

International Newsletter

Adorers of the Blood of Christ



Year XXVII – Issue 2
March/April 2024

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Walking with St. Maria De Mattias

It is heartwarming to see how day after day the good continues to materialize through the generous and tireless work of the ASCs. Maria De Mattias would surely be proud of us, indeed she is! I am sure that she misses nothing of what her daughters think, say, do and, most of all, live. I realize that a newsletter cannot express or contain the vitality and aliveness of ASCs, but it can give, so to speak, a taste of it. Even before being a means of communication, it is a place for sharing. Sharing is good for us. It broadens our horizons, bridges distances, sets imaginations in motion, ignites curiosity, inspires, encourages and opens our hearts wide. So let us share our lives spent daily in the peripheries, in schools and universities, in offices, in retirement homes, in social services, in parishes, in spirituality centers; but above all, let us share our lives as they are, without a lot of fuss, without ifs and buts, because they are animated by the ambitious desire to please Jesus. I share a phrase from Tagore that every morning 'waits' for me when I enter the office: *By my work I will tell who is hidden behind my life.*

On February 4, we remembered and celebrated our Foundress in every corner of the world, wherever there is even a single ASC. We gave thanks for her life and renewed with her our YES as individuals and as a global community. We continue to walk together sharing our lives and mission certain that *God is hidden behind our lives.*

Sr. Barbara Perali, ASC

Editorial

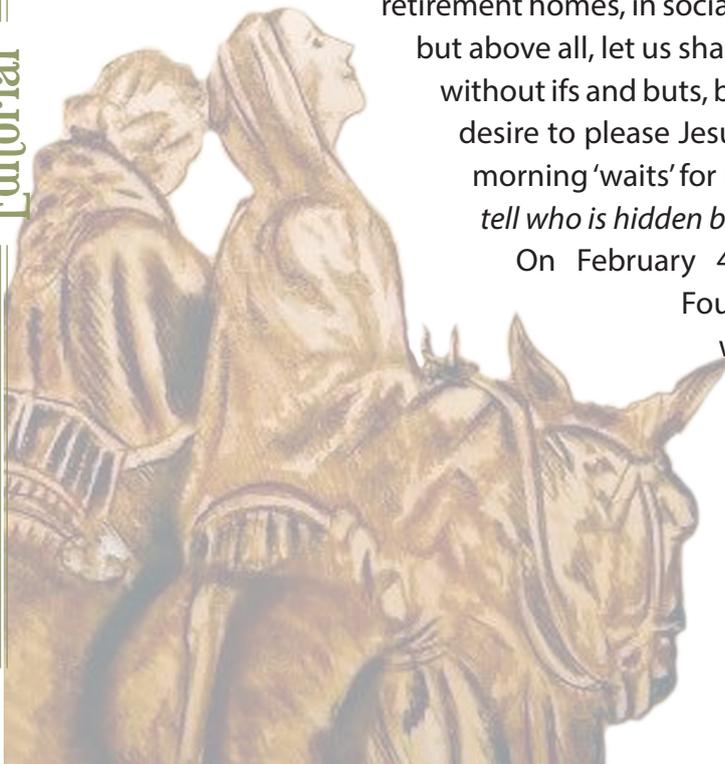


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Feast of the Birth of St. Maria De Mattias

February 4, 2024

Let us thank God for the gift of the life of St. Maria De Mattias. We especially thank God for the gift of St. Maria De Mattias' call to the Church and to the Congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ as the foundress of this Holy Congregation.

The commemoration of this day was preceded by a special three-day prayer that helped our community prepare spiritually toward the culmination of this special celebration. We are very grateful to our General Administration who so lovingly prepared this special prayer that accompanied us and introduced us to a deep reflection that touches the reality of the life of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

Each day of the triduum had a specific theme in which phrases from the letters of our foundress, St. Maria De Matias, psalms and passages from our Constitution were combined.

The theme of the first day was **GRATITUDE**. Through the words of our foundress, Psalm 137, our Constitution and litanies we reflected and prayed on gratitude. Our Tanzania Regional House community was touched by the calm and silence that reigned around us, signs of the peace and silence present in the hearts of each of us. We were quick and ready to share with each other what had touched us and what we carried in our hearts. We expressed our gratitude for the gift of St. Maria De Mattias to our congregation and the Church, also recognizing the value of each of us in the community and the preciousness of the vocational journey.

On the second day we reflected on the theme of **FORGIVENESS**. We experienced the real difficulty of living forgiveness through a long silence, which, however, gave us the strength to share those feelings of sorrow that we harbor within to see them then transformed into happiness and peace. The words of St. Mary De Mattias, Sirach and especially those of our Constitution inspired and guided us in our reflection. We found the strength to begin again and to let go of the pain. At the end of the prayer, we were filled with joy and peace, grateful to God for allowing time for our humanity to forget and forgive.

On the third day we were guided by the theme of **PRAYER**. After listening and reflecting on the words of our foundress, the gospel of St. John and our Life Charter, we felt freedom in our hearts. We are called to pray and have a responsibility to do so for all people, especially those we encounter and serve.

The place where the Triduum was held.

The litany of St. Maria De Mattias touched us deeply. The charism and spirituality of our Congregation embrace our mission wherever we are. For us, the litanies are a daily prayer and a reminder of what we are called to in this sacred congregation founded by St. Maria De Mattias.

We concluded our special three-day prayer on February 3 at 7:30 p.m. with all community members full of joy ready to celebrate the birth of St. Maria De Mattias.



March 4th was full of joy. We followed the liturgy of Sunday but with the intention of celebrating our feast day in a special way, which was made even more joyful by the entry into postulancy of four aspirants: Laura Valence, Laura Daniel, Maura Daniel and Martha Jackson. The event took place in the small church of the Regional House during vespers. We thank God for the gift of the new postulants.

Let us thank these sisters for their willingness to continue to respond to God's voice and for their willingness to begin a new journey. Thank you to the Waabudoo community for welcoming them and promising to continue to accompany them through prayer and to guide them in living according to our guidelines and the lifestyle of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.



The reception of the new postulants and the evening praise was followed by the celebration organized with the participation of our neighbors, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. It was a very happy day in which everyone built community by showing their talents. It is clear that everyone feels at home in the new family founded by St. Maria De Mattias. As we remember the birth of St. Maria De Mattias, we pray to God to grant us the grace to live our vocation well. In a special way, may we who follow in her footsteps renew her mission of love toward God and our beloved neighbor with the goal of achieving holiness.

BLEST BE THE BLOOD OF CHRIST!

*Sr. Suzana Damiani Maingu, ASC
Regional Councilor*

Africa
Region of **Tanzania**

Human Trafficking Seminar

Miyuji – John Merlini House of Formation – January 1, 2024

The seminar organized by TICAS (Catholic Association of Sisters of Tanzania) was attended by about 80 students of various religions from UDOM University and the College of Management Planning.

The following people collaborated and offered papers during the seminar:

Sr. Jacline Mongela – Congregation of the Sisters of Loretto - presenter

Gervas Senga (student) Mining College - presenter

Najma Mohamed (student) UDOM University – presenter

Sr. Anita Kimbwene – Congregation of Charles Borromeo - collaborator

Sr. Salome Augustina – Congregation of St. Gemma - collaborator

Sr. Caritas Aloyce Kilawe, Congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ - collaborator

Sr. Maria Mathias Mrema, Congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ - collaborator

Human trafficking and its organization comprises various systems of slavery today and is one of the greatest challenges facing the international community in the world today. Young people and particularly women, girls and younger children are the main targets of these systems of slavery.



From the ASC World

This situation compels young people from different regions of Tanzania to meet with interested parties to share methods, skills and tools to combat the terrible phenomenon of human trafficking by emphasizing the fact that this is not a war of a few but instead affects everyone.

Two important points were addressed:

- Ending human trafficking
- Remaining united in the fight against human trafficking.

The underlying components of human trafficking are:

- An activity whose goal is exploitation and whose method is deception.

Therefore, we are all invited wherever we are to be ambassadors to combat this epidemic.

Let us remember: making a person work for a very low wage is also considered a human trafficking activity.

*Sr. Caritas Aloyce Kilawe, ASC
Regional Councilor*

The Americas
USA Region

Citizenship is a Gift

On a cold, windy, and snowy January 19, 2024, I braved the elements to go to the downtown Eagleton Federal Building to join my Iraqi student, her husband, three children, and their "American mom" to witness Dunya's oath of citizenship. With 39 new citizens from 28 countries, the courtroom was crowded with some of the bravest people in our country, people who have left their native lands, cultures, and families to seek safety and a better life.

I often had ambivalent feelings when Dunya and I studied the text that explains the geography, history, and governmental system of the United States. Our country's lofty ideals often seem blurred by racism, partisanship, polarization, and disagreement. Dunya assured me that as refugees they are now safe and free in a flawed land. Her husband Amjed reflected on their eight years in this country; they arrived with two suitcases and a lot of hope. They now own a small house; he has a good job and plans to get his engineering certificate so that he can work as an engineer in this country. Dunya and Amjed, refugees and now American citizens, want ordinary things - safety, freedom, decent housing, a good job, and a quality education for their three American-born young children.



I volunteer as a tutor IHELP (Immigrant Home English Learning Program) that focuses on language, texts, goals, and progress. It's also about so much more, as the relationships and love develop over time and during classes. The League of Women Voters registered them after the ceremony so that they can exercise their new voting privilege. Watching them fill out the forms was almost as moving as watching Dunya raise her hand and recite the oath of citizenship. I've been humbled, privileged, and extremely enriched as her teacher and by being able to call them friends.

الله خير

That's Arabic for "God is good." (And no, I'll never learn Arabic!).

Sr. Regina Siegfried, ASC

Birthday of St. Maria De Mattias

On January 26, in our chapel of the ASC Częstochowa community, the celebration of Maria De Mattias' birthday began with a novena, which was prayed in community.

The last three days of the novena were prayed with the text of the triduum of St. Maria De Mattias sent by the General Administration. This was our expression of communion with all ASCs scattered around the world.

On Saturday, February 3, we prayed the morning prayers of the Solemnity of St. Maria De Mattias and Mass was celebrated by Fr. Mariusz, CPPS, who wore a chasuble with the image of the Foundress. The intention of the Mass was offered to God for the gift of the desire for holiness for all ASCs and the gift of vocations for the Congregation.

A few days before the Solemnity, the parish priests of St. Andrew Bobola and St. Brother Albert Parishes received a poster prepared by us inviting parishioners, friends, acquaintances and non-parishioners - children, youth and adults - to come to the chapel of our house on February 4 at 3 p.m. to pray together and for "sweet refreshments."

On Sunday, February 4 - around 3 p.m. - people started arriving at our house. More than 55 people in total, children, teenagers and adults; both parishes together, Associate members of the Precious Blood and friends of the sisters together with St. Maria De Mattias - all before the Face of Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament - offered their prayers to God. Those praying were joined by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood: Fr. Daniel, Provincial, Fr. Bogusław, Curator of the Shrine, and Br. Jerzy.

The atmosphere of the gathering was joyful, welcoming and infused with friendship. The oldest participant was 92 years old and the youngest 8.

The sisters prepared nice refreshments and some ladies brought their baked goods.

Also on this day there was another touch of St. Maria De Mattias. In St. Brother Albert Parish, Associate members of the Precious Blood distributed St. Maria De Mattias sweets and thoughts

prepared by Sr. Krystyna Kusak, ASC, after each Mass. An image of Maria De Mattias was in front of the altar and her relics were on the altar. During the morning Mass (before the blessing) Sr. Krystyna shared a reflection on St. Maria De Mattias.

During the novena period, Sr. Krystyna together with the Associate members of the Precious Blood celebrated the Birthday of St. Maria De Mattias in different parishes - St. Faustina Parish in Częstochowa, Popowo Parish.

Also on February 4, we received a beautiful gift from St. Maria De Mattias: just before 3 p.m. Sr. Ania Kaczmarek came to the community directly from Rome.

Sr. Gabriela Janikula, ASC



Birthday of the Wonderful Saint in Warsaw

On February 4 we celebrated the birthday of St. Maria De Mattias together with parishioners at St. Mary Magdalene Church in Warsaw. We thanked God for the gift of our wonderful Foundress in a very special year for us as this year marks the 190th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters Adorers of the Blood of Christ (March 4) and the 40th anniversary of the presence and ministry of us ASCs, Region of Poland in St. Mary Magdalene Parish in Warsaw (September). The pastor celebrated the Eucharist in which he prayed for the Congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ and for new vocations. During the homily Sr. Bernadetta Pajdzik ASC addressed the parishioners, sharing the charism, spirituality and figure of the holy Foundress. She stated, "Maria De Mattias, like any foundress of a religious congregation, lived the mysteries of Jesus' life, his Gospel in full, but from a particular angle. This characteristic detail that attracts the attention of the Foundress is a special gift of the Holy Spirit given to her that enables her to start a new religious community in the Church and is called the charism of the congregation. We ASCs have an Easter identity marked by the Blood of the Lamb of God. We must love with unconditional love and, if necessary, give our lives for our neighbor."

"The Precious Blood of Jesus Christ gives me great strength to help my dear neighbor by all possible means, so that poor sinners may be converted wholeheartedly to our Lord God."

(Maria De Mattias)

May we follow Maria De Mattias relentlessly, drawing from the rich treasure of her life to learn from her trust in God, boundless love, a life of reconciliation, guidance of the "dear neighbor" to God, and concern for inner and outer peace. Going to her, we are convinced of seeing the Christ she so loved.

Sr. Aldona Kala, ASC



Second Conference of the CatholicCroWomen



On February 24, 2024, the Second Conference of CatholicCroWomen (CCW) was held at the Croatian Catholic University (HKS) in Zagreb. This event, organized by the Association Entrepreneurship with Confidence, brought together more than 500 women in person and many other online participants from Croatia and abroad. The primary purpose of this initiative was to bring together and support women of faith who are already engaged in or wish to engage in entrepreneurial and economic activities, based on Christian-Catholic values, promote morally correct relationships, and contribute to the development of society through activities aimed at the common good.

With the desire to show support, but also with the intention to learn and create new connections, two ASCs, Sr. Sunčica Kunić and Sr. Marija Bilanović, participated in the CCW conference. The Conference opened with Holy Mass in the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua, near the University premises. The proceedings followed in the halls of the University with talks by five excellent speakers, who presented different topics: Fr. Damir Stojić (Woman - God's Masterpiece), Fr. Mihovil Kurkut (How to Recognize God's Voice in Entrepreneurship?), Eva Vukina (My Path from Talent to Business), Nada Rukavina (How to be a Mother and Entrepreneur) and Mirjana Topčić (How to Live Christianity and be an Entrepreneur).

The presentations of the chosen topics were mainly personal testimonies of the successes and goals achieved with God's help and prayer. Each speaker, in his or her own unique way, offered spiritual and professional help and support to the participants of this CCW conference. After the lunch break, business workshops were organized where participants were given the opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills in the field of entrepreneurship (Setting Business Strategy, Branding and Sales, Francis Economy, Business and the Bible, Communication in Crisis, Finances with God).

In addition to everything already mentioned, this was an opportunity to get together, weave relationships and connections to promote humanitarian efforts together. This

spiritual and business event showed us once again that with the Lord all things are possible and that every "success in life and in the business world" has a thorny road behind it. That is why every ASC (apostolate!) project of ours, communal and personal, no matter how difficult it may be, should not seem "non-profit," even if we sometimes call it that ourselves.

Sr. Marija Bilanović, ASC

A Strong Call...

It is an awakening call for all of us, a call to a new consciousness, a call for listening, understanding, forgiving, loving, accepting, to bend down to the earth thus responding to the needs of the least in the society as well as for an ecological integration. Our suffering world urges us to speak and act with integrity and clear intention. A call to protect our Common Home for the wellbeing of all. I quote from the Direction Statements of GA XXII, *“With deep conviction that each person is worth the immeasurable value of the blood of Christ. So, we have a strong call to commit and to take action that is respectful of creation and peoples who suffer most from the consequences of a lifestyle that plunders the earth’s resources.”* This is a strong call for us.

On January 29, 2024, all the ASC JPIC-VIVAT Contact persons came together online to build up an ASC network and to learn how to respond to the invitation of GA Act 2023 on *“A Strong Call”*. The main objective of our meeting was:

- To share the information about JPIC-VIVAT efforts around the congregation.
- To share the ideas and challenges and pathways for JPIC promotion.
- To continue to build up ASC network in JPIC-VIVAT activities.

Nineteen Adorers were present for this meeting. Sr. Maria Hughes, General Superior, and Sr. Wiesława Przybyło, General Councilor, were also present and encouraged us with their reflections and presence. Sr. Patrizia Pasquini, general councilor, and Fr. Peter Vu, SVD, supported us in translation. Sr. Cecilija Milković led us in the opening prayer.

Sr. Maria Hughes, welcomed and thanked all of us for carrying out this strong call that we have. She said that we are the sowers of hope, in a world where the dignity of the person and the care of all life are very vulnerable. It is all connected. She appreciated and thanked us for our commitment to the very care of the preciousness of life. She wished showers of blessings for the success of our meeting.

I was enthusiastic to welcome all of us and introduce the objectives of our gathering. I gave an overall view on ASC JPIC-VIVAT activities through my report. All of us were wondering at the marvelous and successful stories of the Adorers who are dedicated to responding to the cry of the earth, and cry of the blood. There was also time for the participants to share their reflections and views.

We encouraged one another to feel the responsibility to build up a strong relationship among ASC JPIC-VIVAT ministry and support one another to integrate the spirituality of the blood of Christ in JPIC mission. We invoked the Holy Spirit to have an openness to respond to the strong call in each one of our realities. Sr. Katty Collana from Peru thanked all of us and Sr. Fatima Euriza Mario Gomes from Guinea Bissau conducted the final prayer.

I realize the importance of networking to respond to the strong call. Pope Francis says, *“In today’s world, the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia.” (Fratelli Tutti, 30)* Being promoters of life, justice, and peace, we recommended one another to use all the opportunities at our disposal to renew our commitment to love our Common Home and care for it and the weakest members of our family. Holding our hands together we respond to the Strong Call...



Sr. Rani Padayattil, ASC

Endeavors to Fight Poverty

One of the Zagreb Region's programs to achieve the goals of the encyclical *Laudato Si* is the fight against poverty. This goal is aimed at the poorest families with many children. In addition to material and economic support, moral support is also important for them, so that they can rely on the community in their difficulties. Included in the activities toward families is the extended community and their children, thus introducing them into the process of ecological conversion that Pope Francis advocates, "Social problems must be solved by the networks of the social community, and not by the mere sum of good deeds" (*Laudato Si*, 219).

This encouragement from the Pope has guided some Adorers to raise awareness among parents and children toward those most in need. The Christmas season is the auspicious time to involve families and children who are particularly disposed to generosity. In December 2023, two initiatives were organized in the two elementary schools where the Adorers, Sr. Sunčica and Sr. Marija, work. Parents, pupils and teachers collected a considerable amount of food and hygiene items for poor families. Children, students of the Maria De Mattias Student House and sisters participated in the preparation and distribution of 30 packages. The personal meeting with the families was a meaningful moment and left an imprint of fellowship and support as well as education in solidarity and Christian love.

The second initiative was "Children for Children." Children from the same list of poor, multi-child families expressed in a small letter the gifts they wished to receive for Christmas. They simply and frankly asked for: toys, school supplies, jackets, tennis shoes, school bags and backpacks with wheels, and many other very useful gifts. The wishes were granted by the parents of the children from the two elementary schools mentioned. All the children received what they wished for, and the gifts were wrapped with care and ingenuity and were accompanied by a nice letter from the children with greetings and wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Fifty-five wishes were granted with this initiative. Feedback with photos, videos, warm words of thanks from parents and children of wealthy families testify that giving, enriches both the giver and the receiver.

Both initiatives were prepared and implemented with much care and love. All participants constituted an excellent team, which was "more than a collection of people. It is a process of giving and receiving." (Barbara Glacel). This form of cooperation makes the world better, brings more light and love, unites people and makes them happy. Faith and hope in goodness and solidarity are the driving forces and for this they need to be supported.

Sr. Cecilija Milković, ASC



General Administration Calendar



April 13-20, 2024: Assembly of the Delegation of Schaan (April 15-16) – Sisters Wiesława, Patrizia, Danijela and Barbara are attending

April 21-29, 2024: Sr Wiesława, Sr Monica and Sr Florida are in Tanzania.

April 23-29, 2024: Sr Patrizia leads spiritual exercises for postulants in Acuto.

Birthdays: Let's Celebrate Life

March

<u>30th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Agnes Andrea Ngaiza	03/30/1994	Tanzania	
<u>40th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Maria Immakulata Liborius Kilawe	03/04/1984	Tanzania	
<u>60th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Basilisa Julius Sasa	03/12/1964	Tanzania	
<u>70th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Ivana Paialunga	03/01/1954	Italia	
<u>80th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Terezinha de Jesus Moreira	03/03/1944	Brazil	

April

<u>30th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Maya Orappankuzhimattathil	04/08/1994	India	
Sr. Magdalena George Bilinje	04/07/1994	Tanzania	
<u>40th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Lilian Stuart Kasembe	04/05/1984	Tanzania	
<u>50th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Ana Jerusa de Castro Feitosa	04/12/1974	Brazil	
<u>70th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Patricia Owens	04/26/1954	USA	
<u>80th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Miriam Rau	04/06/1944	USA	
<u>90th Birthday</u>			
Sr. Immacolata De Jeso	04/04/1934	Italy	



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Adorers of the Blood of Christ
International Communications – General Administration
Via Maria De Mattias, 10 - 00183 ROME
Year XXVI, Issue 2, March/April 2024

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They have returned to their Heavenly Home

02/28/2023	Sr. Philomena Bahr	USA
03/07/2023	Sr. Speranza Marzano	Italy