

UNDER^{the} SOUTHERN CROSS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH - HOLY SPIRIT PROVINCE IN AUSTRALIA | NO 20 / JUNE 2017

INVITATION TO CAMINO 2017 – 2022

Dear Sisters, Associates and Friends,



As one of my favourite authors wrote: *"My work is a ministry and an invitation from God to help create a better world. As a spiritual guide I encourage you to take time for prayer, remembering that words are the least important part of prayer. Just open your heart and become a space for God. Create a little space for silence. There are*

some things we can only learn in silence. Commit yourself to a spiritual path." (Macrina Wiederkehr)

A significant date in the life of Holy Spirit Province and in my life was 8 January 2017. I never thought that God's grace will lead me to be provincial leader. My name is Sr Lucy (Lucyna Fraczek), and I am the new Provincial Leader for the Australian Province. I will do my best to continue the beautiful journey begun by our previous Provincial Leaders, and especially by Sr Grace (Grazyna Roclawska). I am grateful for the "Spirit" that was passed on to me and which I desire to treasure and nurture for the next six years! Thank you very much to the previous

administration teams for their generous service, which began in Australia sixty-five years ago.

Full of passion in my heart for my new journey, I would like to invite all of you to join me and walk this special journey which I call "Camino". The most popular pilgrimage to date is the ancient path, "The Way", to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. This pilgrimage is what I was planning to do for my sabbatical year: walk the way to St. James' Cathedral! Nevertheless, God had different plans for me - bigger than I ever dreamed about. After prayer, fasting and discernment, I said YES. I accepted the nomination to leadership which is a great privilege. This great privilege comes with great responsibilities. Please pray for me and for my Team that we will stay on the right track.

Starting this new journey, I did not give up on my first dream. I am on the way in spirit, and I believe you can walk with me in your daily pilgrimage in this beautiful life.

My deepest gratitude to everyone who is walking this path with me in spirit and in many other ways.

BY SR LUCYNA FRACZEK

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JOURNEYS END AND BEGIN

January 8, 2017 was a significant day in the life of Holy Spirit Province - the commissioning of the new Provincial Leadership Team for our Australian Province. In the presence of the majority of the Sisters from the Province, the "torch" was being passed from the previous Provincial Administration: Sr. Grazyna Roclawska - Provincial Superior, Sr. Joanna Zarzyczna - Assistant Provincial, Sr. Anita Litwin - Provincial Councilor, Sr. Jean Wojcik - Provincial Secretary / Councilor, Sr. Lucyna Fraczek - Provincial Treasurer / Councilor, to the new group: Sr. Lucyna Fraczek - Provincial Superior, Sr. Alicja Drabik - Assistant Provincial, Sr. Grazyna Roclawska - Provincial Treasurer / Councilor, Sr. Rita Marie Apura - Provincial Secretary / Councilor. Words of thanks were offered to the previous administration for their years of generous service, as well as to the new team for their willingness to take up this ministry, carrying on the legacy begun in this land over 60 years ago.

Sister Angela Marie Mazzeo, General Councilor, was present in Australia to take part in this important event as a representative of the General Administration. During the specially prepared Eucharistic Liturgy, the new Leadership Team was commissioned, with each Sister promising to utilize her gifts and abilities in ministry to the Province and its Sisters, serving with energy, imagination and love. Following this part of the ceremony, the newly appointed/elected local leaders were then also commissioned. To conclude this ritual, all the Sisters present extended their hands asking God to bless each other with the words, "Heavenly Father, you have chosen us to be your beloved people, and have gathered us to live in this Province. Give your blessing to each one of us. Guide our actions by the light of Your Spirit, and help them to work for Your honor and glory and for the benefit of all Your people. May the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, be with us! May they help us, teach us and bless us at every step and at every moment. Amen". (Originally posted on nazarethfamily.org)

BY SR ANGELA MARIE MAZZEO



8 stycznia 2017 był oficjalnym dniem przekazania Zarządu Prowincjalnego Prowincji Ducha Świętego. W czasie liturgii siostry modliły się w intencji Prowincji oraz Zgromadzenia. Sr Angela Marie reprezentowała Matkę Generalną. Na zakończenie Siostry udzieliły sobie nawzajem modlitewnego błogosławieństwa.



A SINGLE ROSE CAN BE MY GARDEN



“A single rose can be my garden”. This short but meaningful sentence spoke of an image that Sr. Josita and I shared for 42 years. I first saw this sentence written, below a magnificently beautiful red rose, on a poster that Sr. Josita gave me, for some celebratory occasion, in the first year of my novitiate. I don’t remember the exact occasion but the beauty of the rose and the power of this simple sentence have remained with me, throughout my life, since that gift was given. The poster hung on the wall of my room for many years until it was eventually shared with someone else. Sr. Josita was a lover of nature and a lover of beauty. In beauty, in its many forms, Sr. Josita saw the face of God. This love of nature and beauty was something that we came to share throughout the years, despite the fact that we only lived together in the same local community for four years.

I had no way of knowing, as we sat and talked together about shared memories in her hospital room in early January, that this particular conversation would be our last conversation. Unaware of the short time that Josita would remain with us, as we spoke on that day, I am now grateful that I had the opportunity to tell her of things that she had taught me through the simplicity and the witness of the love she shared with so many and with me. We also spoke of the hurts we had caused each other at times, and how these paled into insignificance in the light of deeper and more meaningful experiences shared.

I learned much, from Sr. Josita, through both forms of experiences shared.

Sr. Josita became my novice directress in 1974, several years after arriving in Australia. She remained in formation ministry for a number of years before returning to ministry in education and later into congregational administration and pastoral care. Sister adapted to whatever was asked of her or needed from her, as best she could. In whatever ministry she accepted she often “learned on the job” and gave of her best, many times acknowledging her limitations in open humility. Her kindness towards many in the priesthood became a mark of her life, as witnessed by those who travelled long distances to attend her funeral, despite ministry commitments, distance, the extreme heat of summer and age. Sr. Josita’s life left a lasting impact on many who experienced her simplicity and loving presence in their lives.

Sr. Josita’s last farewell was attended by representatives from her time in various ministries across nearly 50 years. All spoke of the simplicity, humility and love of beauty that was so much a part of who she was. Sister could find the presence of God in the beauty of nature, in the beauty of a child, in the beauty of a person aged and suffering, in the beauty of music, in the beauty of the prayerful celebration of liturgy, in an act of kindness and attentiveness, in the beauty of her beloved Jesus recognised in the most simple of experiences.....in the beauty of a single rose!

This is but one example of the many things I learned from Sr. Josita, in good times and in not-so-good times. If I shared all that I learned this article would become a book. I am grateful that Josita and I shared life, in its’ different aspects, for nearly 50 years. I will never look at the beauty of a single rose without remembering all that can be hidden within that simple creation of God.... something that Sr. Josita taught me so humbly all those years ago.

BY SR ROSANNE SINCLAIR

WHERE MERCY MEETS JOY



At the end of 2016 we concluded the Year of Mercy. This was a very significant year for me in many ways, and in fact I think the Year of Mercy will extend all throughout my life! Although the current year has not been given an official title by Pope Francis, for me it could definitely be titled the “Year of Joy”!

On the 11th of February, I began a very special part of my life’s journey with my investiture and entrance into the novitiate. The previous two years of my life had been slowly preparing me for this time and I was so excited to take this next step on my journey. On this day, I not only received physical and tangible signs of my commitment – our constitutions, a crucifix, the white veil, and my religious name (Mary Sophie), but I also felt in a very deep way God’s presence and love, accompanied and expressed by the loving support of my sisters in our Province and beyond, and of my family and friends.

One of the questions I am most often asked about my novitiate is “What do you do?” The answer: many things! At the moment I am taking a course with the Institute for Mission in Blacktown called “Themes of Faith”. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to discover once again and in



new ways the richness and beauty of our faith, and also to connect with many people around the Parramatta diocese, who inspire me with their busy and complex lives lived with faith and humility.

Twice a week I travel to Baulkham Hills to participate in the Kairos program. This program runs for six months and is for novices and formators from different congregations. There are eight novices in the program (three Josephite sisters, three Salesian sisters, one Jesuit, and me). Each week we cover a new topic, and so far we have looked at many diverse areas including Scripture, Church leadership, personality, community living, and cross-cultural interaction. Our gatherings are always so enriching and vibrant!

Life in community is very rich and full of blessings. Every day is an opportunity for growth and challenge and, as always, I find myself overwhelmed by the genuineness, generosity and support of the sisters with whom I live. I have time each day for prayer, house chores, spiritual reading, and recreation. I meet regularly with my formator, Sr Margaret, who offers me incredible

I AM HAPPY

guidance and support as we work closely together during this time of personal and spiritual development. I am continuing to learn Polish, the native language of our Foundress and of many of our sisters around the world, and one of the two official languages of our congregation. I really enjoy learning languages and as part of my study I attend our Polish Saturday school.

My time in novitiate has been incredibly enriching. Looking back on these few months, I can see that they are full of God's mercy: through the gift of my life, through the gift of my vocation and of my journey with this congregation, and through the many opportunities and people around me who grace my life with their presence. Recognising all these things fills me with awesome gratitude. Mercy and joy have met – and they have met right here in my life!

BY SR SOPHIE BOFFA



I am a really happy person, because I belong to Jesus and because I am a Sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. I can share my happiness with youth who are discerning their own vocations. In October 2016, Sr Grace asked me, "Sister, would you like to be Vocation Director?" At first, I was really scared. I thought about it and said to Jesus: "Why me? My English is not perfect." Then I prayed and opened a book written by Bl. Josemaria Escriva, where I read: "...no worries about language, but be only natural..."

After that I asked myself: "What should I do as Vocation Director?" My answer was: "Pray!!!" On the first Thursday of each month, my community and I organise a Holy Hour for Vocations. We pray with youth and afterwards we have pizza and sharing. Each of these Thursdays is special for me because I can share with others the gift of my vocation and pray for everyone who is discerning their own vocation.

I really appreciate my community for helping me to organise this prayer. Young people, thank you so much for your presence and your sharing! Finally, I would like to share one last message from a girl who attended our Holy Hour for Vocations: "Hi Sr Paula, A big thanks to you & the rest of the sisters for having myself & my siblings and family over last night. We all enjoyed it & will be attending more events with you all! God bless!"

BY SR PAULA VOLCHEK

Ika-11 ng Pebrero sinimulan ko ang napaka-espesyal na bahagi sa aking buhay, ipinagkaloob ng ating Panginoon ang tiwala nya sa akin, ipanalangin po ninyo ako!



BLESSED BY HIS LOVE

Pope Francis asked consecrated men and women to look at the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope and we do it. On the 29th of October 2016, Sr Grace Roclawska, Sr Paula Volchek and I celebrated our Silver Jubilee of religious life. Three sisters from Marayong, and not from the Blue Mountains, as Rev Bishop Vincent Long joked, celebrated 25 years living out their vocation.

And it is impossible to miss this opportunity to share a little bit of my vocation story. So... I wasn't born wearing a habit. I was my parent's baby, a sister for my siblings and a friend of many. Believe it or not... it is true.

I had my dreams and plans and they were not connected with religious life at all. I loved my life and hanging around with my friends and didn't always make smart choices. But I met Jesus and he changed my life. He wanted my heart without reservation. His loving gaze touched my heart so deeply that I couldn't resist his call. And all I treated as my treasure and success become worthless. My heart become restless and longed for something that at first I couldn't name. But later through my discernment I knew it. He was gently inviting me: come, follow me, be mine, be like me and love like me.

How did it happen? When I was 17 my friend invited me to go on a retreat run by nuns. And it was a profound experience of God's presence and love. It was a life-changing experience. After discerning, at age 19 I entered the congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and started my religious life: the real adventure in which I was surrounded by the merciful love of the Father, guided by the Holy Spirit and embraced by the love of the greatest friend ever: Jesus. And always under the protection of the Holy Family.

Now here I am, 25 years in religious life and still happy, full of joy and God's blessings. I let go of many things and dreams but I have received so much. I am sure of His love and I'm grateful for that every day. God's grace was always ahead of all my efforts. Every vocation is a pure gift of God's love. God is not calling us because we are special, perfect and holy. He calls us because he wants us and He is able to bring out the best in us. And after all these years I know there is only one place I can put my roots to be happy and joyful in my consecrated life. This place is God's heart.

A few years ago I wrote in my journal: *Jesus, you gave me all of you... I still struggle to give you all of me but you know that I love you.*

Today in my Jubilee year these simple words are my humble Magnificat... I can't express enough how blessed I am because of His faithful love.

BY SR MARGARET KOZUB



RETURN TO OUR ROOTS

“Return to our Roots” is the name given to a 30-day sabbatical in Rome offered to our sisters throughout the world. There were six of us on the sabbatical, all seasoned missionaries who came from four corners of the world: Philippines, Israel, Rome and Australia.

As the title suggests, the focus of the programme was directed to the roots - or to all that lies below the surface of a person. Like plants we too have a primary root from which smaller branch roots emerge. For us the primary root is LOVE - incarnated in the Holy Family of Nazareth. This means that we are called to extend God’s love among ourselves and others by living the spirit of Jesus, Mary and Joseph whose lives were centred in the love of God and one another. Now that is a deep root to return to!

This is precisely why we chose an experienced, trustworthy guide for the journey, one who is surefooted on the edge of the precipice, unafraid to go where others fear to tread, undaunted by darkness and smells the flowers along the way. Her name is Bl. Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd.

She was constantly reminding us to listen with the ears of our heart to the sounds of silence, to keep our head, spirit and body in the same place and our eyes focused on Jesus. And ... we did.

When things got a bit tough and we grew weary, Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd gave us her letters to read and even shared with us her most intimate conversation with Jesus. It was consoling to know that she sometimes felt the same way yet kept on going with an even deeper longing and determination to reach her final destination.

The 30 days passed quickly and we still did not get to our roots! However, I believe that we came to realise that continuing the journey is our business and the final destination is God’s.

BY SR LOIS ANN RICHARDI



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www.csfn.org.au

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth is an international apostolic congregation founded in 1875. Sisters live and serve in 170 communities in 13 countries on 5 continents. The Generalate is located in Rome, Italy.

www.nazarethfamily.org

Check out our Facebook page for the Holy Spirit Province. We post regular updates on important news and events happening in our Province, in our Church, and in our world.

www.facebook.com/csfnaustralia



THE SABBATICAL EXPERIENCE

A sabbatical is a gift of sacred time. Participating in a sabbatical is a spiritual pilgrimage through which I journeyed with thirty-two sisters, brothers and priests from Australia, New Zealand, and Sri Lanka for five weeks beginning 3 March and ending 8 April, 2017. Our base was St Joseph's Retreat Centre in Baulkham Hills, NSW. We were all considering retirement as our next stage of life. For me personally, I was hoping to find some answers as to how I could handle the challenges of ageing. Moreover, I wanted to find the best ways of contributing to the mission of the Church as a Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

Our coordinator, Sister Lil Girardi rsj, greeted each participant upon arrival. Our group had very interesting ministerial experience and a wealth of wisdom. Most of all, we were so compatible. I was privileged to have a long chat with one sister, who answered so many of my questions about working with Aboriginal people. The programme was holistic. Content included images of God, Scripture study of Matthew's Gospel, the Church and its mission, religious life in the 21st Century, living with dementia, handling grief, and the ageing process. The most outstanding lectures for me were: Pope Francis' Vision of Church, which is a challenging one to implement, and the presentation of the Images of God that encourages development of my unique relationship with Him at this new stage of my life. In the library, I came across a book *Praying Body and Soul*, written by Jesuits Anthony de Mello and Gabriel Galache. I decided to use it and began experimenting in my private prayer times with the book's suggested different methods of Christian traditional meditations and physical awareness exercises. My prayer sessions were becoming more deep encounters with God that I hope will ultimately lead to truly contemplative, silent prayer in the future. Wednesdays were days of silence, recollection and devoted to spiritual direction. The group met regularly for a guided meditation.

Optional Hatha yoga classes that emphasized stretching occurred on Thursday and Saturday afternoons. Craft and leisure activities had their share of our time. Six members of the group



requested that I teach them how to loom knit. Twice a week on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, the group celebrated Mass with Father Kevin Walsh CP. How I wished that we could have celebrated daily Mass!

Well, one could ask, did I **find my mission** for Retirement? I'd sum it up as a work in progress. When I was a young religious, I met some elderly sisters in our community who mentored and influenced me greatly because they were obedient and gentle. One was so joyful in accepting her illness that people would go to visit her room just for the inspiration she provided. These sisters could listen without being judgemental. At that time, and still to this day, I called them "beacon lights", which showed that a life lived with Jesus Christ was worth living. I too hope to develop those qualities in me over the days ahead. Besides "Beacon Light", one of my deepest insights was that of being "a bridge". We cannot live Nazareth life as it was in the past. Being a "bridge" is to take the past – the principles of religious life and our charism Mother Foundress bequeathed to us – and encourage the community with whom I live to develop the "Nazareth heart" by adapting the principles and charism in new ways to meet the ministry needs of the Church and society today. Every stage of human life is important, but the mission of a sister in retirement continues with a greater emphasis on **being** rather than **activity**.

BY SR JEAN WOJCIK

TIME OF TRANSITION



The request to write about my transition from Thornton to Plumpton became for me a wider reflection and meditation about life, which is full of changes and new chapters that shape and create our lives. I think with every change comes a time of transition – a time of questioning and discomfort.

In my life so far, I have experienced two very big changes and transitions. The first was the time when I made the decision to enter the Congregation, saying “Good bye” to my life’s plans and saying “WELCOME” to God’s will. This change completely transformed my life and my life became a beautiful way of following Jesus and discovering His love. Over my 24 years of consecrated life I have received a few life lessons which help me to be closer to Jesus.

My second big change was the decision to come to Australia. I left everything that was familiar or comfortable and went to an unknown land, culture, language and people. It was like God’s question to Saint Peter, “Do you love me more than these?” (John 21:15). I said as Peter said, “Yes Lord, I love you”, and I moved to Australia. Over the last three years, I have experienced many ups and downs, many new emotions and thoughts connected with homesickness, loneliness, difficulty with English, difficulty understanding others, and so on. But despite these difficulties, I have always remembered God’s presence and love. This time has helped to purify my heart, my motivations and my love for God.

At the end of my reflection about transition, I can say that transition is a process of seeking our authenticity in God. Authenticity is where we became similar to Jesus, where God comes first and we embrace freedom. My transition is in process... until...

BY SR BOGUMILA MALIKOWSKA

LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

I’m one of the sisters ministering in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. I work as a full-time Provisional Psychologist, along with 26 other psychologists servicing across 46 primary schools and 11 high schools in the Diocese. Specifically, I look after three primary schools and one high school.

My day-to-day job probably sounds boring or emotionally draining depending on how you look at it, but for me it is very challenging and rewarding. No two days are ever the same. One day I will be counselling students, the next day I will be doing psychological assessments and classroom observations, talking to parents and teachers as we plan strategies to support the students, or simply listening to them as they share their concerns. I see my role as someone who supports others, especially the students in schools, to be the best they can be. This is what makes me feel passionate about my ministry.

You see, a very long time ago I had the realisation that it was possible to live life to the full and that I was living it. That’s when the desire to share this experience with others came about. I wasn’t sure then in what particular way it was going to happen, but it felt to me that God was leading me towards this ministry.

BY SR CHRISTINE RAMADA



Mamuhay ng buong buo at magtiwala sa Panginoong Dios.

HERE AND THERE: A PHOTO STORY



Our Sisters journeyed for WYD with the Diocese of Broken Bay and Parramatta.



Наши Сёстры во время Всемирных Дней Молодёжи.

Sr Emilia with her co-workers at Hollywood Private Hospital, Perth, WA.



The Ministry at Mary, Queen of the Family Parish provides Sr Grace with a great opportunity to serve families in many ways. Go to: www.mqofblacktown.org.au to see current events.



Our Sisters in Perth, Western Australia with one of the families in the Association of the Holy Family.

Святкування і робота з сям'ямі.



Sr Barbara interacting with people and... the beauty of Australia



My birthday 80th birthday (27th April, 2017) was showered with prayers, cards from near and far, flowers, balloons, presents and parties. The day was overwhelming for me and what I cherished mostly was celebrating with my sisters and enjoying each other in the spirit of love, friendship and laughter around the beautifully decorated table. My beautiful friends from near and far also celebrated with me on Saturday 29th in a luncheon. Gracious God, thank you for my family, Sisters and friends. Please bless them.

Thank you, Sacred Heart of Jesus. I must give thanks to you for all you have given me. Mother Mary, help me to thank our Lord for His generosity to me on my birthday.

BY SR IRENE KUBACKI



GREETINGS FROM VIETNAM



Sending you warmest greetings from Vietnam where I will be by the time you read this article. It was an honour and a privilege to teach in the seminary and the new Catholic Institute in Vietnam in 2016 and 2017.

My journey began in June 2016 where 6 foreign teachers came to teach English to about 150 Philosophy 1 and Philosophy 2 students in Xuan Loc Seminary in the southern part of Vietnam. Not knowing what to expect, it turned out to be a most amazing and spiritual experience. It was not difficult to fall in love with all of the 150 seminarians that were in these 2 groups in the seminary.

Each day brought many surprises and so much peace and happiness for me. I felt like I was on a retreat all the time as the atmosphere was so caring and loving and holy to say the least. I don't know why God led me to do this but I suppose it may have been a Gift from God for something good that I may have done in my life.

In 2017, I embarked on my second journey to Vietnam where I would be teaching mostly priests at the newly formed Catholic Institute. I was very reluctant to teach priests and to teach in the climate of Ho Chi Minh City but it all worked out to be a remarkable experience. It was the ideal teaching situation. The students worked so hard and they were always helping each other and helping me. I was a bit behind with the technology but they always rescued me. By the end of the course, they were no longer my

students but my very good friends. As I am writing this, I miss them so much.

I came back to Australia for a few weeks after the semester finished and now I am preparing to go to the seminary to teach again as I did last year. I feel very lucky indeed. I think I am hooked on teaching in Vietnam and for sure, I am addicted to the seminarians. There are 400 seminarians in Xuan Loc Seminary and about 20 priests. I was the only woman in the dining room and chapel so they often said to me "Blessed art thou among men". From February to May, I taught 4 days in the Catholic Institute and 2 days in the seminary also spending weekends in the seminary. The whole experience was unreal. It was so hot and humid, the bed was so hard, the language is so difficult, the food was really strange but I was always happy, always fulfilled, always felt loved and cared for and appreciated to the highest degree, always felt so close to God. What more can one want.

BY SISTER VALERIE



*Thích thú Việt Nam khi dạy các
linh mục và chủng sinh tại học
viện công giáo Việt Nam và
chủng viện Xuân Lộc.*

THE ENCOUNTERS WITH SAINTS AND DIVINE MERCY



I remember it well. It was a warm September day in 1994 in Calcutta when I introduced Mother Teresa to Bl. Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd. The

encounter was so simple. Mother Teresa cupped her two hands as we do when we receive Holy Communion to accept the picture of Bl. Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd that I offered her. A long silence followed. It became apparent that the two of them were having a conversation of some sort. When they finished, Mother Teresa held the picture to her heart, took my arm, led me to a wooden bench and we sat down. "Now", she said, "you have to write a letter." She began dictating the letter; it was to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. She personally delivered that letter to him the following week. This may seem a long introduction to the topic and one would rightly wonder what this has to do with a canonization.

Yes, many years have passed since that day in 1994 and it was again September in the year 2016. I sat on a small wooden chair among huge crowds of pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square, Vatican City as one memory flowed into another. Pope Francis declared Mother Teresa a saint. He said, *"mercy was the salt which gave flavour to her work, it was the light which shone in the darkness of the many who no longer had tears to shed for their poverty and suffering."*

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta foundress of the Missionaries of Charity and Bl. Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd, foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth – you are so alike. And ... I wonder what you are talking about now?

BY SR LOIS ANN RICHARDI



The Divine Mercy novena was held from the 15th to the 23rd of April from 3 to 5pm each day at the Polish War Memorial chapel in Marayong.

The novena began in the small memorial chapel with a song to Jesus and included recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet and Litany. Afterwards we proceeded to the large chapel to pray the Stations of the Cross. Returning to the small chapel we had a moment with Jesus, then a closing prayer and a song to Jesus.

A little snack always followed outside the chapel.

From 1pm-5pm on the last day, Divine Mercy Sunday, we celebrated devotions, Stations of the Cross, Holy Mass celebrated by Father Ruben Elago and three other priests, and veneration of Sister Faustina's relics. The celebration finished with a light supper and enjoying each other's company in the St John Paul II Hall. My time with Jesus, Divine Mercy was precious on each of those days.

BY SR IRENE KUBACKI

DONATIONS

Your donations towards the places within our Congregation that are in need of support can be made by cheque or direct transfer.

Cheque, mail to:

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth
PO Box 8142 Blacktown NSW 2148 Australia

Or by **direct transfer** to:

BSB: 0621 121

Acc No: 1092 0857

Acc Name: Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia



*Spotkania ze świętymi i
Bożym Miłosierdziem.*

60 YEARS OF POLISH SCHOOL AND COUNTING



Federation of Community Language Schools; Mrs Alexandra Davis, CEO at Holy Family Services; former students (some now parents and grandparents); and faithful supporters. For this, we are grateful. It was a day of memories, laughter and a strong commitment to the future of our Polish School at Marayong.

BY SR AGNIESZKA MISIAK



Holy Family Polish School in Marayong celebrated its 60th Anniversary on the 10th December, 2016. It was an occasion to rejoice, celebrate and reminisce about our humble beginnings. Our school was established to teach the Polish culture in the “Land of the Southern Cross”, which so many Polish migrants called home. Initially it aimed to teach the orphans residing at Marayong, but “word of mouth” spread far and wide and our school grew. We salute the founders, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, the ones before and the ones who continue.

We started our festivities with the celebration of the Eucharist in our majestic church – Our Lady of Czestochowa Memorial Chapel. This was followed by celebrations in the John Paul II Parish Hall, where we were presented with a Nativity Play by the children and parents of our school. With strong parental support, we continued to celebrate in a true Polish Tradition of Hospitality, including an array of delicious traditional refreshments, a Christmas Stall and a treat for our guests with a visit down “Memory Lane”. There were many joyful cries: *“This is me”* – *“Here I am sitting at my desk”*, *“There is Sr Celina at the blackboard”* ...

A wonderful experience...

A time to remember...

A time to continue...

We were joined in our celebration by many guests. These included Mrs Regina Jurkowska, Consul General of the Republic of Poland; Sister Grace Roclawski, Provincial Leader, and Sisters; Marysia Nowak and the Coordinators of Polish Schools in NSW; Mr Albert Vella, President of the NSW

Holy Family Polish School in Marayong is growing in new and wonderful ways. To officially begin their school year, our students took their school oath in a ceremony in our aged care on April 29th. Our school director, Sr Agnieszka Misiak, gave a short presentation about the school’s history before our guests were treated to a beautiful song and poem from the students. Our students were all dressed in matching skirts and ties, all generously made by Mrs Jozefa Wolak, a resident in the aged care. Supporting teacher Mrs Edyta Hoffmann led the students through their oath before they were sworn into the school in a very interesting way – with a giant pencil kindly made by the parents of one of our students! Each received a certificate and pin with our school logo. Sr Lucyna Frączek, Provincial Leader, shared words of thanks before we all gathered together for coffee and cake. It was a great opportunity to come together and celebrate the vibrant life of our Polish School.

Congratulations Sr Agnieszka, Mrs Hoffmann and all!

BY SR SOPHIE BOFFA

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF HOLY FAMILY CAMPUS

Fifty years ago the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, with the assistance of families and others, built Holy Family High School in Marayong. Initially, the Junior High School provided a Catholic education for girls in the area and in 1979 it became co-educational. In 1993, after amalgamating with John Paul II Senior High School, the Holy Family School site became a campus of Saint Andrews College.

On 15 February, 2017, the Most Reverend Vincent Long van Nguyen OFM Conv, Bishop of Parramatta, concelebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving with Monsignor Ron Mc Farlane EV PP, and Father Henryk Zasiura, Rector of Polish War Memorial Chapel. Among the special distinguished guests attending this Mass were Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth: Sisters Lucyna Frączek, Provincial Leader; Alicja Drabik, Assistant Provincial; Grażyna Ročławska, Provincial Treasurer; Irene Kubacki, former principal of the school; Jean Wojcik, former teacher and the last sister to leave the school; Barbara Majcher; Rosanne Maree Sinclair, one of the first students; and Agnieszka Misiak. Diocesan representation included Mr Paul Easton, Director of Performance of the Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Parramatta; Mr John De Courcy of the College; and Mr Richard McGuinness, former principal of St. Andrew's Primary School. Several former teachers also attended the event. The current student body and teachers from both campuses filled the marquee.

Bishop Vincent thanked the sisters past and present for their sacrifice, dedication and foresight in building the school and, with the Lord's help, contributing to Catholic education and the development of the Church community. He also encouraged the student body, like their patron, St Andrew, and Our Lady, to become people of integrity and justice with a willingness to serve others. Prior to concluding the Mass, Mr. Nick Vidot, the College's current principal, expressed gratitude on the school's behalf to the Bishop and attending priests. Then he thanked the sisters for their attendance and efforts in building the school. Each sister received a bouquet of flowers from an appointed student.

BY SR JEAN WOJCIK



PASTORAL CARE CORNER

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven..."

A time to rend, and time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to LOVE."
Ecc 3:1, 7-8

There is never a dull moment for the Pastoral Care team working in our aged care facility in Marayong! All throughout the year we offer many experiences for our residents which are in line with our Catholic mission and which help to provide a space for reflection, peace and prayer. We assist residents in attending chapel services and receiving Holy Communion, provide time for conversation and sharing, offer support to our residents, their families and our staff especially in difficult moments of change and loss...and much more!

This year we have been privileged to be joined by students from St Andrews College in Marayong, who have been visiting our residents as part of a learning enrichment program. One of their goals has been to understand the faith perspectives of our residents, and on March 16th the students engaged with Sr. Joanna and our residents for a faith-based sharing on St Patrick. On May 1st, the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, a Thanksgiving Mass was held in our chapel to celebrate the hard work and commitment of all the staff of our facility. At the moment we are working hard to prepare for the Feast Day of our patron, St Brother Albert, on June 17. Life at Holy Family Services is always diverse and interesting. We love working together to meet the spiritual needs of our residents and children their loved ones, and the staff members here in Marayong.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our team –Fr. Henryk, Fr. Maksymilian, Sr. Julia, Sr. Agnieszka, Sr. Paula, and Sr. Sophie, our staff and volunteers and the children from our child care – for their visits, for bringing happiness and smiles to the residents' faces, and for their commitment and dedication to our mission at Holy Family Services: Hospitality, Love and Acceptance.

BY SR JOANNA ZARZYCZNA



Pangangalaga Pastoral para sa ating misyon: katapatan at dedikasyon, paglilingkod sa pamilya, mabuting pakikitungo, sa kapwa at pag-ibig.



POETRY CORNER

God's the Author

Life rushes by, surrounded by the clamour
of a restless rising tide-
A tide of discontent, of fear, of chaos,
unuttered and forlorn.
Amid the throng of people, drums a heartbeat, all
alone.
And sad, as if to mock the laughing, boisterous crowd.

Time ebbs and flows, and life parades-
The good times and the bad,
The voices ring from warm and hostile throats-
A curse, a whisper, truth or lie...
Perhaps the feeblest word
When swiftly sent, could stern,
or even turn a rising tide.

Why are we distraught and disturbed?
Have we forgotten His words, the wellspring of His
strength and His immense wisdom?
Ah! In the beginning was the Word
The Word was the Omnipotent breath,
Radiating its Life...

Who took the time to paint the leaves?
Who sent the breeze?
And who believes that every season, leaf and flower;
Reveals God's splendour, love and power.

The seasons come, the seasons go...
The sun comes up, the flower grow
Who tells the trees to grow so tall?
Who tells the snowflakes when to fall?

Who stays the waves, to bid retreat?
Then kiss the sand and bathe our feet?
Who orchestrates electric storms?
Who starts a heart as baby forms?

If wisdom gained a whole life through...
Was put to test by me, by you,
We'd falter from the very start
To fathom God, to know his heart.

In pride we go about our days
Denying God, withholding praise,
Content to stumble, starved of light
Until we kneel and praise His might.

Our Heavenly Father made it all
And longs for us to hear His call
To come and lay our burdens down,
Receive His gift, return His crown!

The Remnant of Hope

Gazing through the horrors of terror
The remains of anguish and pain
Torture so real, fear cannot be hidden.
Where is the thunder, the lightning of heaven?
A ninety-minute walk seemed so endless...
Gasping for breath, aching heart beats,
Such sorrow of disbelief... cannot fathom its depths...
Traces of crimes, justice comes under fire
Oppressors of the law, manifested and act as the foe,
Humanity cried, evil act of those in power abides!
Auschwitz-Birkenau, Concentration Camp...
God's heart bleeds for you as He listened to you...
"You cried...Lord of Mercy! Where are you?
Surely our God there is something You can do?
He was silent...

You thought it so unfair,
You cried, You prayed, You called;
thought God didn't care.
And then you kept hanging on in faith;
despite the nature of hopelessness...
Then you knew God did know, you had to trust and
His Will must be true,
So that New life will come just like a promise
He made for His Son.
Jesus, His Son said to you:
With my risen life within you,
you will have nothing to fear.
Breathe in My Holy Spirit;
Call on My name for I am very near.
I am Your Risen Saviour and you're a follower of Mine,

My Spirit will be with you until the end of time.

BY SR RITA APURA



WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IN KRAKOW



In previous years I was involved with the preparation before the World Youth Days in Sydney-2008 and in Madrid-2011.). A couple of years ago, the Parish Priest, Father Don Kettle, once again asked if I would be willing to facilitate the participation of young people from his Parish in WYD 2016, to be held in Krakow.

Before his new mission to Ireland, Father Don gave us (Noel, Joanne, Joseph, Mary, Kate and I) a solemn Blessing for our journey.

Our first stop was Warszawa, the capital of Poland. There together with the other WYD groups, we took part in 'The Days in Diocese,' discovering and learning a lot about the country and its history. Our accommodation was organised by the St Josafat Parish at Warszawa-Powaski. The Parish Priest, Father Andrew Kowalski, the Vicar Priests and parishioners made our stay in Warszawa absolutely amazing and unforgettable. In Warszawa we turned our first steps to the St Stanislaw Kostka Church, Zoliborz, for Mass then to the Museum of Blessed Jerzy Popieluszko, a Priest, and Polish Martyr for the faith. The next stop was the Royal Castle.

To our big surprise we ran into the Highgate Youth group from Perth at the Willanow Palace. There was an opportunity to talk to our Archbishop, Timothy Costelloe, Bishop Don Sproxtton, Father Irek Czech, Mariusz Grzech from St Charles Seminary, Anita Parker, and many young pilgrims from Perth known to us.

At Niepokalanow, we visited a place where Saint Maximilian Kolbe lived and worked 'all for Immaculate Mary' before his martyrdom in Auschwitz. We also walked through the Palmiry in Kampinos Forest, where many eminent civilians were buried after 'their unhuman interrogation' by German Nazis.

Being so close to Zelazowa Wola, we naturally made our way there to see where the famous Polish composer, Frederick Chopin, had been born. We then moved to the St Roch and St John Church in Brochów, where Frederick was baptised, and where his sister, Ludwika, was married as well. Mary and Joanne, youth from our group, amused us by playing the piano at the Church.

We could not resist going to the superb "Mr Rubik and his Team" Concert. Towards its end most of us present were singing parts of Rubik's songs. It was a great privilege to have a beautiful photo with Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz, Archbishop of Warszawa. At the concert we met the CSFN Sisters from Czerniakowska, who invited us to visit them at their place. We were overwhelmed by the Sisters' warm welcome and hospitality.

On July 23, all WYD Pilgrims who stayed in Warszawa met at the Temple of Divine Providence, a Jubilee Church. After the Eucharistic celebrations, together with all present passed through the Gate of Mercy with open hearts for God's divine graces.

Before the opening of the World Youth Day in Krakow, we made a profoundly moving visit to the German Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz, where in silence we prayed for all the victims of the Second World War killed there.

Among the many incredible places we visited in Krakow were: the Shrine of Mercy of God, the Basilica of JP II, the Wawel Cathedral, that houses the tombs of a great number of historical figures and saints; St Mary's Basilica, where we had the opportunity to adore and worship our Lord in the

Blessed Sacrament and St Mark's Church, where we venerated reliquiae of St Terese's parents. We were blown away by the Stations of the Cross Liturgy at Krakow's Blonia Park crafted in a way that we could easily see ourselves in many of them. Our main place for daily Catechesis was the Tauron Arena. Every day, morning or evening, there was so much to learn from and enjoy at the same time. We loved catechesis with different Bishops, great music and most of all Adoration led by Father Robert Barron. During the Mass with Pope Frances at the Saint John Paul II Shrine for Priests and Religious we were moved by the Pope's words: "...it is important to put our humanity in contact with the flesh of the Lord, to bring to him, with complete trust and utter sincerity, our whole being...our troubles, our struggles and resistance."

Together with the WYD Pilgrims, we walked to Wieliczka to a specially designed site south east of the city of Krakow, called 'Campus Misericordie' or 'Field of Mercy'. There we participated in major celebrations of the WYD. The highlight of the theme of this year's event was: "Blessed Are The Merciful, For They Will Obtain Mercy," proclaimed by Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount on the shores of Lake Galilee and linked together with Pope Frances's call for Jubilee Year of Mercy.

At the Vigil prayers we pondered deeply on the Pope's words: "Jesus is calling you to leave a mark on history...to trade in the sofa for a pair of walking shoes... spreading the joy that is born of God's love and wells up in (our) hearts with every act of mercy." Again, we will never forget the hospitality of families who hosted us in Krakow and Sister Benita, our "right hand in Krakow".

In Chestochowa, before the Miraculous Icon of Our Lady Queen of Poland, we prayed in thanksgiving for all the graces of this pilgrimage. From Czestochowa we did two one-day trips: first to Our Lady of Lichen and then to the Shrine of Saint Joseph in Kalisz and the second excursion was to Wroclaw to see The Panorama Raclawicka. We were very grateful to Mr Krzysztof Klimczak

and his wife, who invited us to their place. At the end of this stay, Mr Klimczak made sure we made a mark on history by participating in a video testimony to the "Niedziela Czestochowska Weekly" and by taking part in an interview for the readers of the "Niedziela" about our experience of WYD '16.

Last on our way was Rome, the Eternal City. For four days we stayed with the CSFN Sisters in the General House, and enjoyed the Sisters' kindness and generosity. Grateful to God, we spent much time in prayers at many holy places. Group was doubly blessed with our guide, Father Don, who made time to be with us in Rome.

Full of gratitude to God for WYD'16 in Krakow, we would love to make changes in our lives. We may not be called to do great things but surely we can, with God's help, do small things with great love, to which we are all called.

BY SR JOSEPH MAZUR



ASSOCIATE NEWS

Our NSW Associates meet one Saturday every second month at Queen of Poland convent in Marayong. In December 2016, the last gathering for the year, we had an Advent reflection and sharing as part of our preparation for Christmas, which was followed by Mass and a meal and celebration. Each gathering brings us together and is full of joy, but this time there was a special reason for even more joy. Halina Prociuk and Miguel de Ubago declared their membership of our Association during a short ceremony just before Mass. Halina and Miguel have actively participated in our gatherings since 2011. We wish them all the best as they continue their journey as members of the Association of the Holy Family.

With joy usually comes sorrow. Recently we lost one of our members due to death. Vincenza Grunsell, from the Sydney group, died in March 2017. Vincenza was born on 25th April 1926, in Kercem, on the Maltese island of Gozo. She and her husband arrived in Melbourne in March 1949. Vincenza was a member of the Association of the Holy Family since May 1991. Over the last few years she was unable to actively participate in meetings, but she always assured us of her prayers and love for families.

BY SR ALICJA DRABIK



*Uczestnicy spotkania
Stowarzyszenia Najświętszej
Rodziny w okręgu sydneyjskim.*

UNDER^{the} SOUTHERN CROSS



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