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CSJOURNAL

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GENERAL COUNCIL

NOVICES MEET ONLINE

Sr. Elisa Fátima Zuanazzi, CSJ

General Council



On May 5, for a first meeting, thirty novices from the Congregations of St. Joseph of Chambéry, Toronto, and Philadelphia of the United States Federation met via Zoom. The aim was to share experiences, strengthen ties, and support each other. The

sharing revolved around three aspects of the life and mission of Sisters of St. Joseph: what they appreciate about this journey, how they respond to the calls of the world, and what strengthens them and gives them joy. The sharing of the novices was a real gift that expressed

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(Top Left to bottom Right): Joan Gallagher (director US Federation novitiate), Jaya and novices (India), Elisa Zuanazzi, Rashmi and novices (India), Marit Brinkmann (director - Norway), Marit Stensli (Chambéry - Norway), Jennifer Martin (Toronto), Elizabeth McGill (Philadelphia), Pakistan novices, Josiane (director) and Tanzania novices, Shakila (director - Pakistan)

the listening to and the movement of the spirit in the heart of each one. Below, I share some of the relevant aspects that touched everyone.

Martina, a novice from Tanzania, said that “living in community, being and serving together in the mission, being a presence of love, hope and unity in interpersonal relationships, are important elements for those who desire consecrated life”. Along the same line, Jennifer Martin, from Canada, said that “we need to be aware of

today’s needs and attend to everyone we meet wherever they are, with inclusive love”. The novices from India highlighted the “intercultural richness of the communities, and despite the different languages and cultural backgrounds, we welcome each other and grow in understanding and respect. In this way, by living in community, we become a visible sign of communion, mirroring the Trinitarian love that we are called to incarnate in our daily lives. Hospitality, simplicity, and missionary zeal fuel the

desire to continue this mission with fidelity and joy.” Elizabeth McGill, from the United States, stressed that, as a Sister of St. Joseph, she wants “to live and work so that all people can be united to God and one another.” She wants to wholeheartedly embrace the vocation to consecrated religious life with prophecy, in unity with her neighbor, with God and with all creation. The novices of India added that they have the desire to “live a simple lifestyle and respond to the needs of the world today. To practice the true spirit of

poverty and share their gifts and abilities with the poor and vulnerable.” They wish to live an exemplary life in action. Preparing themselves to face the challenges of the world with patience, humility, and prudence, without fear of barriers or contradictions. “In a world marked by fragmentation, inequality and spiritual hunger, we feel a deep call to be living witnesses to Christ’s compassion and mercy.” Marit Steinsli, from Norway, expressed her “gratitude for being a Sister of St. Joseph” and emphasized that “community life, the mission focused on people’s needs, is what gives meaning to the choice of life. Common prayer, adoration, retreats, and the celebration of Mass strengthen the joy of living and serving. It is enriching to meet Sisters from other cultures, it helps to create in us a broader perspective and makes it possible to share our different experiences and realities.” Sonia Emmanuel, from Pakistan, is “grateful for this opportunity to share her experiences with all the novices. We were very excited to see everyone. Thank you for this meeting and the opportunity to listen to each other, especially



to share our lives in an intercultural dimension. We are all different, we come from different countries, and we are all Sisters of St. Joseph. I ask God to help us accept ourselves as we are, and to accept others as they are.” Saloomi, from Pakistan, said “It was great to share our experiences as novices of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Most of us shared about the life of prayer, the charism of the Congregation, and our presence in the world.” Rozina from Tanzania concluded: “It is very good to see that our Sisters dedicate themselves to various ministries, to serving the poor, to evangelization, always with a missionary

spirit. Your witness is an example to us who are starting in consecrated life. We need to learn to live this lifestyle with you.”

This new generation of consecrated women expressed in their sharing their desire to seek together a place and a lifestyle rooted in Jesus Christ. They want to respond with their differences to the needs of the congregations of St. Joseph in the world, with a deep desire for unity and service to the poor and needy. Let us pray for these women that they may have the courage to be credible witnesses to the Gospel and find in us a friendly and supportive presence.

CLIMATE CHANGE CALLS HUMANITY TO SUSTAINABLE ATTITUDES

Elton Bozzetto and Sr. Nilva Dal Bello, CSJ

Brazil



The world has passed the period of global warming and entered the dangerous scenario of climate change. The torrential rains in various desert regions of the world and prolonged droughts in tropical forest areas are a demonstration that the average increase of 1.1 degrees Celsius in the Earth's temperature over the last hundred years is transforming the Earth's landscape and even altering areas of human occupation. As Pope Francis said, "the earth has a fever and the consequences are unpredictable".

The consequences of the civilizational catastrophe have an impact above all on the poorest populations, who lack access to technologies,

means of production, and basic rights to food, health, work, and housing.

This reality is challenging the Family of St. Joseph in Latin

America and the Caribbean. This family connection has dedicated itself to addressing the issue: learning in depth about the effects of climate



S. Maria Cristina Gavazzi and Donna Cicalese (Philadelphia) in procession during the closing ritual



Those who attended the Seminar in January in Bolivia

disasters and proposing personal, community and social initiatives to mitigate the consequences of climate change, promote the resoration of conditions to preserve water sources and strengthen awareness and an attitude of caring for our common home.

In the first week of January 2025, the theme of Climate Change was the subject of the VIII Latin American and Caribbean Seminar of the St. Joseph Family, held in Cochabamba, Bolivia. A series of proposals were outlined to be implemented in all the activities of the congregations in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States.

Among the actions are the development of educational projects concerning environmental sustainability, especially with children and adolescents, in schools, social centers and pastoral activities.

They also include strengthening the relationship between the St. Joseph Family and the CSJ UN-NGO to present proposals for environmental sustainability and to implement projects to stop climate change; adopting and installing new sources of sustainable energy capture and use in institutions.

The participants in the seminar pointed out other actions to guarantee environmental sustainability, such as promoting initiatives for the separation and recycling of waste, adopting a model for the consumption of organic products, and advocating for energy transition programs.

Another important action on the continent is participation in the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference, which will take place in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025. For the first time in history, a world summit on the environment

will take place within a biome that is threatened by human intervention, the destruction of which will interfere with the climate conditions of the entire planet.

In preparation for the participation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry, through a continental articulation of the St. Joseph Family, reports are being collected on climate change situations in the countries of the continent and local actions that contribute to curbing climate change. These reports and experiences will be presented at an event as part of the COP 30 program, to draw the world's attention to the impact of climate change and also to highlight the possibilities for viable actions in all communities to guarantee environmental sustainability and living conditions for future generations.

ABUSE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING, A CRIME THAT HURTS HUMAN DIGNITY

Sr. Jaqueline Conceição, CSJ

Brazil



Sexual abuse and human trafficking are among the most serious crimes that take away freedom and hurt human dignity, taking lives and leaving deep scars on the victims. It is an evil that affects people of all ages, cultures, and nations.

According to UNODC reports, criminals have been acting through the internet, committing scams and cybercrime, and women and girls are still the biggest victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

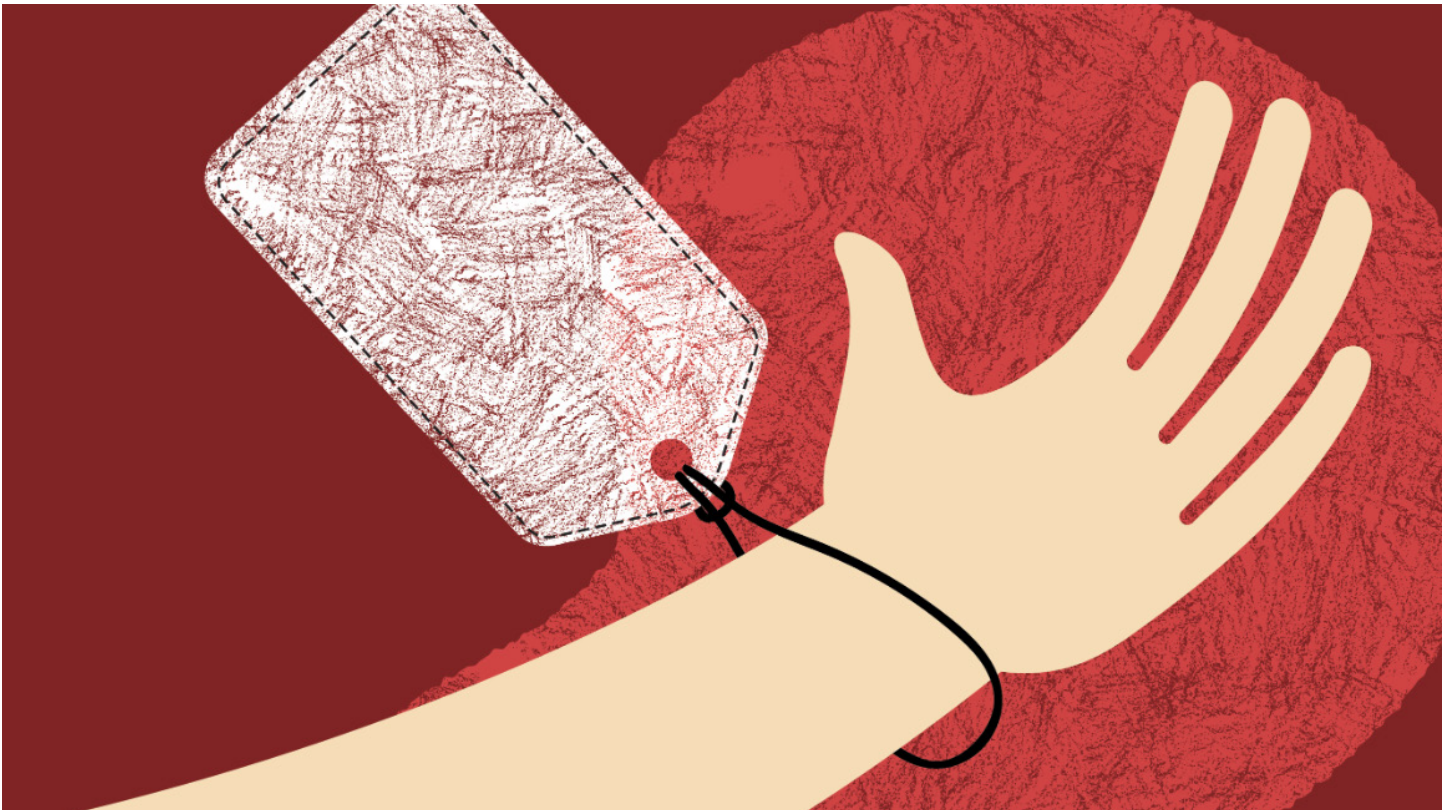
Human trafficking and abuse in its various facets have been a relevant issue worldwide, and many Non-Governmental Organizations

(NGOs), churches, and governments have come together and worked in partnership to constantly combat this sad reality.

One example of a group that is concerned

with combating this evil is the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), an organization that represents the women religious of the Catholic Church around the world. It is a networking





organization, and its projects are a commitment to peace, integral ecology, solidarity, and social justice for the most vulnerable. One of its projects, aimed at combating abuse and trafficking in persons, is the international “Talitha Kum” Network.

On April 29, 2025, Talitha Kum held an online event entitled “Digital safety: understanding exploitation and preventing new forms of human trafficking”. On this occasion, some members of the network shared their experiences and work with trafficked people, as well as positive statistics resulting from their work to prevent and protect victims of abuse, trafficking, and exploitation in the various countries where they work.

The need for urgent attention to online exploitation, a new form of threat in the digital age, was highlighted because with the rise of social networks and online gaming platforms, traffickers are increasingly using this technological medium for recruitment and exploitation. Through the virtual environment, they have entered spaces that we used to consider safe, our homes, schools, and communities, with malicious files as well as child sexual abuse and exploitation materials, claiming victims all over the world. We are experiencing a growing crisis with the ever-increasing availability of digital devices and internet access, so understanding

how online exploitation works is necessary in order to create effective strategies to prevent and combat it, with collaborative actions, networking between interfaith groups, governments, and NGOs.

The united effort of all the positive forces that want to defend the dignity and value of every person is the way to strengthen support networks and reinforce the laws that protect people who are victims of violence, giving visibility and recognizing the courage of survivors. Those who have been rescued often use their voices and experiences to denounce and fight back, committed to restoring so many other abused, disrespected and deeply wounded lives.

IFC GATHERS IN ROME

Sr. Snehal Jacob, CSJ

Pachmarhi/India



Faith has been an intrinsic aspect of human existence throughout history, providing individuals with a sense of belonging, confidence, and security.

Each person adheres to a particular belief system, which significantly influences their lifestyle choices. Notably, there is a tendency among individuals to incorporate

their religious beliefs into their daily investment and financial decisions to varying degrees. Religious faith plays a crucial role in the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of



(Left to Right) Sisters Cristina, Laveena, Barbara, Neuza, Shilpa, Snehal, Marianne, Mariaelena and Apolonia

life, thus inherently affecting the financial and investment behaviors of individuals. The policies established by congregations regarding financial assistance offer insight into the stewardship required for Provinces, Regions and Missions (P/R/M) and personal financial management.

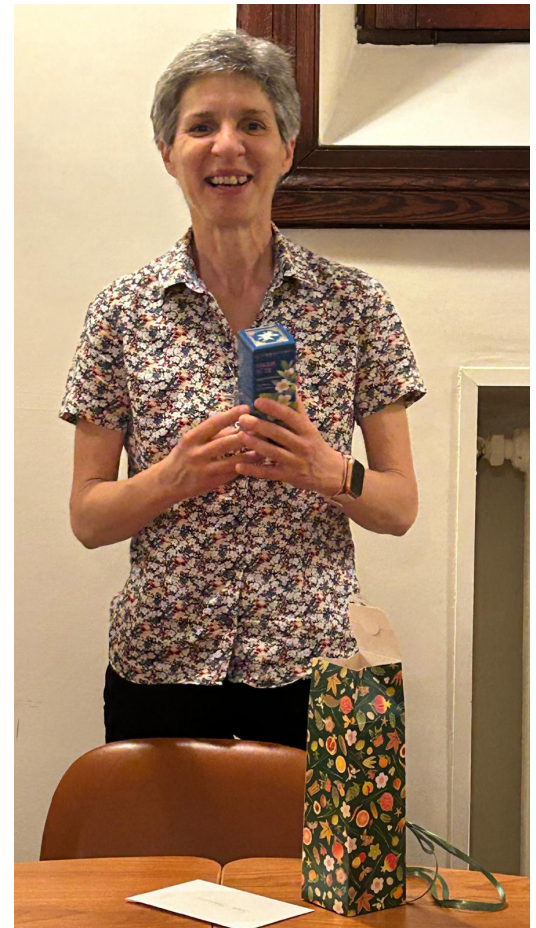
The International Finance Commission (IFC) convened for its second in-person meeting from Tuesday, June 3, to Sunday, June 8, at the Italian Provincial House in Rome. Sisters Apolonia and Neuza from Brazil, Sisters Shilpa, Snehal and Laveena from India, Sister Barbara from USA, Sister Marianne from Denmark, Sister Mariaelena, the General Treasurer, Sister Maria Cristina, liaison for the General Council for finance matters, and Sister Dolores, our Superior General, were present for this meeting. This gathering marked the first face-to-face meeting since October 2023, following two years of regular virtual meetings via Zoom, during which members collaboratively accomplished and reviewed various tasks. The foundation laid during these virtual sessions proved invaluable for the productive in-person discussions.

The primary objective of the meeting was to finalize

the new Economic Procedures Manual for the Provinces, Regions and Missions. The commission members reviewed the progress made thus far, incorporating constructive feedback from Provincial and Regional leaders and finance staff. This Manual is intended to serve as a guiding document for financial operations across the Congregation, establishing a framework that promotes consistency and transparency at all levels.

Sister Mariaelena provided updates regarding the investment portfolio. She elucidated the investment climates in both regions and examined the different parameters under which PRMs operate with various banks. Members also received the basic education in investments in-person and via zoom by the consulting agencies.

The IFC welcomed Sister Laveena, the newly appointed General Treasurer, who will assume her role in Rome at the end of August. Sister Mariaelena, whose term has recently concluded, will assist Sister Laveena during this crucial transition period. Sister Dolores, the General Superior, was present throughout the sessions,



demonstrating the availability and support of the General Council as needed. This engagement underscored the significant role of the IFC in furthering the Congregation's financial vision, long-term planning, and sustainability objectives.

The meeting concluded with an expression of sincere gratitude for Sister Mariaelena's dedicated service and leadership as General Treasurer. Her contributions have substantially advanced the mission of the IFC and established a solid foundation for future endeavors.

LIVING INTERCULTURALITY IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATION

Sr. Maria Elizabete Reis, CSJ

Brazil



In our life as Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry, we have had occasions to be with Sisters of other nationalities and to listen to and get to know their

languages and cultures. Visits, meetings, or General Chapters have facilitated these international opportunities. Through gaining insight into these realities, we become

aware of a more integrative approach to our shared heritage and values, and we move toward understanding that different cultures could express themselves through



S. Bete (2nd from left) with Sisters of St. Joseph from the USA, Mexico, and Brazil and other friends

interculturality. I want to share this journey with you.

In 2006 I went to the United States. It was a time of studying English, receiving help from the Sisters, wonderful surprises and a lot of learning for me. Getting to know their culture and different places made me appreciate the richness of the American people expressed through the sharing and life of the Sisters in the communities.

Being in France allowed me to relive everything I had learned when I started in the Congregation. The places I had seen so many times in photos became a living reality and the Sisters brought with them the history that I admire so much – a grace that I appreciate very much.

Going to the International Center in Le Puy meant getting to know the cultures that the Sisters of the many congregations of Saint Joseph brought to life in the colorful cultural evenings, conversations and sharing of each moment. They were expressions of countries I had never been to, but which the Sisters made known through their dances and their stories in many ways, so vividly.

Italy – and all its wonders – was a great gift from God, a blessing that I cherish. Visits to the different communities were moments



S. Bete in the Papal Audience Hall in Rome

of grace and encounter. The Sisters treated us with loving generosity, accompanying us and showing us the art and beauty of their country. And there was the Vatican, the center of faith that invites all beauty to express itself, where we want to return again and again.

The Scandinavian countries - Sweden, Denmark and Norway - were occasions to be with Sisters from very different cultures and get to know all the varied richness of these places and their history. I also experienced the wonderful work the sisters share with simplicity as they offer their gifts freely.

Here in Brazil, different cultures are also a reality that we experience every day. Even though we have a common language and a “History of Brazil”, you only

have to travel to another state or even another city to see the cultural differences in customs, food, words, habits - in people.

It’s a wealth of knowledge that has really helped me to broaden my horizons and open my heart to a greater Brazil that I want to be ever more welcoming of differences so that we can understand them better.

What really made me perceive INTERCULTURALITY more inwardly and become aware of its richness was and is living our Charism of Communion. It is being received as a Sister, getting to know a different reality and recognizing that it expresses the same grace that I have received, that we have received: it is being welcomed into the common sisterhood, into the community, into the same gift of the Congregation.

FINAL PROFESSIONS IN THE CHAMBÉRY CATHEDRAL

Sr. Lorraine Marie Delaney, CSJ

Nagpur/India



15 June 2025 was a Red-letter Day in the Annals of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry and of the Universal Church.

It was a day of tremendous rejoicing and heartfelt thanksgiving for

the global family of Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry, for the entire Church and for the families of our 11 young sisters from 2 Indian Provinces, who professed their Final vows in the Cathedral at Chambéry, France.

It was in the year 2017, that three young members from the Provinces of Nagpur/ Pachmarhi, had responded to the call to be “a missionary presence in Savoy” and later, professed their First vows in Chambéry, in 2019.



(Left to Right) Sisters Nirmal, Ashakiran, Anita, Pinky, Koltida, Arul Mary, Savita, Pratima, Mery Prava, Ramya & Sapna



Six years later, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Savoy, the idea gradually developed to celebrate the Final profession, not only of the first young sisters, but also to have the other young members of the Provinces of India join them.

Hence, on the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, 15 June, 2025, the idea became a reality - this unique and historic celebration took place in the Chambéry Cathedral. It was indeed, the audacious

initiative of Archbishop Mgr Thibault Verny to celebrate this remarkable event in the place of our origins, thus witnessing the universality of the Catholic church.

This event is indeed an historic congregational event, marking 375 years of our Foundation, 170 years of the arrival of our French sisters on Indian soil and as an Ecclesial event, marking Jubilee year 2025.

One can never forget that it was because of the

courage and vision of our French sisters in the 19th Century that the Charism was implanted on Indian soil, bearing abundant fruit today.

This historic congregational, Ecclesial event is certainly recorded in the Annals of the Archdiocese of Savoy, where the presence of the Sisters of Saint Joseph is a sign of hope and communion. Never before has this happened, and never again will there be an event of such a magnitude.



NEW SAINTS

Sr. Judith Maria Muniz	98	Brazil	07.05.2025
Sr. Mary St Jude	91	USA	14.05.2025
Sr. Marthe Marie Servel	99	France	21.05.2025
Sr. Manoelita Gasparin	98	Brazil	27.05.2025
Sr. Augusta Marazza	82	Italy	30.05.2025
Sr. Rita Crasta	89	Nagpur	08.06.2025
Sr. Sebastian Vithayathil	93	Tanmaya	10.06.2025
Sr. Alice Maria Zago	85	Brazil	12.06.2025
Sr. Catarina Labouré	95	Brazil	12.06.2025
Sr. Franceschina	101	Italy	20.06.2025
Sr. Marilva Reginato	94	Brazil	20.06.2025

LIFE AND RENEWAL IN TANMAYA PROVINCE

Sr. Laveena D'Souza, CSJ

Tanmaya/India



To revitalize the life and mission of the Tanmaya Province in Bhopal, India, the Province's Ongoing Formation Team, led by Sr. Frances Regis, the team coordinator, devised an innovative plan to rejuvenate the spirit of its members. The main aim was to foster

renewed enthusiasm and a deeper sense of purpose among the sisters in their collective journey of faith and service.

As part of this initiative, the sisters were organized into six distinct groups based on the year of their religious profession.

These groups are as follows: Winter Grace Group (1956 – 1962), comprising 10 sisters, Transforming Grace Group (1966 – 1976), consisting of 21 sisters, Wisdom Group (1977-1986), comprising 20 sisters, Generative Group (1987-1999), consisting of 19 sisters, Firey Group (2000-

2011), made up of 21 sisters and Emerging Group (2012-2017), consisting of 20 sisters.

With the exception of the Winter Grace Group, the remaining five groups, guided by their core teams, came together to channel their energies into planning something new and innovative. The thoughtfully designed three-day program featured engaging input sessions, sight-seeing, visiting the nearby communities, and sharing the experiences of life and mission with the larger group.



Wisdom Group

Each of these groups as the name suggests, had an input session based on it that enthused the members to delve deeply into the various aspects of religious life. The Winter Grace Group had their activities in their respective places. The Transforming Grace Group reflected on cultivating an attitude of gratitude and shared Emmaus Experience with one another. The Wisdom group discovered

the transformative power of self-reflection and a profound sense of collective wisdom. The Generative group explored the theme generative leadership and also had a session and sharing on menopause, whereas the Firey and Emerging groups explored the meaning of vitality through scripture, emphasizing the importance of community, vulnerability, and mission.

Sr. Sagaya who belongs to Emerging group said, “It was a fun-filled, heartwarming, and nostalgic moment, overflowing with joy, to see how time has shaped each of us, molding us into unique personalities



Transforming Grace Group

with diverse life experiences. Spending time together and sharing what life has taught each of us was truly special. I felt overwhelmed with happiness to be with my companions, with whom I could open my heart.” Sr. Veena from the Transforming Grace Group expressed her experience this way: “Our group gathered at the Jesuit Retreat Centre in Pune for a spiritual experience. The sharing was rooted in our lived experiences in community life and ministry. This gathering has deepened our sense of



Generative Group



Emerging Group

connectedness with one another.” Sr. Vibha, a member of the Generative Group, said: “During the batch gathering, I experienced a profound sense of community and connection. The sharing and bonding that took place were incredibly enriching and left me feeling truly revitalized.”

Despite the diversity in backgrounds, each group was able to form strong bonds of trust and unity, which greatly enriched the overall

experience. A joyful sightseeing trip added moments of delight and deepened the sisters’

appreciation for God’s creation. This initiative was truly a meaningful experience for the entire Tanmaya Province. It helped the members gain a deeper understanding of their personal calling within community life and mission.

Moreover, it had a lasting positive impact, encouraging the sisters to embrace and live out the spirit of the ‘Magis’—striving for greater love, service, and dedication in their religious life.



Firey Group

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