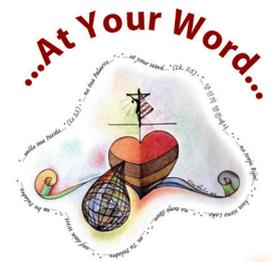


International Newsletter

Adorers of the Blood of Christ



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Servants – Builders - Animators

Editorial

The shepherds went and found a Child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger!

Who knows what they might have said to each other! Were they disappointed and dissatisfied or awed and shocked?

Why did that messenger bother them during the middle of the night? It was not their first disturbance, and it certainly would not be the last night-time nuisance.

Perhaps the shepherds thought about some news scoop, like a woman being killed or something of that kind, in order to get out of the quagmire and stench of those sheep that had characterized their lives up to then. But instead, it was a Child and a family of beggars in an impoverished dwelling.

What did that Child born in the setting of a world infested with violence and terrorism want from them? Just one thing: to leave their indifference. He was asking them to become **servants** of a broken humanity, **builders** of a frayed society and **animators** of churches and unbelieving communities. He was asking them to be Christians and inhabitants of a world in which lording it over the least is stopped and projects of peace and solidarity are implemented.

They are given a great responsibility:

politicians called to work for the common good, going beyond their own sheep pens and promoting the rights of the people not to remain sheep, but to become shepherds who listen to the voices and wailings, even if these are far off.

Servants, builders, animators of the common home of the beatitudes that promotes the participation of the young people, and does not accept the strategies of fear and war. They do charity as a concrete form of a *common home* and not a *common kitty* – to say it the way Father Tonino Bello would, where everyone can live and not just survive.

New sheep paths flow from this for the new shepherds of the third millennium, harrassed during this Christmas night - paths of education to policies and responsible citizenship of which Father Milani made a school, the obligatory direction to give dignity back to the people from whom it has been stolen and to offer a worthy and just future to those who continue to believe that life is only a gift.

No one is excluded from this peace project to ride the wave of inclusive policies as St. Maria De Mattias already did.

Sr. Mimma Scalera, ASC

Summary

Editorial

◇ Servants – Builders - Animators

General Administration Space

◇ ...Transformation to generate life ...

◇ In-depth pilgrimage

From the ASC World

◇ Update from Liberia:
diary of Sr. Therese Wetta, ASC

◇ Educating in Mozambique

◇ Talents being sought

1	◇ The Prophetess Hildegard	7
	◇ Third Congress of Consecrated Young People: Free in the Holy Spirit	8
2		
3	JPIC/VIVAT Space	
	◇ Educating for respect of all creation	9
	In the Congregation	
4	◇ General Administration Calendar	11
5	◇ Birthdays: Let's celebrate Life	11
6	◇ They have returned to their Heavenly Home	11

... Transformation to generate life ...

...are the words of the Extended General Council logo that gathered the ASCs in charge of the Regions and Foundations from around the world at the Generalate November 21-30, 2018. Together we sought out **Paths of Transformation** during the ten days with an agenda filled with important topics for the Congregation and for each individual Adorer.



At the beginning of the council meeting, Sr. Nadia Coppa, General Superior, encouraged us to embrace the process of transformation, reminding us that transformation is one of the strongest recurring calls accompanying each decision made during the 2017 General Assembly and asking us an important question, *"As a Congregation, what do we mean when we speak of transformation?"*

Day by day, we were more and more open to new ways, sharing our experiences and getting to know each other better through the presentations of each reality, whether small or large, seen as a puzzle piece of that unique picture that is the Congregation.

As a General Administration, we shared our hopes and the concrete steps we've taken with regard to the mandates received from the 2017 GA. And we presented our plan for our six-year term with the theme, "... Toward that beautiful order of things ..." divided into five areas as a vision that goes beyond the individual activities:

- area of prophetic calls;
- area of mutuality of encounter;
- area of covenants;
- area of generative sharing (treasurer's office);
- area of communal communication (secretary's office).

The members of the Extended General Council worked in groups on the topics presented, spending more time especially on some topics: the preparation of the Congregational Novitiate, the revision of our proper law, possible paths for vulnerable regions and foundations, CIS and JPIC programs and the evaluation of VIVAT

The two presenters, Dr. Rosanna Virgili and Sr. Maria Cristina Avàlos, SSpS, together with Father Leonello Leidi, facilitated the work of searching for new transformation processes. Rosanna led us to biblical and spiritual aspects of transformation, Sr. Maria Cristina illustrated the topic of international and intercultural formation, and Father Leonello enlightened us about the topic regarding the Congregation's proper law.

The pilgrimage to Vallecorsa and Acuto made us feel like *pilgrims on the journey* along the footsteps of our charism to rediscover the importance and beauty of being authentically transformed.

... our transformation process continues ... and in order to remember that, we received a small clay amphora, a sign of the transformation process we are called to undertake with openness of heart.

Each person returned home with the message, *"Go and be the transformation to generate life in the world."*



Sr. Matija Pavić, ASC

In-depth pilgrims...

Along the footsteps of Maria De Mattias for an authentic transformation of heart

On November 24 during the Extended General Council, the members set off toward Vallecorsa and Acuto to walk with Maria De Mattias along the path into the depths of Love, which calls, seduces and transforms. There, among the barren mountains and rugged hills, God began his conversion process in her. The day was guided by Sr. Nadia Coppa, General Superior, and Sr. Manuela Nocco.

In spite of the typically autumn rainy weather, the desire to encounter Maria De Mattias in the salient times of her story, her transitions, her faith journey did not wane. We can draw strength, teaching and courage from those times.

As we traveled from Rome to Vallecorsa and Acuto, deep prayer and conversation with Foundress showed us that true transformation is accomplished by accepting Love. In fact, her restlessness as a young woman became

an opportunity for deeper searching. God understood her torment and Maria De Mattias allowed herself to be transformed from a restless teenager to a courageous woman in love. This is shown as Love and as a tireless urge to go outside herself to come closer and closer to the heart of her Beloved. Following her footsteps from the Church of St. Martin where she was baptized, to the Church, where she heard the call to follow the Lamb, and then to her departure from Porta Missoria was a process of ongoing renewal, of conversion that experiences ever deeper transitions, more involving responses that each time ask for letting go of something to lighten her steps toward the new to be embraced. This can also be said of us. The reflection day concluded with the Eucharistic liturgy.

And then on to Acuto, the place that for Maria was the realization of a promise, but also a prophecy of a life in tune with the Gospel. Led by Love, Maria becomes an announcer of God's intentions in history and his saving actions for humanity.

Thus, the pilgrims of the 2018 EGC continued to ask themselves about what the Lord is asking us to let go in order to accept change. Questions were asked about what lands we are dwelling in and especially what horizons are given us to glimpse so that our gaze can extend forward.

Today, Maria De Mattias continues to be a witness of the process in which we are called to participate, a process that is the answer of our faithfulness to God, to His Spirit and His story, from which we cannot be absolved.

Sr. Maria Grazia Boccamazzo, ASC



Update from Liberia: diary of Sr. Therese Wetta, ASC

November 29, 2018

It is a national holiday in Liberia today (November 29) honoring a former president. Tubman University in Harper, our diocesan center just over two hours from here, is named for him. We are using today as our Thanksgiving day and enjoying three of the favorite foods here: rice, palm butter (a sauce made from palm nuts and poured over the rice) and fresh coconut. Last Thursday we did pasta for lunch.

Sister Zita had five women come for sewing class this morning, despite it being a holiday. Holidays here are no different than any other day except Sunday. The women are quite faithful in coming to class but usually on African time.

For Therese, no school! I woke up this morning



to a termite hill on the floor by the door frame between my bedroom and bath that was not present last night. Some hot water and insect spray served as the beginning treatment. We are having considerable termite problems in the house because of wooden poles between the outside and inside walls. This situation became the prompt I needed to wash my windows as rainy season is mostly over.

As I did a more thorough cleaning of my room, I was aware of Advent and a new liturgical year both beginning Sunday. I pondered about how much more difficult it is to clean the spaces of my heart for this new season and Christmas than it is to clean a window or scrub a floor. Together we prayerfully support one another to use this season well.

Two weekends ago, a lay group similar to the Legion of Mary met here for the weekend. There were about 50 participants from this geographic region

of the diocese. I've attached photos that show how they decorated church (retained for Christ the King), the offertory procession and the choir in action. The Mass took three hours! This week, six 4th-grade students, as a punishment for refusing to take a test for a teacher, had to remove all the decorations and clean church. Some 5th-graders had to wash all the benches, also a punishment. Church is now physically ready for the new liturgical year!

I had another orientation experience this week as I went to Pleebo (I had to personally go to the bank for a transaction) via motorcycle -- three hours, 15 minutes each way. My legs are still talking to me. There was no driver available for our vehicle and the road is still too bad from the rains for us to attempt the drive. The driver is a parishioner and he made sure I felt safe, especially in the area where I got off the bike and walked down the hill and up it on the return trip. Too much mud on the sides of that foot-deep rut for me!

We've now worked a process so such a trip will be unnecessary in the future. God was so good as it was cloudy most of the day, a great blessing for my eyes. And, 45 minutes after arriving home, we had a torrential downpour with lightning and thunder, a definite unsafe situation on a cycle in the middle of the savanna. The driver wouldn't have been able to see because the rain was so hard.

This next week begins tests for the second six weeks. I'm praying that the printer at the rectory works and we get paper copies rather than writing the test on the blackboard. The Christmas holiday for us runs from December 21 to January 3.

Wishing all of you a contemplative and fruitful Advent. We meet in prayer and love.



Educating in Mozambique

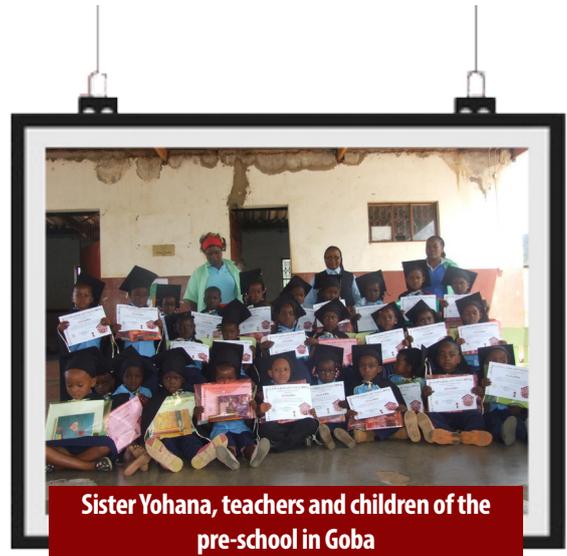
One of the dreams of St. Maria De Mattias was educating the society of her time especially children, girls and women. This wonderful dream continues today through the ministries of education in many parts of the world as the Adorers continue to educate these groups in order to empower them.

The Tanzanian ASC sisters in Mozambique are working in collaboration with the Parish of Saint Frumenzio in Rome. They are supervising and providing education at the nursery schools of Goba, Bakabaka and St. Frumenzio in Mafuiane. The School of Goba has 68 children and St. Frumenzio has 108 children; both are supervised by Sr. Yohana Amu, ASC. The school of Bakabaka has 83 children and is supervised by Sr. Flaviana Alfredy, ASC.

On November 07 2018 there was a graduation of 48 students at St. Frumenzio nursery school. On November 08 2018, 28 children completed their studies and had their graduation in that day. On November 09 2018, 37 children graduated at Bakabaka nursery school. The children of these three schools have learned well not only to read and write, but also moral values and thus have a good foundation to continue with primary school subjects and becoming better citizens of the future. The children gave a word of gratitude to the sisters and teachers for their readiness to help them in their studies.

Education is needed by the society of Mozambique so that it can overcome the civil war that has lasted for a long time. We believe that the education we give to these children will be a leaven of change that will stimulate the growth of love and justice in the country; these are important values. When they are missing, peace disappears. Through this education they will build their own homeland and even their own dignity.

Sr. Yohana Amu, ASC



Sister Yohana, teachers and children of the pre-school in Goba



Sr. Yohana, the teacher and children of the St. Frumenzio pre-school



Children singing during recreation

Talents being sought

In a society that is has no wide-ranging views, and is more and more in search of immediate satisfaction and quick remedies for urgent problems, the desire and creativity to envision new connections between and among various cultures that will lead to an understanding of a new humanism is essential. With such a perspective, a planning seminar, "Looking for Talents," was held on November 16, 2018 in Trani at the Sanguis Christi Spirituality Center. It was facilitated by Sr. Mimma Scalera, ASC a planning expert.

During the seminar, participants were given



was done with the participants: sisters of various congregations and laity involved in parish work, professional formation and social and cultural sectors. The seminar was divided into times of presentations and practical exercises. This provided an effective educational activity fostering everyone's involvement through the use of participative and interactive methods with time for dialogue among the participants and with the seminar director.

The seminar concluded with the hope and commitment to overcome the self-referencing and fragmentation of our pastoral work and to integrate it in to a new framework of synodality to promote evangelization in contemporary cultures.

Sr. Anna Grazia Di Liddo, ASC

the priorities of the Community Policy Agenda, and were shown tools for finding the way through European and National Planning, necessary methods for presenting a project, and furnishing a panorama about the new program of funds for 2014-2020. The aim was to create a concrete possibility of professional growth through deepening basic knowledge and acquiring new specialist skills.

During the course, topics on the life cycle of the project, monitoring and evaluation, financial plan and the creation of partnership were studied. Simulation of cases



The Prophetess Hildegarde

For some time now, the "On the Mountain" Spirituality Center, run by three Adorers of the Blood of Christ, has been dedicated to the understanding of women and their value in the Church and Society. Recently, another program in this vein was presented. The Prophetess Hildegarde is the title of a study that Professor Neria De Giovanni published a year ago to tell this saint's history and personality. Since Pope Benedict proclaimed Hildegard a Doctor of the Church on October 7, 2012, her life and writings have been spoken about and reflected upon much more.



De Giovanni came to Castelplanio to present her publication to more than one hundred people who were interested in the value of this medieval woman who still offers light and meaning to modern life. Hildegard, Abbess of the monastery of Bingen, who died in 1179 at the age of 81, was a gifted woman who loved to study natural sciences and medicine along with hygiene and human nutrition. Hildegard had the gift of visions and prophecy, and she lived in an historical time when the Church and the Papacy were no longer truly evangelical. She became a prophetic voice for the Bishops and the Pope. A medieval mystic, she loved the earth and its herbs, loved to sing and have her nuns dance with joy and happiness, to love life and the earth, and live each moment together in communion with God, is a beautiful sign for us. As Pope Francis has for us, Hildegard wrote a "Laudato si" with her life centuries ago, encouraging the safeguarding of the earth and its fruits for the good of humanity, or each person.

Today we hear certain homilies or presentations that make a distinction between material values and spiritual ones, preserving a dichotomy which is not real. Is it possible to hold beauty and harmony of the body, dress, dance, music, healing herbs and everything regarding health and equilibrium of human existence with distain? They can become idols to be served, and we need to guard against that, but idolatries are not fought by fleeing, but by being animated from within by the fire of the Spirit.

In Galatians 5, St. Paul distinguishes fruits of the Spirit from fruits of the flesh, which are worldliness, according to Pope Francis, nothing other than selfishness closed in on itself. This is a challenge to us today to live by the Spirit, a way for us to respond to the calls of Pope Francis and Hildegard herself.

The presenter for this gathering, Professor Neria De Giovanni, is the president of the International Association of Literary Critics. She has written 40 books, some of which were published by the Vatican Editorial Bookstore. She gives voice to women in literature and history.

It was a beautiful evening at Castelplanio Spirituality Center. There was also some delicious food prepared by the community and by some of the friends of the Sisters. One of the ladies that attends the Center also prepared some cookies, using one of Hildegard's recipes. A dance to Hildegard's music was a gift to us by Neria and her daughter Sara at the beginning of the evening, creating awe and inner peace in everyone. Thank you, ladies!



D. Mariano Piccotti

Third Congress of Young Consecrated People: Free in the Holy Spirit



The Third Congress of Young Religious was held in Krakow, Poland from September 13-16. About 900 participants from 100 men's and women's congregations and secular institutes gathered for the event. The theme was *Free in the Holy Spirit*. Most of the gatherings were held in the John Paul II Center and at the Divine Mercy Shrine in Łagiewniki.

Young people, liberty and the Holy Spirit were frequently heard words during the days of the Congress and the enthusiasm of the participants not only filled the conference halls but also gave life to times of recreation with games and dancing.

In his conference entitled *The Holy Spirit assures eternal youth to the Scriptures*; Father Krzysztof Wons, SDS, made reference to the young in spirit that is not necessarily linked to the date of one's birth. *"Tell me your desires and I will tell you if you are young."* This statement does away with the question of age and emphasizes openness to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's imagination and eternal youth. Father Krzysztof spoke of *Lectio divina* in a daily context. In fact, the Word of God does not allow us to become old and die before we actually die.

Another important theme was that of trust, which, if lived in daily life, defends us from excessive activism, from trusting only in our own strength and from burnout. Sr. Anna Balchan, SMI, leader of the Association of Assistance to Victims of Prostitution and Their Families, spoke about the experience of God's Mercy. Her stories about abused women rescued from the hell of violence, made me ask the question, "Do I respond to God's invitation to take the Blood of Christ to excluded people?" The witness of Father Krzysztof, Sr. Anna and Father Stanisław

Jarosz, OSPPE, showed me that it is possible and wonderful to live consecrated life with Jesus.

During the Congress, I was entrusted with the task of the liturgy, along with Michael. This was a very important challenge for me. I wanted to make the beauty of the liturgy and its richness of diversity of expression shine forth.

In the organization of the liturgy, the Way of the Cross was the most important experience for me. I prepared some stations by taking inspiration from our spirituality and the reflections of Father Krzysztof Grzywocz who was tragically taken from us. Others were prepared by the Religious of Trzebinia. Accompanying Jesus on the Way of the Cross helped me to rediscover His closeness in the most difficult situations. He is not indifferent to what I experience, to what I often do not want to admit to myself. I was moved by the thought that the Way of the Cross helped many participants to experience God's tender love.

During these days in Krakow, we experienced a youthful God in love with humanity. Two other important events of the Congress were the march to the city center and the concert by the band NiemaGot.

The Congress was a school of relationships for me, even the difficulties encountered are not insurmountable, but are an opportunity to learn to collaborate.

Sr. Tatiana Studentowa, ASC

Education for respect of all of creation

Life was given to us so that it may be fully productive. The spiritual journey of following Jesus is closely linked to the daily miracles of grace and the marvels of nature that He pointed out during his earthly life – the lilies of the field, the grain of wheat falling to the earth and bringing forth fruit. He talks of fertile and sterile land, of grains whose fertility is impeded by thorny and rocky ground. Pope Francis notes that on many levels the territory ruins the person and cuts off life and relationships with God, with other human beings and the land ... and a great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us." (Encyclical *Laudato Si*, numbers 66 and 202)

In the Region of Zagreb, the months of September and October were marked by prayers and activities toward greater ecological culture. The creative prayer prepared for "the day of all creation" was like a breath of fresh air for almost all the ASC communities; the members of the Community of the Blood of Christ and the parish communities where the Sisters work. Many talked about their prayer experience and were encouraged to be an example of gratitude and create harmony within creation and the environment. We valued our ecological awareness in communities for using the resources of our common home in a more rational way and keeping our towns clean.

The educational activities carried out with the children of all ages and the scholastic programs

and parish catechesis were dedicated to the theme "Creating and safeguarding our world together."

These activities included reclaiming the environment, recycling, making useful products from plastic bottles, collection of usable fabrics, making of rugs and purses, paper recycling to make illustrated books, planting flowers in the school courtyard, filtering water, rationally using water and all of creation. These created mutually good relationships for health, peace and joy.

It was interesting how the children came to the conclusion that there are no factories for making forests, mountains and seas, and if the woods are destroyed, the wolves, squirrels and other animals will not be able to survive. This theme drove them to think about their responsibility for the air, land, water, vegetable and animal world and the diadem of creation, the human person.





Speaking about God's wisdom and goodness in creating the world we also touched on the topic of ecology. In the story of creation (Genesis 2), which we took as the basis for reflection, they recognized "the first and ongoing mission of the human person is to cultivate and care for the earth." (cfr. Gen. 2:15)

To emphasize the importance of this commandment of God for themselves and for others, the students of the Davorin Trstenjak elementary school in Zagreb, together with Sister Marija Bilanović, did an experiment during their religion class on "How do some things pollute the earth?" They buried a paper napkin, a plastic cup, a piece of glass and a metal screw in the school courtyard. These objects will remain buried until International Earth Day on April 22, 2019. They will dig up the things and write down their observations and their conclusions will be presented on posters and Power Point presentations to the students in the lower grades.

The Eucharistic celebrations for Thanksgiving Day for the fruits of the earth were prepared with great creativity. All these activities help us open our eyes to better see God's great work in our life, in people, in all creation and to cultivate a responsible attitude toward nature where God has placed us in his Love.



Sr. Cecilija Milković, ASC

General Administration Calendar



January 6: Generalate – Epiphany Concert: a night of love following the stars

**Birthdays:
Let us celebrate life**

<u>40</u>	Sr. Theresia Rogatus Mwimba	January 8, 1979	Tanzania
<u>50</u>	Sr. Ra Mi Agnes Yoon	January 2, 1969	Korea
<u>60</u>	Sr. Sônia Maria Pinho de Matos	January 4, 1959	Manaus
<u>70</u>	Sr. Sue Andrew	January 6, 1949	USA
	Sr. Maria Grazia D'Amato	January 14, 1949	Italy
	Sr. Francisca Lafuente Hidalgo	January 23, 1949	Spain
	Sr. Bernarda Krišić	January 24, 1949	Zagreb
<u>80</u>	Sr. Teresa Cardetta	January 8, 1939	Italy
	Sr. Giuseppina Pacifico	January 12, 1939	Italy
	Sr. Maddalena Orsillo	January 26, 1939	Italy
<u>90</u>	Sr. Attilia Compagno	January 1, 1929	Italy
	Sr. Frances Newton	January 16, 1929	USA
	Sr. Mary Peter Chiodo	January 19, 1929	USA



***They have returned to
their Heavenly Home***

December 12, 2018	Sr. Rita Pace	Italy
December 16, 2018	Sr. Bernardina De Angelis	Italy
December 17, 2018	Sr. Luigina Pace	Italy

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At Your Word...
Lima, Peru

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