

# I AM THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE



**Jesus Has Risen**

**Dear Sisters,**

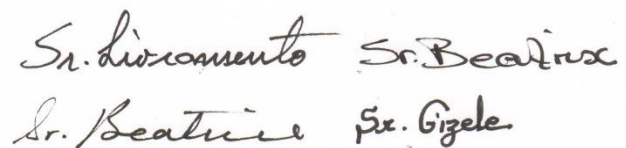
**"A season of rebirth... A time of renewal...A day of resurrection...**

**Today we share the peace and joy that God offered us when He gave us His only son."**

**May this Easter bring light into your life and take you back to God's unending love.**

**HAPPY EASTER!**

**FROM YOUR SISTERS AT THE GENERALATE**



*Sr. Livramento Sr. Beatrice*  
*Sr. Beatrice Sr. Gizele*

### Counting Our Blessings

On behalf of the Unit of Our Lady of Lourdes, I would like to express my gratitude to Sr. Joanne Riggs and the leadership of American Province for their kindness and generosity to help and share their resources to support our Unit and the young SMIC in Philippines. By the presence of Sr. Eleanor, we could feel the hearts and blessings from the American Sisters; we experienced the Grace of God and One SMIC through them.



May God bless our American Sisters in ways they need most.

~ By Sr. Lucy Zhang, SMIC

### A Big Blessing at SHS

It was such a big blessing to have our dear Sister Eleanor Goekler, from our US province to give our teachers and faculty members a very meaningful spiritual seminar.



The theme of the seminar was Eco-spirituality at Sacred Heart School, Tacloban held on Jun 1-2, 2017, a few days before our new school year started. We are very grateful to have Sr. Eleanor to share her rich Franciscan spirituality and profound life experiences with our teachers, and bring us close to our inner self, and especially help us to realize and

appreciate the beauty of our Mother Nature.

We know that Tacloban had a very devastating super typhoon Yolanda in 2013; most of our teachers are the Yolanda survivors. It was a good opportunity for some of the teachers to share their unforgettable memories, and how they survived from that disaster. There were some very touching stories shared with the whole group. Through

tears and deep grief, we have realized how powerful our Mother Nature is and how weak we humans are; we are called to protect and live harmoniously with our environment. Through the attentive listening and sincere support, there were also healings around from God's wonderful hands.

With the inspiration of St. Francis, we were all invited to write our own Canticle with grateful hearts. At the end of the seminar, we made a practical plan on how to take care of our Mother Nature, starting from our own school. All of us promised to try our best to take care of our environment and Mother Nature with awareness and God's help.

It was a wonderful seminar for all of our staff and faculty members! We are very grateful for Sr. Eleanor who spent these few days with us and brought the spirit of St. Francis to our lovely campus. With everyone's effort, we hope that the spirit of St. Francis will be rooted more deeply in the heart of all our teachers and students!

~By Sr. Rebecca Niu, SMIC

### **A Special Blessing at St. Francis Formation House**

Calling Abraham to journey to a foreign land, God promised that He will bless him, and his offspring will be countless like the stars in heaven. Along the journey of Our Lady of Lourdes Region going forward, we believe that God also promises us that His bountiful blessings and graces will be countless like the stars in heaven. While thinking and counting our blessings for the year 2017, at this moment, we could recall that Sr. Eleanor is one of the special blessings that we received directly from God this year.

Sr. Eleanor Goekler arrived at the Our Lady of Lourdes Region in the Philippines on May 05, 2017, and she went back to her own province, the Province of Immaculate Conception, on August 11, 2017.



We have to say that we received plenty of God's blessings and had a wonderful experience when Sr. Eleanor was staying with us. First of all, she kindly accompanied our pre-novices and some junior professed Sisters to study English by reading and sharing the Gospel, and sharing our daily life and talking in English around the meal table. Second, the students of SMIC - ITCM in Manila and the teachers and the Sisters of Sacred Heart School in Tacloban also benefited from the "Spiritual Activity" guided by Sr. Eleanor in June and July. Lastly, both the Sisters at St. Francis Formation House and all the junior professed Sisters in the region had an opportunity to have a "Franciscan Spirituality Workshop" with Sr. Eleanor, which was held in different places and time. What we learned was not only the way and the life of St. Francis and St. Clara of Assisi, but also captured the core spirit of both Saints' life as well. Indeed, those spiritual activities enlightened and attracted us to go deeper and to follow the footprints of St. Francis and St. Clara.

Apart from giving us "The Franciscan Spirituality" and other activities, we'd better say that Sr. Eleanor herself is an excellent model to our young sisters for her patience, her kindness, her ever readiness to help, and her valuable sharing. It is true that living



with Sr. Eleanor has enriched and nourished us in different ways. Her presence among us and her wise suggestions have created a kind of atmosphere that is transforming and inspiring to us along the continuous journey to God.

"How good it is, how pleasant, where the people dwell as one! ..... Like dew of Hermon coming down upon the Mountains of Zion. There the LORD has lavished blessings, life forevermore." (Psalm 133) Dear Sr. Eleanor, how good and pleasant it was when you were living with us and it was as if the dew of God fell upon us. We believe you are the special blessing that God bestowed to the

Sisters of Our Lady of Lourdes Region this year! Sr. Eleanor, whenever we think and count our blessings, you are in our hearts and prayers!

~ By Sr. Teresa Zhang, SMIC

## The First Unit Assembly of Holy Name of Jesus Unit

The First Unit Assembly was held from January 16 to 20, 2018. Minister General, Sr. Livramento Oliveira, and Assistant Minister General, Sr. Beatrice Yang were invited to attend our first unit assembly.

On Jan. 16, Most Rev. Bosco Lin, the local diocesan bishop, presided an opening mass at 9:00 am at the unit center, where all 37 assembly members were present, each responding with a positive “yes” to the role calling by Sr. Caritas Chen.

Following the timeline of implementing the new governance model of the whole congregation, this First Unit Assembly created an unprecedented beginning in the history of the province, with a specific new change during the entire sessions of the assembly: **ALL SISTERS**, instead of only nominated representatives, involved. Thus, the temporary professed, especially the young Vietnamese sisters (except student sisters), all were present, and even a few of them were assigned to take the roles as group facilitators during the assembly sessions.

In order to foster effective communication and reach great consensus, all sisters were divided into two different groups, based on the nature of issues on the agenda: base community and consensus group, in which sisters were able to engage in the communal discernment, exchange feelings, reflections, views or thoughts during the sessions of faith sharing, proposals, and of the election of the new leadership team.

On Jan. 20, the first unit leadership team was established, then followed by a thanksgiving ritual for the out-going provincial leadership team. With deep gratitude, we thank God for His Spirit fully flowing throughout the assembly gathering, and put trust in His wisdom to continue guiding our new leadership team who will direct all sisters in the unit toward our declaration and new resolutions for the next three years.



Center piece

彌撒結束全體姊妹和主教合影



Bishop Bosco Lin presided the opening Mass



1<sup>st</sup>Unit Leadership Team (Left to right):Sr. Scholastica Ling, Sr. Paulina Tsai, Sr. Benedicta Kuo, Sr. Catherine Kuo, Sr. Catharina Tien



Faith sharing



Group discussion



Sr. Livramento & Sr. Beatrice



Thanksgiving for out-going

## SMIC—Following Christ

~By Sr. Clementia Wang, SMIC  
The Unit of Our Lady of Lourdes

The Fifteenth General Chapter began in Taiwan on November 6, 2016. The inspirational theme of the General Chapter – “That We May All Be One” guided us to listen to the Holy Spirit, with hope and joy to embrace this new endeavor– “Congregational Restructuring”.

After the General Assembly, with the advantage of being young, the curiosity toward new things, the courage of innovation and the spirit of not fearing challenges, the Sisters of Our Lady of Lourdes Region began to prepare for the implementation of the new administrative model. In order to better prepare for the first Unit Assembly, we formally held a two-day “Chapter of Mats” on November 1 and 2, 2017. We invited Sister Benedicta Kuo, still the Provincial Coordinator of the Holy Name of Jesus at that time, to explain to us the new administrative model, Communal Discernment and Consensus, and Nonviolent Communication-A Language of Life. The two-day conference was successfully completed in the company of Sister Benedicta Kuo.

On December 26, 2017, the first Unit Assembly of the Unit of Our Lady of Lourdes opened in a grand ceremony of name calling, then the Unit Coordinator Sr. Lucy Zhang made an opening address and announced the formal opening of the assembly.

Afterwards, the Minister General, Sr. M.do Livramento M. de Oliveira made a speech for the Unit Assembly, she appreciated the prayer we recited every day prior to the assembly: “...send us the Holy Spirit, lead us in constant conversion and purification, discern the will of God in mutual trust, openness, respect and listening, and to follow...” She said that this passage was also very meaningful to her. She once again invited the sisters to start a journey of constant conversion and purification, and wished that Our Lady of Lourdes would continue to walk with us! Sr. Beatrice Yang, the Assistant

Minister General and the facilitator of the Assembly was very happy to have us





young sisters as her “white mice.” She reminded everyone not to be afraid, and promised that the “white mice” would still be alive at the end of the Assembly!

The sisters arrived at the meeting room on time and with energy every day. Each sister gave advice and talked to each other with respect and openness, and finally reached a consensus to pass the decisions. When discussing the topic of “The Norms” which is closely related to our lives, with even more intensity, the sisters discussed the common goal and the interests of the group. The active participation of each sister made us experience God’s grace–His wisdom.

When we started “the Acts” about the issues of actively promoting vocation, the apostolic ministries, and responding to the needs of the Philippine evangelization, we once again initiated discussion and discernment until a consensus was reached. From this we have deeply realized that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; when wisdom and wisdom meet, numerous particles collide and create a spark. The true wisdom lies not only in seeing through the present time, but also in foreseeing the future! At that moment, each of our prophetic vision was vividly presented.

The most exciting moment was the “election”; this was a sacred moment. After praying in silence, the sisters voted sincerely. On the third day of the Assembly, the afternoon of December 29, we were very happy to have the first Leadership Team of the Unit of Our Lady of Lourdes.



We hugged each other with cheer and blessings! To celebrate this exciting moment, Sr. Beatrice gave us half an hour to spend in the dining room to enjoy some refreshments and snacks with joyous heart.

In gratitude and praise, the Assembly was drawing to a close. Our first Unit Assembly



was successfully concluded with the patient guidance and company of the Minister General and the Assistant Minister General. December 31<sup>st</sup> was

the communion day for all the Sisters of the Unit; we went to enjoy nature with thanksgiving; we thank God for His great creation.

In the ups and downs of the past twenty-five years, we will always remember the guidance, love and care of our Taiwanese Sisters. They unconditionally gave us all we need, like the baby connected to the mother's umbilical cord to absorb enough nutrients to grow healthy and happy. Today we have grown up, hoping the sisters in Taiwan will be pleased to see our growth and be proud of us. It may be the time for the

sisters to let us go and give us more space to learn and grow, so that we can stand by ourselves and walk our own way.

Looking back at the first group of Chinese vocations until today, this sacred space exists



Minister General (extreme left),  
Assistant Minister General(extreme right)  
With the Newly Elected Unit Leadership Team:  
Unit Coordinator Sr. Cecilia Tian (second from left),  
Assistant Unit Coordinator Sr. Regina Liu,  
Unit Councilor Sr. Lucy Zhang &Sr. Michelle Liu



between the two points in time of “birth” and “cutting the umbilical cord.” This moment contains intertwined sensibility, emotion, and rationality of richness, diversity, and contradiction. All thanksgiving and praise will never stop in our hearts!

The Unit of the Our Lady of Lourdes is a group of young and energetic

women in the SMIC who are grateful for God’s countless blessings. We are willing to continue to follow the footsteps of our Founders, to enter the world without losing ourselves, to always have room for one more, to live out the face of Christ, and enlighten and warm every corner of the world.

**50 years of Religious life of Sr. Elisabeth Lunebrink  
Silver jubilee of Sr. Monika Hainduwa**

February 3, 2018 was a day of great joy for the Namibian Province in thanksgiving to God for Sr. Elisabeth celebrating her 50 years and Sr. Monika 25 years of religious life. On the same day two Postulants Herta and Christian entered their novitiate. We acknowledge the presence of the different Religious congregations of



sisters and priests deacon, lay ministers, youths and our families who came to share the joy together with us. Admission into Novitiate: Sr. Herta and Sr. Christiana It was amazing how young sisters brought the words of God to the altar in beautiful cultural dancing procession. The Church choir of Tses led the Liturgy together with the sisters.

We were also blessed to have Fr. Joseph, vicar of Keetmanshoop diocese, Fr. Werner Afunde, vicar general from the Archdiocese of Windhoek and Fr. Josef Hatutale and Rev. Emeritus Bishop Philip Pollitzer, the main celebrant. The homily of the bishop was inspiring and very clear "that the jubilee is to look back with gratitude, joy and pride upon the 50 years and 25 years. And that means that our abiding devotion and faithful services to God has touched countless heart and inspired so many. Today is a day of thanksgiving to God, for many graces and perseverance in the Religious vocation and for listening every day to God, saying to me: "Whom shall I send ? who will go for us? Here I am, Lord, send me to preach your word to the whole world." (Is 6:8)

**Novices:** This is day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad. It was really an unforgettable day where we felt proud to become part of the SMIC family. Therefore our gratitude goes to our sisters who allowed us to take further step in religious life as SMIC. The liturgy dance was lead by candidate, youth and St. Therese parish choir. It



was a joyful day. After communion the candidate and the two novices dance thanksgiving dance with the sound of the African drum and that was amazing.

Thanks to our Sisters who made this day wonderful for us. We appreciated everything and please continue praying for us, from Herta

Shaningwa and Christiana Stephans.

After the Mass everybody was invited to the Church Hall for delicious meal with barbecue. Thanks to the parishioners who prepared and decorated the Hall so beautifully. As you know, as Africans, our celebration continues always with the performance of our different cultural dances, singing and beating drums; that was really feast filled with joy and happiness. We thank the Almighty God for the beautiful celebration and gratitude to all who made our day so wonderful with best wishes and prayers. Sr. Monika Hainduwa

### **Final Profession of Sr. Emeresiana Hawanga**

*Jer 5:1 before I formed you in the womb I knew you.*

With a great joy the SMIC family, my family and friends at large gathered together in Tondoro (Namibia) at the parish for the celebration of my perpetual Vows. The Eucharistic Celebration was presided by Fr. Maurus Kantana Kakuru (OMI) the Vicar General of Rundu Pastoral Region. I was honored to have him because he



presided at the Mass when I made my first profession. My very thanks goes to him and let us keep him in our prayers since he will be celebrating his 25th silver jubilee as a priest on May 2018. My gratitude goes to our Generalate sisters in USA and the

Provincial councils of Namibia for approving my request to make this final step in religious life. Many thanks and I pray for you. After the entrance hymn the provincial calls me by name and I got up and said " Yes I am ready." The whole community and parishioners welcomed me with applause. As I was sitting with my parents they brought



me to the altar to meet the provincial (Sr.Clara). A conversation was between my parents and the provincial asking them whether they understand the way I chose to follow Christ; their answer was "Yes," they understand fully. After that they give me to my provincial and I went to remove my traditional dress and dressed in a religious habit. As a sign of renouncing the world and following Christ, I give back the traditional dress to my parents telling them that I am

thankful for their support on this way of life and that I have decided to give myself totally to Christ forever. "This was the most touching and tearful moment but I believe that everything I do, I do it for Christ." My parents received my traditional attire and I joined my fellow sisters. What moved me too was when the priest said: final vows is a serious commitment, you might come along with challenge but there are more challenges awaiting for you outside this Church. But with those challenges be not afraid, God will always be with you and will protect you". I'm grateful for God's countless blessing in my life and my gratitude to my SMIC family for the beautiful celebration and for your encouraging words on my journey. And thanks to all who accompany me with their prayers. God Bless you all!!



**"If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (LC: 9; 23)**



We are happy to be accepted into the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God.

On the eve of our entrance we made a day of retreat reflecting on Mary's yes. It was a moment of reflection in which it provided an intimate dialogue with God. It made our hearts overflow with joy for the expected day of our

entrance into the aspirancy, a stage of falling in love with Jesus Christ.

Our entrance ceremony happened on February 11, 2018, in a beautiful Eucharistic celebration that was unforgettable. It will be kept forever in our hearts. Sister Petronila officially introduced us to Our Lady of Fatima / Padre Andrade neighborhood and invited Sister Antonia Ana Oliveira to give us the Franciscan tau cross we used as an aspirant. It was one of the happiest moments of our lives. With our heart full of joy in receiving the Franciscan symbol that for us is more than a simple tau. It is as if we were carrying a treasure around our neck.



We know that following Jesus Christ is not easy, but with faith and perseverance we will be able to live the ideal of life that he proposes to us.

Fraternally  
Aline Mota (Aspirant)  
Lucenilda Rodrigues (Aspirant)