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GENERAL COUNCIL

Returning to desire

A proposal to focus on the dream in formation

S. Mariaelena Aceti

General Council

“If the times don't require your best, invent other times”. This is an invitation to rediscover the ability to imagine, to let oneself be attracted by dreams, to look at projects that have the strength to bring out the best in us. These words of Stefano Benni, an Italian writer and journalist, are an apt comment on the title of the next international session for formators, “Formed by Jesus to make the dream real”. In fact, there are many issues on the agenda of this session for updating and revising the guidelines for initial formation. Looking at responses to a survey of over 50 formators and 70 young women in formation, there are questions and incredible opportunities that will be the subject of study by formators. In some cases, the wishes of those who accompany match that of those in formation. It happens quite often, thankfully. In other cases, what formation offers does not match the demand, i.e., the expectations of new generations. It is here that, with a little courage, better opportunities are found.



A relevant aspect of formation concerns discernment and openness for mission, a dimension that St. Ignatius sees as grounded in desire and movement in response to the attraction to the magis. the best part, to be precise. In fact, living from desire produces a healthy restlessness, a thrust towards an outgoing life, looking toward new horizons and the future. For this, the engine for discernment and the Ignatian missionary paradigm can only be desires. For Saint Ignatius, and before him in Sacred Scripture, without desire there is no room for God to operate, for only God can send one on mission. But wishes are not an act of will. They are aroused in us and we are called by them. So what is the educational challenge? First of all, to take increasingly into account that today, those who knock on the door of our communities on different continents, are children of a generation that for decades

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has closed up its dreams in a box. The inability to dream and the lack of a future for global villagers are especially sad, because they affect youth, dreamers by nature, and are the result of several factors that we should analyze.

But what formation can we imagine for sharing the dream? Probably, it would be a worthwhile adventure that forms new members to discover the dreams they have within, a project that exposes them to strong and challenging experiences, awakening the desire for the magis,

because desire and the expansive horizon it brings can be encouraged, can be formed.

In formation to the consecrated life, the “personal trainer” is Jesus. It is he who reveals the happiness of the unconditional love of God for each person. It is his dream of proclaiming this good news from border to border on the Earth that puts life on the road. From this dream was born “a community for dispersion, open to the deepening of the gift received, to the journey,

to precariousness, to the encounter”, (Father Gianfranco Matarazzo, head of the Euro-Mediterranean Province of the Jesuits). Therein is defined the project of consecrated life that initial formation can facilitate.

But if today someone might come to you or to me, not Jesus, we would be too intimidated, but rather the genie in the lamp who says, “Tell me your wish and today I will grant it”, what would we ask, we consecrated women, now professed for some years?

Planet 50-50 in 2030

The General Council

Rome

The path to the recognition of the dignity and rights of women is perhaps the longest revolution in history.

In the agenda of the UN for International Women's Day on March 8 is the theme, “Planet 50-50 in 2030”. It is a theme that seeks to reinforce the role of women at all levels. Placing the focus on gender equality, still yet to come, requires appropriate policies regarding income and employment, public services including protection against domestic and sexual violence, and access to education and technology, in order to promote the advancement of women and girls.

The research of the United Nations is far from encouraging. Fewer than half of adult women are employed in the official labor market and at a salary 20 to 40% lower than that of their male counterparts in their professions. A third of women workers leave their jobs because of motherhood.

Femicide, rape, harassment on the street and at work, and the abuse and violence perpetrated online as a continuation of domestic violence are a plague that nearly every day figures shamefully in the news all over the world. There is no particular age to this inhuman vortex of violence, that in many cases, has already occurred before the age of 20 years. What are we doing to change the culture



and traditions which nourish and feed female inequality? How are we committed to overturning the order which, as a “natural” given, has been allowed to continue the domination of one sex over the other for centuries?

Pope Francis recently remarked that “the persistence of a certain chauvinist mindset” existing even in the most advanced society transforms women into subjects, and in the church their service “comes down to more roles of servitude than true service”.

Women have the right to be free to live without fear, to move about or to feel safe in their homes, to develop their potential, to participate in decision making and be recognized in their dignity. In different areas of the planet, our communities are fighting alongside women, building with them paths of

social advancement and empowerment, but it is still too much of a local action. Gender inequality is universal, but by no means is it inevitable. Stopping gender inequality requires the mobilization of all, national women's movements, leaders, organizations and individuals. Do we want to be part of this? Do we want to contribute to a world in which women of all cultures and religions have the same rights and the same freedom as men? Let us join the best initiatives for mobilization and awareness-raising campaigns in our society and in the Catholic Church, to seek to strengthen the voices of all women and fight for their recognition.

A Good Women's Day to all of you Sisters, Associates, and all male Friends who recognize the feminine genius and want a “50-50 planet”!

Active Listening

S. Elisa Fátima Zuanazzi
Brazil

Active listening is one of the important elements in communication, and perhaps one of the most difficult skills to practice in human relationships. Active listening happens when there is openness in dialogue and space for the other, that is, when there is full and loving attention from both sides.

The author José Tolentino Mendonça, when writing about "listening to the melody of the present", tells us that "listening is perhaps the sense most suitable for grasping the complexity of what a life is". However, we listen so little, and the art of listening is rarely among the skills that we develop. In one of the rules of St. Benedict, there is an expression essential to authentic listening: "Open the ear of your heart". This means that listening is not just with the outer ear, but with the awareness of the heart, with the attitude of leaning into the other and hearing what is not spoken.



Listening actively demands respect and hospitality. It is a tool that leads us towards the kind of connection between people where the needs of all are valued and served through compassion

and/or the happiness of contributing to the other.

Marschall Rosenberg tells us that there are two ways to improve connections and understanding, to "vulnerably express our own feelings and needs, or sympathetically listen to the feelings and needs of the other. These are radically different choices than we are used to experiencing during a conflict, where basically we learned to fight, struggle or flee."

The ability to communicate well requires a high degree of self-knowledge. Understanding your personal style of communication will help create strong relationships that are long lasting and will avoid conflict and misunderstandings.

Thus, Mendonça affirms that "the art of listening is an exercise in endurance. Without listening, our life becomes quickly invaded and colonized, becoming a life that doesn't belong to us.



Three Years of a Unique Experience of Active Listening

S. Geni Estegues Pereira
Brazil

When we were asked to report on a practical experience of “active listening,” we thought we would say something about the journey during these three years of service as members of the provincial coordination team.

Receptivity, listening, empathy, respect ... On-going challenges in the exercise of leadership!

During this time, we needed to do much “active listening” on the personal, community, nucleus and provincial levels, to eliminate conflicts from communication which was violent, inept, or simply non-communication, so that relationships would be more transparent and true.

Often we have to do the work of “active listening”, not only regarding words, but especially regarding body language, whenever we stand face-to-face or in a circle with our sisters.

We also have to let come to the surface all that injured, hurt, was not understood or integrated into lives and



relationships, to create the process of forgiveness and reconciliation.

How often, after a bad argument, we need the humility to be silent before the mystery of the other, putting ourselves in their place to better understand and to love them.

In this time of learning, we grow together in “active listening,” in what we do and witness as we study the theme, “Cultural diversity and conflict management”, as well as in the implementation of the tools offered to us by the program in Le Puy, France.

**NEW
SAINTS**

S. Emmanuelle Bruggemann (91)	Denmark	12.12.2018
S. Elvira Teresa Debastiani (85)	Brazil	16.12.2018
S. Raphaèle-Maria Wessing (80)	Denmark	22.12.2018
S. Michaela-Maria Niepelt (81)	Denmark	27.12.2018
S. Louise Marguerite Marillet (98)	France	31.12.2018
S. Joséphine Arnollet (98)	France	03.01.2019
S. Anais Luvison (91)	Brazil	04.01.2019
S. Joan O'Connor (88)	USA	15.01.2019
S. Carmelita Gonçalves (100)	Brazil	17.01.2019
S. Regis Chiramel (79)	Pachmarhi	13.02.2019

Accompanying Socially Marginalized Youth through Skilling India

S. Laveena D'souza

Tanmaya

Migration, poverty, homelessness and unemployment are what makes youth socially marginalized in India. These socially marginalized youth are the most vulnerable group. If trained and guided they can become a nation builder; if not they can destroy the whole nation. Cut off from families and the larger society in which they live, these youth have little or no system of social protection. The only social support they receive is usually from peers living in similar circumstances.

Since 2015, two sisters of our Province, Srs. Sarita and Rani are closely associated with bringing these socially marginalized youth into the mainstream of the society. Joining hands with 'Skilling India' – a nationwide project initiated by the Don Bosco Tech Society run by the Salesian Fathers, which has reached out to over 6000 youths. This project

attempts to bridge the widening digital, financial and social divide between those who have access to opportunities and those who are increasingly being marginalized from the new economy jobs.

Having gone through an intensive training programme and many exposure visits to different parts of India, Sr. Sarita works as Madhya Pradesh State Coordinator and Sr. Rani in the areas of the MIS (Management Information System) and M&E (Monitoring and Evaluation). Their main responsibilities are to visit and monitor the functioning of the existing 15 Centers in Madhya Pradesh and to open new centers according to the need. Each centre has 2 to 4 domains and each batch consists of 30 students per domain. Each batch goes through a 3 month Training Program in their chosen domain. Along with this they are given Basic Computer Training, Soft Skills, English Language Study, Counseling and Values they need to inculcate in their lives. During the training period the trainees are closely accompanied. Once the candidates

complete their Training the Centre sees that they are given placements. All these Training Programmes are free of cost for the trainees and are sponsored by various Companies. Each youth who steps into these centers has their own story. Stories of brokenness, poverty and hunger, stories of dreams aiming to reach the heights. Sr. Rani, while sharing about her ministry said, "I feel a sense of satisfaction in doing something for the youth from the poor sections of society. It is not only providing training or making them stand on their feet, but listening to their stories and the yearnings of their souls. Accompanying the youth makes me touch and see the beauty of their souls."

Ms. Rani Madanlal one of the trainees in the Ashta Centre said, "We are seven in the family and my father is a daily wage earner. Seeing my struggle to continue my studies, the Sisters of St. Joseph encouraged me to join DB Tech Centre in Ashta. Now I am trained as a computer operator and I earn Rs. 7,000/- per month. I am grateful to the sisters and the centre because their guidance has changed my life."

Sr. Sarita shared, "Accompanying youth through Skilling India is not as easy a task as it appears at the first sight. Each day new and big challenges and responsibilities come our way. Our task is not only to train the youth, but we do much more. We also do constant updates on each Centre regarding mobilization, training, placement, tracking, advance training and quality assessment."

Both Srs. Sarita and Rani feel great satisfaction and joy in this ministry. They love to work for the youth because they see them as nation builders. "To build a better world, a better nation, a better society we need to build up today's youth. It is the youth who have tremendous potentials within them to transform humanity" said Sr. Rani.



Sr. Sarita providing kit to a trainee

“Valuing our diversity through the intercultural”

S. Maria Cristina Gavazzi

Italy

This was the theme chosen for the first workshop on the topic of interculturality in religious life, which took place January 21 - February 1, 2019 at the UISG (International Union of Superiors General) in Rome.

The 180 participants were religious belonging to 45 different congregations, from more than 50 countries, primarily from Africa and Asia (23% for each continent), followed by Europe and South America (21% and 20%, respectively), 10% from North America and 3% from Oceania.

The aim of the workshop was to form four persons for each religious congregation, who in turn will form others in their congregation, in the country where they are on mission and at the service of the Church. Sr. Dolores Lahr (USA), Sr. Rashmi Chalissery (India), Sr. Eliane Costa Santana (Mozambique), and Sr. Maria Cristina Gavazzi (Italy) attended For the Congregation of Chambéry.

“Interculturality is a big challenge for religious life. The task of the UISG is to lend support with an ongoing formation process and to motivate congregations in different parts of the world,” said Sister Patricia Murray, Executive



Secretary of the UISG.

For this seminar, eleven women and men religious from different countries took turns to create an intensive ten-day program, where the theme of interculturality was addressed from different perspectives. They engaged us in group work, spiritual and creative activities and the analysis of sociological and psychological tools for the measurement of intercultural skills, necessary for living an embodied interculturality.

As has been repeatedly stated, interculturality recognizes cultural differences as a revelation of the face of humanity, created in the image and likeness of God and enriched by the

ever-deepening exchange between them. Interculturality is thus not an end in itself but rather the means by which we create the conditions to enjoy our humanness, by cultivating people and cultures. Reflection on interculturality takes us beyond the fact of recognizing that around the world there have existed and now exist many cultures (multiculturalism). Rather it focuses on trying to build bridges between cultures and to establish a true communication. A temptation of consecrated life is often to adapt itself to multiculturalism as an expression of its universality. To adapt to living well with people of different cultures who are under one roof but living separately, would mean to lose the opportunity to experience a serious journey of conversion within one's own religious community.

Anthony Gittins, one of eleven featured speakers at the UISG seminar, has consistently said that living together in our differences is a new revolution, and that this is necessary for consecrated life. This means living together in an intentional way in solidarity with different cultural groups, sharing the same faith. An intercultural lifestyle is the future of international religious life. If our international communities do not become intercultural, they will not survive. This is the great challenge and/or opportunity that we are called to harvest and to revive in our Congregation.



S. Cristina (3rd from left) interacts with her table group

Mission experience in southeast Pakistan

S. Saiqa Anwer

Pakistan

As we move into the future each of us in the region of Pakistan is seeking ways to share the love of Jesus wherever we have the opportunity. I was given the opportunity to do this in Sindh, one of the four provinces of Pakistan. Located in the southeast of the country, it is the third largest in area and the second largest in population. It also has a large number of poor and vulnerable people who face many unexpected risks including natural disaster, illness and unemployment.

We know that every country embraces many cultures and here, in the province of Sindh I faced a completely culture, actually several different cultures since several different ethnic groups, having different languages, are living there. One group to whom

I was present were Hindu-speaking Indians who migrated to Pakistan after independence. At that time they were converted to Christianity by the missionaries. Now the second generation has made Pakistan their home. The missionaries tried to help these people and built schools, dispensaries and

churches for them. But not all have a decent place to live. Some are still living in small huts, made with sticks and plastic bags, without toilets or clean water. Forced to use dirty water even for drinking and cooking, many catch bad diseases. Since there is no good hospital for them to get adequate treatment, many die. Their food is very simple. For many generations they have worked in the field from morning to evening, especially the women, with the children working in the fields after school. Yet they do not own this land, but are paid daily wages by landlords. Clearly, their desire is to own their own fields. In spite of their difficult life, they are a very generous people who open their doors to others, embracing the principles of hospitality, responsibility and participation. They are happy for the company of the missionaries. This mission experience challenged me to action and inspired me with passion for the lost and hurting. It was a time for me to develop a more compassionate heart and to gain a new perspective and vision for the mission and for the ministry which lies ahead in the future.



S. Saiqa with a group of girls



S. Saiqa (3rd from left) with women

Retreat Day for Associates in Denmark and Sweden

Marian Bridget Connolly,
Edited by S. Gisela Heitz

Denmark

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware." Hebrews 13: 2

The Yearly Retreat Day for the three groups of associates of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Denmark and Sweden is a day all look forward to. In October 2018 the topic of the day was the actual situation of refugees in Denmark. A member of the Catholic parish in Aarhus, Anemone Samy, who for several years has been working with refugees in Denmark, spoke to the group about her experience.

Anemone was inspired to work for refugees during the so called refugee crisis in Europe in 2015. She learned that refugees are people who are very vulnerable. It is not enough to just welcome them; individuals and families need assistance with many things. They need someone to listen when they worry about their dear ones who are left behind and to talk about their experiences in the war zones. They need someone to go shopping with them and practical help to go to a doctor.

The conditions of refugees living in camps often are whitewashed in public and in the media, which do not show the sufferings refugees have to endure. Some right-wing political parties stir up conflicts by giving the impression that the country is being flooded by refugees, but in fact the number of asylum seekers has diminished during the last year.

Anemone explained the quite inflexible administration system in Denmark. Part of this inflexibility is that refugees are not allowed to take up a work that fits their education in any place where such work is available, but they are limited to work only in the place they are registered. This often leads to a situation of unemployment, even though there would be a fitting employment elsewhere for him or her. Thus the economic condition of refugees is often very poor, with them lacking



enough money to buy food or provide for the needs of the children.

Another very hard condition for refugees is that the state no longer encourages family reunification.

Families now have to try to obtain a Danish visa for their endangered family members which is both complicated and expensive. This is especially hard on children, who often need to be reunited with their parents. The government has also cut support for medical help. In a number of cases refugees do not receive the medical help they would need. It often seems the state does what is possible to make the situation of refugees more difficult at all levels. Associates and Sisters felt ashamed when they came to realize under what conditions the unfortunate refugees live and that they do not receive the most basic help in such a rich country as is Denmark.

The factual part of the day was followed by lunch in silence and a prayer, during which the "good Samaritan" from the gospel of Luke became the model of one who is "caring for those in need". Later the participants shared their ideas in groups. "What can we do?" was the simple question that arose in the group. How can the feeling of powerlessness be overcome?

A result of the sharing is the insight that simple things can be done in ordinary daily life: sitting beside a refugee in a bus, often the seat next to them remains empty; smiling at a stranger we meet; talking about facts and not allowing untruths in order to stop/change the mainstream of indifference that is spreading in society; writing about this growing injustice wherever possible.

The central message of the day was "SEE the OTHER as a Person."

The Golden Shamrock

S. Victoria Irudayaraj

Pachmarhi

Saturday, January 05, 2019 was a red-letter day for the Sisters of St. Joseph in Bhopal, India as they gathered together along with 40 priests and 300 people at Assumption Parish to celebrate the dream which came true 50 years ago: "to give a home and care to handicapped children whose life story is usually sad, and sometimes tragic," in the words of the late Archbishop Eugene D'Souza, the pioneering visionary of the project. A thanksgiving liturgy was organised to celebrate the golden jubilee of the three special ministries of caring for physically and mentally challenged children, teaching hearing-impaired children and caring for the sick.

The entire celebration was summed up in a Shamrock that represented the three communities with the three special ministries: Miriam, Marian and Asha Niketan (Home of Hope). A shamrock was chosen because the inspiration for this mission came from Ireland and S. Christopher Whelan, an Irish missionary, devoted 50 years of her life to this mission. Three nursing students danced to the rhythm of "Love changes everything," with the three leaves of the shamrock in their hands, at the end of which Sr. Christopher accompanied by Jacob, the first student, lit the Golden Jubilee Candle and placed it in the shamrock. The present archbishop of Bhopal praised the Sisters of St.



S. Christopher along with Jacob lighting the jubilee candle held by S. Sushma

Joseph for the selfless service rendered to the Church and humanity through the three unique ministries on Asha Niketan Campus. Over the past 50 years hundreds of handicapped children have passed through the portals of the three institutions.

At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, the 'Golden Shamrock', a booklet containing the experiences of our courageous women who began this challenging and daring mission, was released.

Presently there are 110 residential children, 43 girls and 67 boys, at Miriam school for the mentally challenged. The 98 day-scholars attend the primary

or nursery classes and undergo the appropriate rehabilitation treatment. All children attending Miriam School have difficulties learning due to intellectual deficiencies, physical handicap and similar issues.

Asha Niketan School for the deaf has 250 children from Nursery to Class 12, with 25% from families below the poverty line, with many parents illiterate and daily wage earners. Thus the school has to provide for all needs of these children: food, clothing, books, stationary, toiletries, medicines and the like. Residential facilities, which presently house 82 boys and 80 girls, are available for those deaf children whose parents reside outside Bhopal. At the age of four the students are admitted in the hostel.

Asha Niketan hospital has grown over the years and today it is a multispecialty hospital with many facilities. The school of nursing grooms many young women from different states of India to be efficient nurses by the time they complete three years of General Nursing. The physically challenged children no longer stay in the hospital they but are helped by the physiotherapy department. These three ministries truly bear witness to our charism of communion with those at the peripheries of our fractured world and society. The sisters try to heal those fractures by their life and ministry.



The release of the Golden Shamrock

Soup with the Flavor of Sharing

S. Christiane Roger

France

In the town of Albertville, where two of our communities are located, "The Festival of Solidarity," is held annually, for a fortnight. Its goal is to raise awareness in as many people as possible about the importance of solidarity. Roundtables, projection of videos, and theatrical shows are organized by many associations: the Solidarity Territorial Association, CCFD Earth Solidarity, the Republican Collective of Albertville, the France-Palestine Association, the League for Human Rights, and the Restos du Coeur (soup kitchens), all in support of the municipal government.

This year, this collective of associations organized a festive day in the Jeanne d'Arc school environs to close the 11th edition of this festival begun on November 16. The decision was made to cook a soup of solidarity, or rather soups

of solidarity. Participants from all backgrounds and representing different areas of this olympic city, including Sister Jaya and Sister Nirmal of the community in Albertville, gathered to wash, peel and cook the vegetables they brought, in addition to those given by various local producers.

An ethnic melting pot, Indian, Albanian, Brazilian, Bangladeshi, African and European, cooked and tasted different soups. "The goal of this day is to show that you can make and share a meal together in conviviality with people of all countries", said the Coordinator of the Collective.

In total, more than 100 people prepared and tasted six pots of four different soups: Moroccan, Algerian, peasant or squash and pumpkin soup.

Finally, fruit, pastries, and "homemade" salads were



Preparing the soup



Sr. Jayarani (L.) and Nirmal (3rd from L) with two of the women

placed on pretty tables, decorated by Farfadets, young scouts of France. A good mood filled the gathering. The day ended with various activities, including a "game of the goose of solidarity" in the school courtyard. Participants spoke positively of their experience. Genevieve, a volunteer in the Restos du Coeur, attended for the first time; for Teresa, a member of the trade union confederation of families, it was the second time. "It's a very friendly day with a real mix of cultures in the presence of youth and the less youthful. . . . A beautiful moment of sharing," they said, as they peeled potatoes.

Panettone of Solidarity

Enrico Casale

Italy

The 8th edition of the "Panettone of Solidarity" was a great success.

Some 1,850 sweet cakes were packed and delivered, going beyond the already excellent result achieved in 2017.

"These cakes are something more than a beautiful tradition", observed Sister Clementina Copia. For years, she, along with many volunteers and some Sisters, have worked for CSJMissioni, expressing the desire to be open to and committed to their neighbors. The funds raised will ensure school attendance for 41 girls at the hostel in Songea (Tanzania), who have only this chance to study and complete their schooling."

The girls of the hostel receive food and proper care, along with a comprehensive education that helps them to develop as individuals and embrace their personal dignity. The accommodation has beds, toilets, showers and electricity. In Songea, Tanzania, there are so many young women with different stories, united by the same dream, to continue attending school in order to shed prejudice, educate themselves, and finally be recognized in their dignity, as much as men.

"The success of the panettone campaign was not insignificant," explains Sister Clementina. "This year, the communities of the Sisters were reorganized, and this could have compromised the initiative. Instead, we found that by now, the campaign is well established and is always greeted with great enthusiasm. We must thank everyone, beginning with those who bought the cakes in a gesture of solidarity, and also the team of enthusiastic friends of CSJMissioni who, starting in October, worked with great dedication in packaging and delivering the sweets. Finally, we thank the Sisters who worked in their distribution".

Panettone were dispatched to all the communities of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chambéry in Italy: Rome, Acerra, Ferentino, Ceprano, Foligno,



and Pisa. "Like last year," continues Sister Clementina, "we sent numerous panettoni to Sicily and Tuscany where we no longer have a community but, thanks to groups of mothers and sisters of Sisters, the initiative has spread. This year there was the novelty of Ravenna, a new city for us. Numerous cakes were sold within a few days. As usual this year, the panettoni have crossed borders, reaching France, Denmark, and the Czech Republic. In Norway and Ireland, panettoni were not

purchased, but our Sisters supported the campaign by sending funds. Thanks to the panettoni," concluded Sister Clementina, "the hostel can continue its activities. The best thing though is that, over the years, an unbreakable bond between Tanzania and Italy has been created. It is made up of friendship, solidarity, sensitivity, and generosity, truly realizing the following proverb: 'If I give you a flower, I gave you only a flower; if with the flower, I also give of myself, I have given you spring.'"



JPIC – A way of Life

S. Vidya Kullu

Tanmaya

A two-day interactive session on “JPIC – A way of Life” was organized by Srs. Neha and Vasantha, members of the International JPIC Commission. Twenty Eight members of JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) of the four Indian provinces participated in these sessions held in Snehalaya, Nagpur, on January 12 and 13.. The group was led and stimulated to go into core of JPIC by the gentle presence and valuable contributions of Sr. Mariaelena Aceti, General Councillor, and S. Lorraine Marie Delaney, former Superior General. After a meaningful opening prayer, floral welcoming and lighting of the lamp, Sr. Philomena, the Provincial Superior of Nagpur, addressed the group, saying that a JPIC activist needs to be rooted in the mystery of the Trinity, daring to make drastic and prophetic change. Our charism has to be lived in this fragile and broken world where justice is evolving all the time. She challenged the sisters with this question: “Do we have a call to bring about justice, peace and integrity of creation?”

S. Mariaelena, after explaining the structure of the JPIC, its goals and functioning, noted the importance of networking with others locally and globally to deal with relevant issues. Additionally, she enlightened the participants on the role of the UN-NGO, of JCoR (Justice Coalition of Religious) and of Global JPIC. She explained that



S. Mariaelena speaking with the group

our Congregation is one of 18 Roman Catholic NGO organizations accredited by the United Nations in New York who are members of JCoR. The primary aim of this collaboration is to strengthen the capacity of our members to address the root causes of unsustainable development. We work toward this goal by coordinating national, regional, and global efforts of Religious to call on local and national leaders for a just, equitable, and rights-based implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN's Agenda for 2015-2030. S. Dorothy Beck, the most experienced JPIC member at the meeting, deftly brought out the connection between CSJ Spirituality and JPIC. She categorically stated that the mission demands creativity, a spirit of daring, and deep humility. She said “JPIC demands passion for justice, desire for peace and non-violence, and concern for the integrity

of creation.” Justice can be understood as God’s way of being, acting and doing things. Peace comes about when justice abounds. Integrity of creation comes about when we bring forth a sustainable global society.

Explaining the Profile of a JPIC Animator, Sr. Neha highlighted the fact that JPIC is not a theme or a topic to be included in a meeting, but an attitude, a way of life which needs to be inculcated and lived. A JPIC animator is called to serve Jesus in the most vulnerable and excluded.

The responsibility of a JPIC animator is formation, communication, coordination and collaboration, breathing life into the group. With its emphasis on collaboration and advocacy as well as the need to protect creation, as we were reminded in the presentation on “Laudato Si” this meeting enlightened the participants and encouraged them to make JPIC a way of life.

EDITING

Barbara Bozak

Eliana Aparecida dos Santos

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Navya Neelamvilail

TRANSLATIONS

Agnès Moussiére

Cristina Gavazzi

Joyce Baker

Margherita Corsino

Maria Elisabete Reis

Anette Jensen

Marie-Pierre Ruche

CIRCULATION

Rossella Galli

www.csjchambery.org

E - MAIL

icc@csjchambery.org