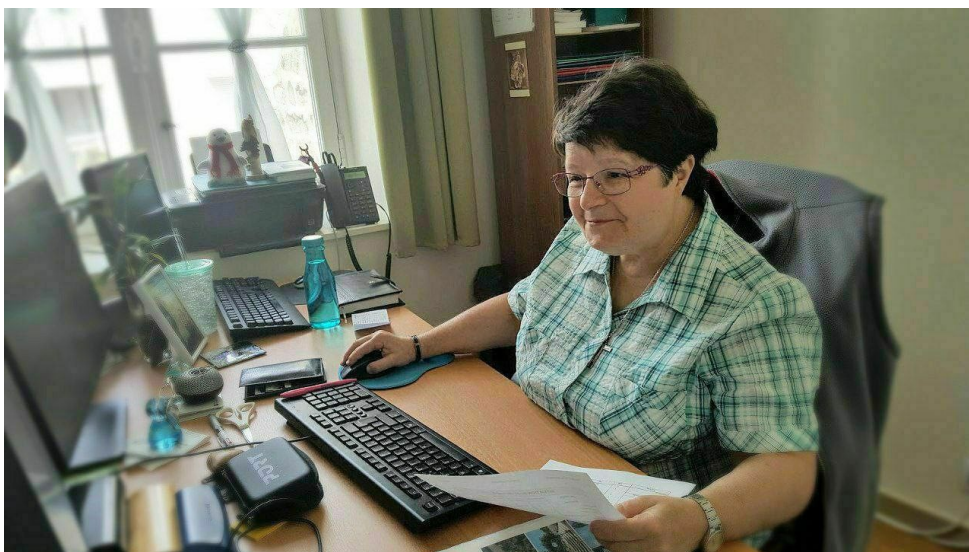


In addition to the technical know-how, there is the skill of presenting the articles. Throughout the years, Sr Josiane has welcomed the articles from the Entities, and skillfully enhanced them so as to convey their beauty through the choice of layout, framing and photos.

With the arrival of a **communications officer**, Sr Josiane's mission in the service of the Congregation's website is coming to an end. New horizons will open up for her.

Sr Josiane, we are grateful for the service you have given with love, generosity and joy. Your gifts and talents at the service of our communication mission have paved the way for the future.

SINCERE THANKS TO SR. JOSIANE LEGRAND



Sr. Lise Leriche: More than a decade of service to the Bulletin Sagesse International

Having the responsibility of the International Wisdom Bulletin, I collaborated with Lise Leriche, a Canadian Daughter of Wisdom who already had a good experience of the Wisdom Bulletin for the translations, the formatting, the presentation of the articles and photos as you find it in the publications of **"Sagesse internationale"**.

Lise has always been committed to this mission with the **"perfection"** that characterizes her in the work she does behind the scenes and to which she devotes an incalculable amount of time and energy.

As of June, the Bulletin is under the responsibility of the Communications Officer that the General Council has just recruited. The General Council would like to express its gratitude to Sr. Lise for having put her skills at the service of the International Wisdom Bulletin for more than ten years.

Thank you very much, Sr. Lise, for all the services rendered to the Congregation through the Bulletin which is a **"tool" to concretize some of our values as Daughters of Wisdom: "**, to encourage dialogue, communication, sharing of information and formation, consultation and participation throughout the Congregation"¹.

Sr. Pierrette BWAMBA, fdl



¹ Acts of the 2018 General Chapter, P.11§4



ECHO OF VOCATIONAL AWARENESS

Vocational awakening is part of the mission of the Daughters of Wisdom in the DRC. A sister is appointed coordinator of the activities of the vocation awareness at the level of the Delegation. She collaborates closely with each person in charge of vocation awareness appointed in the community. We have the same objective: **"To make the Congregation known to young girls who wish to become religious"**. However, it is left to each person in charge to concretize this objective according to the reality of the milieu. Usually, the sisters are creative in the way they present the Congregation, by presenting our charism, our mission and our works.

Like everywhere else and in the Congo, religious life no longer seems to be an ideal that attracts many young girls today. We are counting on the fact that **young people in general remain committed to our churches** and among them, some decide to become religious. For this, we are present in the youth groups and movements in the parishes and in the schools; it is there that we meet them and try to accompany them in the discovery of their vocation to religious life.



Sister Marie-Magdeleine

Here are **two testimonies of the Daughters of Wisdom** responsible for vocation awareness in their community:

At the Jesus-Wisdom/Yanonge community: "I am sister Marie-Magdeleine KYAKIMWA, Daughter of Wisdom for 3 years. I accompany the young aspirants at the parish level. This mission gives me joy in spite of the challenges encountered. I marvel at the way the Lord reaches out to each young person in his or her reality by putting in their hearts the desire to follow him or her into religious or priestly life. And each one, in his or her own way, collaborates in this work of God and seeks to discover his or her vocation to the religious life through my accompaniment at their side.

Some young people join the vocation group without being baptized. In this case, **I accompany them first by doing the catechesis for baptism.**

Others talk about their desire for religious life but are afraid of the negative view that people have of it. These young people need to be encouraged.

Others, on the other hand, are open about their vocation to religious life but are discouraged when they see

some people already committed to religious life being dismissed from a congregation. They see this as a failure and are afraid that it will happen to them as well.

One of the major challenges in our milieu is the low quality of the schools. The young people do not always have the required level to undertake the formation to priestly and religious life. For this reason, in addition to the spiritual activities planned for the group (recollections, sharing the Word of God...) I initiated the French course to help the young people improve their level of French.

I thank the Lord who continues to call young people to follow him; may He help them grow in their vocation.

At the community of Our Lady of Wisdom: Sister Alphonsine MANDILI, 2 years of religious life as a Daughter of Wisdom; she is responsible for vocational awareness in Isangi.

"Young people attract young people... I notice that being a young religious, I am close to young people through the mission of vocational awakening. Several activities are aimed at the youth of our parish in order to engage them in the service of their neighbor. To achieve this, I really try to understand their mentality by remaining open and welcoming. In order to be close to them, **I try to adopt their language** and thus support those who feel attracted by religious life. I admit that at the beginning I did not know how to do this, I received support from my community leader. It all started with a small choir for the parish mass on Saturday. I started with 4 young people who led the songs of the mass with me. **Gradually the number increased.** The choir made a good animation of the Saturday morning mass and the participation of the faithful became remarkable.



Sister Alphonsine

Another place where I am connected with the youth is in the parish group called **Kizito-Anuarite**, a movement of young Catholics who are inspired by the Christian virtues of Kizito, one of the youngest of the martyrs of Uganda, and Anuarite, a young Congolese nun who was a martyr for purity. The Kizito-Anuarite group is present in all the dioceses of our country. And it is a nursery of vocations to religious and priestly life.

Here are some of the activities that I carry out with the young people: monthly recollections nourished by the meditation of the Word of God around the different calls in the Bible. The days of recollection that end with the celebration of the Eucharist are **animated by the young people and their parents** are present at this mass.

I visit the families of the young aspirants and talk with them about the meaning of their daughter's religious life project.

I send the leaflets presenting our congregation to the parish priests of distant parishes and I keep in touch with the young people of the distant villages by telephone, WhasApp... others as well.

Vocation ministry is close to my heart, I give the best of myself because I realize the work that my formators have done with me to love and consolidate my vocation to religious life. I would like to do this for have done with me to love and consolidate my vocation to religious life. I would like to do this for others as well.

Father de Montfort's invitation to Mother Marie-Louise at the Little Plessis: **"See my daughter, this hen who has her chicks under her wings... with what care she takes of them... this is how you must do..."** this invitation motivates me to take care of young people who are searching for their vocation.

Together, let us pray to the Lord to send workers into his harvest.

Sr. Valérie Mboma Sona, fdl,
Coordinator of Vocational Awakening / DRC



Sister Alphonsine



Sister Marie Magdeleine

"MONTFORT HOME", A PAGE OF MISSION HISTORY OF THE BELGIAN DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM.

Montfort community in Jette had a double mission: a house of welcome for the Montfort Association and a Provincial house which became the house of the Delegation of the sisters in Belgium.

The work "**Accueil Montfort**" has been the main mission of this house for several years. It all began in **1979** with two nursing sisters, Sister Thérèse Jossart and Sister Marcelle Adam, belonging to the congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom. They founded and inaugurated in Jette, under the mayorate of Jean Louis Thys, a home for young girls under age.

This project was born out of the distress they encountered during their rounds of home care, but also out of the fact that only 110 beds in women's homes existed at the time in Brussels.

Sister Thérèse took over the direction of the "**Montfort Center**" shelter. The first underage girls were welcomed in collaboration with the social service and the police of the town. The house received the approval of the Ministry of Justice. A regular collection of vegetables and bread is set up for the needs of the house. In 1982, the staff was hired for the work.

Another reception structure called "**Accueil Montfort**" was created in 1986. Constituted as a non-profit association (ASBL); the structure depends on the Ministry of Social Affairs. From this came, among other things, the impossibility for Sister Thérèse to continue to take care of the girls that she had welcomed at the "**Montfort Center**" who were minors and not yet autonomous at the age of 18 or who still needed support.

Following this observation, as the house was becoming small and as a large part of the land was occupied by a shed that was useless, the idea came to build a 16-flat building in its place to accommodate these adult women with, on the first floor, a checkroom.

In **1989**, the first community of 4 sisters moved in on the third floor, until today.

In **1993**, thanks to a donation, Accueil Montfort acquired a building on Place Cardinal Mercier, where a social restaurant was set up as well as four lodgings for men on the upper floors.

Since **1998**, Accueil Montfort has been under the authority of the Commission Communautaire Française (COCOF). Accueil Montfort is open to everyone without racial, religious or philosophical discrimination.

In June **2009**, the Provincialate of Avenue Van Overbeke moved to Jette in the said house. The administrative offices occupied the premises of an annex overlooking the inner courtyard.

Today, in **2021**, the building, in its entirety, will be sold to the Montfort Association. Consequently, the community will leave the premises to join the rest home in Vertefeuille in Tournai.

We think of the sisters who are preparing to leave this community which will no longer belong to us. The sisters are preparing their hearts and their suitcases for this departure which they would like to live as **"Leaving Poitiers for La Rochelle"**.

Sr Annie Joly, Sr Marie-Suzanne Thielens and Sr Monique Goris,
Daughters of Wisdom / Delegation of Belgium

View of the Delegation house



Accueil Montfort



View interior courtyard.





Relais Sagesse - A House and its Vocation

In **1984**, a new house for the Daughters of Wisdom was built at 6444 Lescarbot Street in Montreal, next to the Montfort Fathers' Provincial House. Its vocation was already defined as the future provincial administration of the Daughters of Wisdom of Quebec and its support community. In June **1985**, the Sisters moved to what would become the heart of the Québec province, where activities, celebrations and on-going formation took place. The Daughters of Marie-Louise and the Friends of Wisdom enjoyed being there to reconnect, celebrate, exchange and share with each other.

After the union of the Canadian Entities in **2004**, the Administration moved to Ottawa. The outgoing Provincial Council of Québec expressed a two-fold wish that the former Provincial House remain a gathering place for the DWs and the Friends of Wisdom of the region, and that the mission of the local community be one of collaboration with existing organizations. The Provincial Council of Canada welcomed this request.

Four Sisters accepted this mandate: Lucille Garand, Francine Gauthier, Marie-Reine Gauthier and Brigitte Landry, who were soon joined by Sisters Claudette Danis and Sylvie Bélanger. Thus, in March **2005**, the house, now named Relais Sagesse, opened its doors to several social and community organizations whose values and orientations were similar to those of the DWs.

They offered respite to single-parent families; therapeutic and spiritual support; advice and support to adolescents, guardians of the state; mothers still breastfeeding and women suffering from AIDS; formation for end-of-life support; retreats; a gathering place for the elderly; art therapy; Qi Gong; yoga; biblical recitative classes. Friends of Wisdom also had their own locale.

For sixteen years, this welcoming community created an atmosphere that was highly appreciated. Meetings with the different heads of the organizations helped to build strong ties between the various groups. They, in turn, compared the house to a slice of paradise where they could breathe peace and serenity.

With warm heart and open arms, the community also offered hospitality to the visiting Sisters and to the DWs coming from different entities to Canada for a renewal or a university program. For **seven years**, the community also took on the responsibility for "Villa Sagesse", a cottage situated in St-Côme (Quebec).

With the onset of the **COVID-19 pandemic**, it became impossible to pursue this ministry since the Sisters were included within the age bracket of the "most vulnerable". In September **2019**, the community who experienced so many unforgettable moments at Relais Sagesse regrettably declared the closing of the facility and the Leadership's decision to sell in 2021. Hence, another page in the history of the DWs will soon be turned but will remain forever in our hearts. For this we give thanks to our Wisdom God. May She bless all the DWs who wrote it, for it is a testimonial of their commitment to **"love beyond borders"**.

As sad and destabilizing as it were, this information immediately sparked a wave of recognition and thanksgiving from the organizations and the users of Relais Sagesse. Here are a few of their testimonies.

"I will remember for a long time the many good moments spent at your house with you, Daughters of Wisdom. When I think of you, a shiver of joy, of peace, and a smile come over me and connect me to you. And it is so good. THANK YOU! " - C.G.

"We welcome it with a lot of tenderness even if there is a part of us that regrets that we will no longer benefit from the kindness and warmth we feel in your house."- M. and R. B.

"This house had a soul because of your presence; the gift of life flows through you; in this place, people are nourished at the core of their being. I sincerely believe that you have allowed women and men to become more human, better humans. I am a witness to that."- M. G.

As of June **2021**, the Sisters of the community live in two separate locations on Sherbrooke Street in Montreal, near the Sanctuary Marie-Reine-des-Coeurs. This enables them to continue their ministry with the Montfort Fathers: leading prayer and biblical reflection groups; joining the parish pastoral council; working at the reception desk; giving support for the liturgy. These services are very appreciated as they give a sense of togetherness to parishioners and religious and bring forth new life to the Church.

Sr. Francine Gauthier,

DW with the collaboration of the relais Sagesse Community



The student sisters Yolande Soavelonirina, Malagasy, and Immaculée Beldorin, Haitian, with two sisters of Relais Sagesse: Laurette Fortin and Pierrette Gagnon.

Amis.es de la Sagesse – 2019





**Faith sharing led by Sr Laurette Fortin
Marie-Reine-des-Cœurs Shrine.**



Painting activity



**Meeting between the sisters and the persons in charge of
various organizations that use the Relais Sageesse premises.**

A participant in the "tricothon" activity



**The Relais Sageesse community - 2017. From left to right: Srs
Beverley Green, Pierrette Gagnon, Laurette Fortin, Pierrette
Daviau, Claudette Danis and Sylvie Bélanger.**



Francine Gauthier taking care of a child



Activities with women

How to be a Friend of Wisdom on mission in the context of the pandemic?

The Pandemic that has been affecting the world for more than a year now, affects everyone differently. Some are forced to isolate themselves, others have exposed themselves to take care of others, and others have suffered the full force of this disease and all are deprived of meetings at least physically.

In this context, how can one be a friend of Wisdom in mission?

There are certainly several answers. **In fact, probably as many as there are Friends.**

So I will start from my experience.

I was lucky enough to be spared from the disease but I did experience the confinement.

As a caregiver I felt the guilt of leaving my colleagues during this time. I then focused on prayer to support them. Once vaccinated, I went back to work (occupational therapist, in charge of adapted physical activities in a retirement home) and I enriched it by practicing animal mediation. Indeed, it is a period of emotional deprivation for the elderly and the association that used to intervene with animals can no longer do so.

I thought that the visit of my dog (prepared for this intervention) would be good for everyone, in fact it went beyond what I thought. **The affection offered by the dog is beneficial to the residents but also to the colleagues.** Listening is also very important. Recently, when a neighbor and friend asked me to help her to move when she had only three days to do so, I did not spare any effort to ensure the whole restoration of her home.

All this while continuing to accompany my mother in the evolution of her illness and to participate in the French and International committees of the Friends of Wisdom.

Why am I telling you all this and what does it have to do with the mission of the Friends of Wisdom? It is because it is my way of living it:

TOGETHER: keep the link with the friends of Wisdom and live them even virtually.

Which is a struggle for me, as I tend not to communicate much.

LOVE: in the manner of Louis-Marie and Marie-Louise, it is not a matter of making great and fiery declarations but of simple and concrete gestures that express this Love of Wisdom.

LIVE: in daily life, dedicate our actions to Wisdom, tend towards the good (contemplate, give and forgive), pray whenever we can for each other.

PROCLAIM: to declare our faith, not to hide from it even in an environment as secular as the French civil service. To trust our "unfailing father" whatever happens in the midst of our weaknesses, our illnesses, our sufferings, to keep deep inside the conviction that He loves us and is at our side.

WISDOM : to locate the signs of the presence of Wisdom at our side.

In this pandemic context, not being able to be close to the migrants, two young people in formation for the

priesthood, within the Charles de Foucauld Home, came (invited by the parish priest) to pay regular visits to my mother. It is a time of rest that Wisdom grants me.

This is how I live my mission as a friend of Wisdom in this time of pandemic.

This article has allowed me to reread this period in the light of the mission of the Friends of Wisdom, an exercise that I invite you to try.

Véronique Frinault, friend of Wisdom France
Coordinator of the International Committee of Friends of Wisdom



This flower is called a heart of Mary

Visit of the dog to the elderly





To commit ourselves as Daughters of Wisdom for the transition to an integral ecology

In these last Encyclicals, Pope Francis invited us to both:

- The recognition that *"everything is connected" and that "concern for the environment together with a sincere love for human beings and a constant commitment to the problems of society are necessary"* (Laudato si' (91)
- To consider the urgency of a new and more inclusive socio-economic paradigm that can reflect the truth that we are *"one humanity, as travelers made of the same human flesh, as children of the same earth that welcomes us all"*. (Enc. Fratelli tutti, 8).

In a letter to the Focolare Movement, Pope Francis continued, *"This solidarity among ourselves and with the world around us requires a firm commitment to develop and implement concrete measures that promote the dignity of all people in their human, family and professional relationships, while at the same time fighting the structural causes of poverty and working to protect the natural environment. To achieve an integral ecology requires a profound interior conversion, both at the personal and community levels."*¹

Invited like the whole Church to make our contribution to this global movement, energized by the charism of the Congregation, our commitment as Daughters of Wisdom places us at the heart of this search for a just way to build together the future of the Planet by :

Responding to the cries of the poor, with particular attention to vulnerable groups such as women, children, and migrants - echoing objective 2 of Laudato Si



Thus, the Mamans Hekima project, accompanied by the Daughters of Wisdom, involves groups of women in Kisangani, DRC. They began meeting in **2012** to support each other in the daily challenges of their lives. They come from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions, but they all face the same challenges: financial difficulties, raising their children, family illness, and lack of knowledge and information about their rights.

With the modest but increased income from the sale of their products, the women now have **greater economic independence and control over the family finances**. They are able to buy more food for their families, their children

attend school more regularly, and they are able to take their children to the local health clinic when they fall ill.

¹ Message to the participants of the EcoOne Congress - Focolare Movement / October 26, 2020

Educating in integral ecology (ecological dimension and dimension of peace)² - echoing objective 4 of Laudato Si 2)

In the schools in Haiti, this commitment is expressed as follows: *"Our involvement in the field of peace is played out in the way we help the students in our schools to live in peace with each other, to accept difference and to practice tolerance as Jesus taught us"*, because we live in a country that is facing a recurring socio-political crisis. We encourage our students to live in harmony with themselves, others and their surroundings.



We also sensitize them to respect and safeguard the environment. An introduction to ecology course is offered in our schools at the high school level.

We educate the students to sort waste, to beautify their environment (plant care, tree planting, recycling of plastic pots and cans to make crafts), to collect garbage around the school and to participate in reforestation days.

Adopting simple lifestyles (responsible consumption) - Goal 6 of Laudato Si³

The 3 Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) inspire the way of life of many of our communities.



Through these three examples, through all that is lived out daily in the mission, *"let us seek, contemplate, and reveal the Wisdom at the heart of the world"*. And together, let us celebrate as a community, as a Congregation, this presence of Wisdom that leads us to the search for a sustainable and integral development for all and for the safeguard of our common home.

For the JPIC Committee
Sr. Isabelle Retailleau, fdl

² Letter from the JPIC International Committee - May 7, 2021

³ Introduction Rule of Life of the Daughters of Wisdom p. 11

Experience of discernment for change in the provincial government in Madagascar through digital means

Today, online communications become an inescapable means to communicate especially in the global context of the Covid-19 pandemic. We have just experienced this in Madagascar because it was impossible for us to hold the discernment Assembly. Therefore, the discernment for the nomination of the new provincial council took place virtually, accompanied and supported by the General Council.



We experienced the advantages and **disadvantages of the new communication technology for living the discernment online**. The advantages were that we could stay at home without having to worry about making the long trip for some sisters to Tana where the assemblies are usually held. We have saved money on travel.

The discernment experienced in the community has allowed a certain sense of responsibility. Even if the organization and duration of the discernment required more time between the Province and the General

Council, we lived this discernment in a climate of calm without rushing. We found another advantage in the fact that the process was really lived in confidentiality. **It also taught us a sense of punctuality, of personal and community commitment in order to be able to send the result of our discernment in the time allotted.**

In fact, the online discernment has strengthened our mutual support in prayer, collaboration and communication among ourselves. The sisters have taken up the challenge of the new by learning to use **modern means of communication**: Zoom for some, Skype or WhatsApp for others and even SMS sent from the most distant communities. This has opened our minds and our desire to learn at any age.

We also saw the limitations of virtual discernment and its drawbacks. For some communities, access to electricity and good Internet connectivity remain major challenges. **Some sisters have experienced a certain amount of anxiety when faced with an online process** because they were used to living the discernment in assembly (in person). For some, it was a huge challenge to learn how to use



the new communication materials. For the smaller communities, the sharing was less rewarding. We experienced the difference of not having the General Council physically with us.

Beyond the barriers of the pandemic, I dare say that virtual discernment offered us another possibility that we might not have imagined, in order to continue to function and not to remain blocked for the life and mission of the Congregation.

Nothing replaces the physical presence that we want to privilege as much as possible!

Sœur Marie Jeanne Henriette RAZAFININDRIANA, Provinciale
Madagascar

THE DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM IN CLUSONE

In **1912**, the Daughters of Wisdom opened a school in Bergamo, in the upper town area, which grew over the years, from the nursery school to the Superior and Professional School. The school grew, esteemed and recognized not only by those who attended it, but also in the whole territory.

Palestra



Laboratorio di Informatica



In **1966**, while the school was still growing, it was felt necessary to look for another location. The two main reasons for this were that the city of Bergamo had several public and private schools of higher learning, and that our school had to solve the problem of space due to the increasing number of requests.

After some research, the choice fell on Clusone, a small town in the Upper Serio Valley, located at the confluence of other valleys. **Clusone** has a population of **8,000** and no high school, so the students of the many sections of the colleges of the valleys are forced to go to the city of Bergamo, **35 km** away, to continue their studies. Moreover, in this territory, there is a strong desire for a Normal School. This choice was supported by the Ecclesiastical Offices of the Curia of Bergamo and the Inspector of the Academy.

The beginnings were not easy; committed to both the classes in Bergamo and those that were gradually opening up in Clusone, the teachers were overworked. But the sacrifices soon bore fruit, *"like the grain of which the Gospel speaks, which, if it dies, bears much fruit"*. Immediately, the enrollment was so great that two sections were needed for the first class.

Laboratorio di Chimica



Attention was immediately given to the formation, not only cultural, but also spiritual, of the young girls. It is a territory where youth are still open and the response to the formative proposals: retreats, the month of Mary, meetings..., finds a quick and generous adhesion.

The school is a significant presence in the territory. The parishes are involved at the educational and formative level and several religious are involved in the catechesis of young people and meetings for parents.

With time, the teachers, Sisters and lay people, can rejoice in the results obtained by the many students who



have attended the school. Many have found work in the schools of the territory as teachers, others have become involved in their parishes as catechists, still others have gone on to higher education and **several have returned to the Institution as teachers.**

In addition to the Normal School, the school also opened the two-year professional course for office workers. All the students, once they finished the course, found work to the satisfaction of the school and the companies, which emphasized their professional preparation and **sense of duty.**



*Laboratorio
Linguistico*

But there is no shortage of difficulties to get in the way. The number of Sisters teaching is decreasing and the number of lay people is increasing - with the resulting costs becoming unsustainable. **Then comes the temptation to close classes, year after year.**

When consulted, the Bishop, **Giulio Oggioni**, proposed a new possibility: the birth of the Diocesan School Cooperative with the economic support of the Curia of Bergamo and other Congregations - in addition to our own, of course.

And the journey continues, not without difficulties, until **2013**, when the school closes its doors. The Sisters have not been there for a long time.

But we cannot end this brief history without emphasizing the strength of the commitment of the community which, every summer, welcomed boarders and worked to support the school, whose income was never sufficient.

Finally, it is impossible not to mention at least two names: **Don Giuseppe Belotti**, teacher, formator and supporter of the school, and **Sr. Cornelia dell'Immacolata**, director for many years, capable of looking to the future with creativity. The teachers have all responded enthusiastically to this educational journey. We are

sure that the seed sown will continue to bear fruit...

Sr. Vittoria Maria dell'Eucaristia
Italy



OUR LADY OF WISDOM COLLEGE

ACACIAS - META – COLOMBIA

The **Collège Notre-Dame de la Sagesse**, located in the commune of Acacias (Meta department), was founded on December 4, **1947** by the Sisters Céline-Marie de Jésus, Marie-Agnès de Saint Joseph and Rose de Sainte Marie. Since then, many Daughters of Wisdom have fulfilled an educational mission with children and adolescents; today, only one Sister still directs the College. During these **74 years** of educational history in the region, the College has presented itself as an educational institution of high academic quality, promoting an integral formation committed to social transformation.

Many generations of men and women have passed through the College; many former students are currently civil servants, entrepreneurs, fathers and mothers who bring their children and grandchildren to continue their integral formation and study in junior high school. The society of Acacia esteems the Institution as a forger of ethical principles and values and a **witness to the project of Jesus**: the establishment of the Kingdom of God in us and in the world, according to the mission statement of our educational institutions:



« We are a Catholic educational institution of a private character that, based on Wisdom Spirituality, the critical-social pedagogical model and the Wisdom Humanizing Academic Educational Pastoral, seeks to form integral, happy and competent children and adolescents, through the integration of the processes of science, faith and life, with the participation of the family. »



From the very beginning, the Sisters, in team with lay people, have developed the programs of study with emphasis on the **promotion of Christian values** and the formation of a human being committed to personal transformation and that of his environment; the institutional educational project "**Pathway to the Integration of Science, Faith and Life**" is the result of a joint construction of an interdisciplinary team with

the presence and active participation of the Daughters of Wisdom and lay teachers.

Responding to the calls of the Church to carry out the mission with the laity, and faced with the lack of Sisters able to assume this task, the College has had four lay directors (from 2000 to 2007, from 2010 to 2012, from 2016 to 2020 and now, from 2021), who have exercised their functions with a great sense of belonging and responsibility, with the accompaniment of a Sister on the level of pastoral and spirituality.

The legal representation and the orientation of the administrative and financial part have always been in the hands of a Sister. **A new experience is underway this year.** A lay person is in charge of the administrative functions, another lay person is in charge of the accounting, and a Sister -the legal representative-, who will reside in another community as of July 2021, will continue to exercise her functions from there in telecommuting.

With the direct involvement of the laity, we seek to prolong in time the « raison d'être » of this educational institution - Wisdom Mission , at the service of the less fortunate in this region of the country, where there is no longer a presence of Sisters.

Srs Laura Martinez et Gisela Huertas, fdls



"IF YOU DON'T RISK SOMETHING FOR GOD, YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING GREAT FOR HIM"(Montfort, Lettre 27)

Here I am at the General House for almost a year and a half as Assistant to the General Secretary. I did not expect this call, because of my age and experiences. Nevertheless, this sentence of St. Louis Marie de Montfort motivated me to respond freely to this mission. This is a first missionary experience that asks of me to risk my youth for God in the face of the need of our Congregation.

Two important events marked the beginning of my mission:

The celebration of the tercentenary of the arrival of Blessed Marie Louise de Jésus in Saint Laurent and the Covid-19 pandemic. This tercentenary celebration symbolized the year in which I was entrusted with this mission in which I was able to make reference to Marie-Louise's experience. She took this word of Montfort as the guiding thread of her life. **She was 36 years old when she arrived at St. Laurent and we know well what she experienced at the beginning and during the foundation at St. Laurent.**

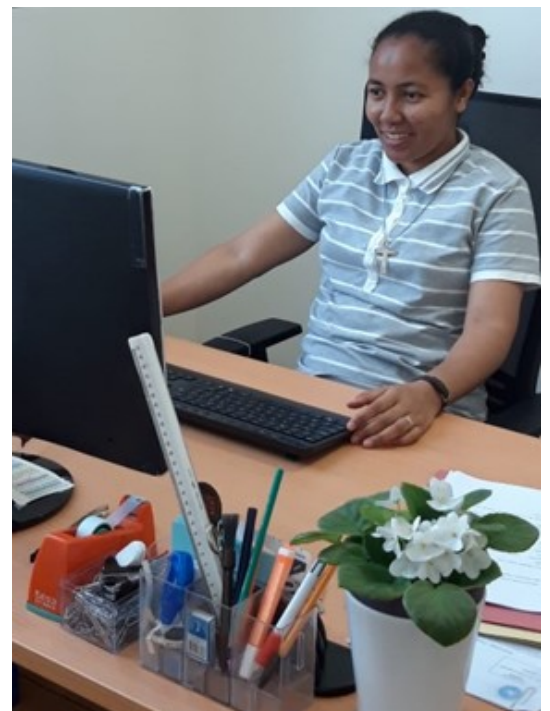
I seized this call and left my country at the same age as Marie-Louise. Her courage, her audacity and especially her trust in God's Providence have been for me remarkable sources of inspiration that I try to live each day.

Serving the Congregation in my youth is something that I risk for God with love and for love.

I who loved to be with children and young people, here I am working in an office. It is a kind of new departure from the known to the unknown. It was not easy at the beginning, but thanks to the support of each of my Sisters and the word of Montfort, I succeeded in adapting and cherishing the mission of Assistant to the General Secretary.

The second element was the Covid-19 pandemic. Only one month after my arrival in France, the country was confined for three months. It was a difficult time for me, between the fear of the disease and the different forms of adaptation. These worries were added to the learning curve of the work at the General Secretariat. But the grace of God is always behind every difficulty, since the closing of the borders has allowed the Generalate community to live in full. This helped me to get to know my community.

We have had beautiful experiences of living together, colored by various sharing, relaxation and communion with those affected by this pandemic in prayer and in concrete gestures. I am now happy to live in this community which has a great mission at the heart of our Congregation and which helps me to grow in various areas. **To have the audacity like Marie-Louise to take on a responsibility is to take a step towards maturity.**



Working at the General Secretariat helps me develop my sense of belonging to the Congregation.

I am becoming more sensitive to everything that affects the Members, the Entities and the life of the Congregation. This makes me more and more motivated to accomplish my mission. I was inspired by this quote from John Kennedy, **"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."**

The country here is my congregation. I have received a lot from it, among other things, the various trainings and studies, it is now my turn to give myself to it. I work only for its good and for the greater glory of God. I love our Congregation and I am always ready, as much as possible, to contribute.

Sr. Albertine Solohery, fdl
Assistant to the General Secretary

AUDACIOUS IN MISSION AND SISTER IN COMMUNITY!



On July 10, 2018, Sr. Marie-Alice Guerrier arrived from **Lima** to Huánuco with Sr. Victoria Retuerto Chauca (community animator), who made the trip to accompany her. In community, we benefited from her testimony as a woman who is available, prayerful, fraternal, helpful and attentive to the needs of the community.

When she was not working at the rehabilitation center, **she dedicated her days to visiting the sick** and bringing them the Eucharist. Thanks to her talent for singing, she participated in the youth group of the "Lumière naissante" choir and accompanied them, witnessing to them the joy and happiness of following Jesus Christ.

She valued the mission projects and participated in the different events with simplicity and fraternity, showing her affection and closeness to the visually impaired and blind students.

During the COVID pandemic, she participated in the virtual meetings of the Friends of Wisdom and the prayer groups.

During Sr. Marie-Alice's stay in our community, we appreciated her **fraternity** and collaboration on various levels, as well as her **simplicity**. We thank her for her dedication to the sick children of CREVAL (rehabilitation center); **she spared no effort to help the children and their families**. Together, we paid a few visits to the families.

Even in the beginning, the language did not paralyze her in her work since **she spoke with the language of the heart...** as the Little Prince says. She continues to speak with this same language..., that is the one that pleases God.

In the hard moments of the pandemic, when we had remained locked up for several months in the community, suddenly there emerged in our hearts the desire to go out and reach out to those who suffer from hunger, pain, lack of work and loneliness.

Up there, on the hillsides! Mary Alice boldly joins this initiative without fear, without preconceived ideas, with great availability; she climbs like a gazelle on rocky terrain, puts wild dogs to flight, enters houses without fear of contagion, with the sole desire to be hope for the abandoned.

Marie-Alice, the community thanks you for being a bold missionary in the challenging times when the pandemic had touched the vulnerability of our



people. Women like you are invaluable and **"worth a Peru"**! That's why we say: Thank you so much! **With all our hearts!**

The Sisters of the community of Huánuco - Peru



Sister Lucy, back to India

The sisters of the Corbeil community are happy to share with you the last moments spent with Sr Lussiyamma JOSEPH.

On this occasion, the parishioners prepared a festive mass for her, rich in emotion for all.

The farewell that was addressed to her, reflects the quality of her investment in our community, as well as in the parish community and in her various commitments in the City.

"We leave you to discover these few lines written by a parishioner in the name of the ecclesial community."

CORBEIL-ESSONNES, May 9th, 2021



Dear Sister Lucy,

We love this district of TARTERÊTS, it is very lively, with its diversity and its different ethnic groups. Saint Joseph's Church is the heart of our community.

Since 2002, the neighborhood has had the joy of welcoming the religious community of the Daughters of Wisdom. Each time one of the sisters leaves us for other missions, either in France or abroad, our hearts are a little sad. Human beings are like that, they get attached and do not like separations.

Lucy, you have been with us since 2018, these three years have passed very quickly.

You are going to join the Community of the Daughters of Wisdom of BANGALORE in INDIA and continue your mission among the poorest.

Your activities in the neighborhood have been diverse. You have contributed by your presence and your discreet investment to give happiness to the sick and the elderly of the neighborhood, to bring them communion, and to support them.

Saint Joseph's Church, so beautifully decorated by you every week and Sunday, will miss you.

Thank you also for helping Santha clean the church.

You have given your time by collaborating with the RED CROSS for the distribution of food parcels once a week.

In 2003, 23 religious congregations joined together to create the Champs de Booz humanitarian association to help the most vulnerable refugees in France: single women who arrive alone, fleeing a country where they are in danger. You have helped these refugees by supporting them and bringing your active and precious presence.

In the neighborhood, you formed a group to discover Wisdom, together during meetings to reflect, share and pray... in the light of the Word of God.

This group has become FRIENDS OF WISDOM.

Santha, Stéphane, Nicole, Elise, Madeleine, Antoinette give you thanks and thank you for these meetings of spiritual journey.

It is never easy to see appreciated people leave us, even if this is part of the mission and obedience of religious communities.

Lucy, on April 11, 2021 you will join another Daughters of Wisdom Community in order to continue to dare to open new doors, to dare new encounters, faithful to the precepts of Marie-Louise of Jesus, and Louis-Marie GRIGNON de MONTFORT.

Since 2018, your arrival in the neighborhood, we have become accustomed to your presence among us.

Thank you for your availability to everyone, for the many services you rendered in the neighborhood, for your presence at Saint Joseph...

We will miss you for all this, but we will not fail to think of you and to unite ourselves to your prayers.

Long road Lucy with Wisdom, hoping from time to time for a little word giving us news of you and of INDIA!

We embrace you with all our heart and say a very big THANK YOU!

The community of Saint Joseph of Tarterêts.



FAREWELL TO SR. TERESA de JESUS

In April 2016, Sr. Teresa came to the United States from Colombia, South America. Sister joined the international community of the Daughters of Wisdom working in St. Hugh of Lincoln Parish, Huntington Station, New York.

Sr. Teresa has been active in working with the Hispanic community. She was a member of the Divine Mercy prayer group, as well as the group that visited and prayed with sick members of the parish. Sr. Teresa helped in the Summer Bible Camp, and also joined in cooking breakfast on Sundays in the parish kitchen.



She started literacy classes to help those unable to read and write in their own language.

Besides her parish work, Sr. Teresa was an active member of SEPA MUJER, a Long Island group to empower Hispanic women. She joined members in Albany, New York and

Washington, D.C. to advocate for driving licenses for immigrants, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), and fair wages.

We will miss you, Sr. Teresa. We admire your tireless energy for the poor, the sick, and the disadvantaged. May God bless you as you return to your country. You have made a lasting impression on our community and you will not be forgotten. **THANK YOU.**



The Daughters of Wisdom of the international community of Huntington Station, New York.

MISSION OF SR KARUNA REKHA

XAXA IN HAITI

Sr. Karuna Rekha Xaxa, Daughter of Wisdom of Indian nationality, sent on mission to Haiti, to the Institution of the Sacred Heart of Turgeau, arrived on December 24, 2017, the eve of the nativity of our Lord, as a beautiful gift from Wisdom.

Sr. Karuna quickly adapted to her new environment, making herself everything to everyone, investing as much with the little ones in kindergarten as with the older ones in high school. It would be up to the one who would be the first to meet her in the morning to greet her with a vigorous **"Good morning sister Karuna"** and to ask her all sorts of questions about her country of origin and her culture.

As the days went by, her active, joyful and smiling presence was a beautiful testimony of the effective, active presence of Wisdom Incarnate. During her first year, she taught English not only at the Institution of the Sacred Heart, but also at Sister Etienne School and Our Lady of the Rosary School, two Wisdom schools in the commune of Pétiön-Ville, in addition to her role as assistant principal to Sister Nadige.

Her love of nature and animals quickly became proverbial not only in the community but in the province. Indeed, during her time in Turgeau, **46 puppies benefited from her care and attention**. She saved 13 newborn puppies from certain death by bottle-feeding them during their mother's illness. Today, the 6 dogs in the community have a touching attachment to her, following her like a shadow whenever she is around.

Sr Karuna, by her spirit of faith, her openness to others and to differences, her ability to listen, has allowed us to experience in community the richness of Wisdom who welcomes and loves beyond borders.

With you, Sr. Karuna, we thank the Lord for the pearl that you are for the congregation. **Thank you for having put your talents and gifts at the service of Haitian youth**. May Wisdom - who cries at the crossroads - accompany you in your new missions! **Be assured of our prayers**.



The sisters of the Turgeau community



Sr Karuna and the sisters of Haiti

