

French

**English**

Italian

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# CSJOURNAL

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry

May - June • Year 2021 - n. 3



## GENERAL COUNCIL

# The Year of “Firsts”

**S. Sally M. Hodgdon**

*General Council*

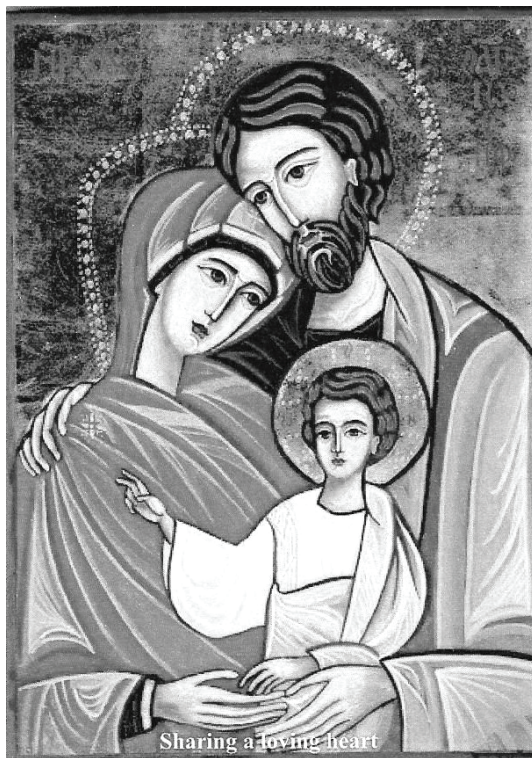
**T**welve months does a year make! Certainly, the 12 months from March 2020 to March 2021 was a year marked by many “firsts”.

It is the first time that a Pope has dedicated a year to our dear patron St. Joseph. It is the first time in 100 years that our entire planet has been attacked by a persistent, ever evolving deadly virus that we fearfully refer to as the Coronavirus or Covid-19. It is the first time that our congregation has planned and organized a General Chapter for a specific time in October and has had to change not only that date, but also the basic style and format of our once familiar general chapters. Another first is there are more women leaders at various levels of national and international governments in our world and in our Church than ever before in our lifetime.

Of all of the “firsts” that surround

us, I would like to speak about the Year of St. Joseph since it informs all of the others.

In Patris Corde we read, “In every situation, Joseph declared his own “fiat” like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.” I was thrilled that Pope



Francis spoke of Joseph’s “fiat”, a word we do not often use when referring to St. Joseph, comparing Joseph’s yes with

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that of Jesus and Mary. Joseph's yes cost him dearly. As we know, each dream, each intimate conversation with God was another request for Joseph to sacrifice his own plans, his own way, his schedule, and to make huge changes. Each time God spoke to Joseph, in order for Joseph to be faithful to God's request, it meant leaving the familiar to move to a new area, live a new plan, often among strangers. Joseph's faith in God deepened and he was able to sense God's presence directing him as he patiently waited for the next prayer or dream moment.

We, too, have been waiting, dreaming and listening to our intimate conversations with God, as we continue to walk this new time in our history, a time that touches our deepest feelings, a time that often still asks us to re-plan, re-consider

and re-group depending on the "life" and location of the pandemic. What would St. Joseph do if he were living now? From the little we know about Joseph, he would think about his reality, ready to respond in accordance with his cultural traditions and then allow himself to be changed by the grace of his prayer. Joseph would go forth, carrying on his responsibilities of loving Mary and creating a safe and loving home for Mary and Jesus.

What does this mean for us? It means we must continue to create space and time for personal prayer, for allowing the grace God continually offers us to flood our hearts and minds, to inform our presence each day, to keep us grounded in a way that allows us to be flexible and open to the many changes that call us to let go of our

way, of our plan, of how it was supposed to be. Whether it be your Provincial Chapter dates, Assemblies, the General Chapter dates, professions, jubilees and the manner in which these are held, that keep changing, our daily call remains the same...to live our 'Yes', to live fully the love we proclaim for Jesus and to follow the Spirit who is leading us.

Yes, we are and must continue to be "Communities immersed in the Spirit connected with the world" regardless of the changing conditions our world presents to us. We must be flexible and continue our mission of moving out towards the other in need, whomever she or he may be. We are called to be present to the joys of others but also to clean and touch their wounds, to allow ourselves to be welcomed into their experience of their world. This is the YES that we are called to say in this year of many Firsts.

# NEW SAINTS

S. Mary Amabilis Athickal	87	Nirmala	3.04.2021
S. Mary Crescentia Chullical	87	Nirmala	29.04.2021
S. Helena Dalcin	97	Brazil	29.04.2021
S. Grace Jean Todd	72	Nirmala	01.05.2021
S. Giovanna Balzano Elisabetta	93	Italy (Pinerolo)	05.05.2021
S. Henrietta Edasseril	85	Nagpur	05.05.2021
S. Giacinta Kannenkeril	86	Tanmaya	09.05.2021
S. Helena Benetti	98	Brazil	11.05.2021
S. Angela Maria Mugnolo	90	Italy	11.05.2021
S. Celine Marie Dias	76	Nagpur	19.05.2021
S. Lourdes Brolo	80	Brazil	19.05.2021
S. Pascale Peronnier	92	France	20.05.2021
S. Zélia Simioni	100	Brazil	02.06.2021
S. Caterina Pasquero	95	Italy (Pinerolo)	05.06.2021
S. Mary Andrew Kuzhivelil	87	Nagpur	13.06.2021
S. Bénédicte De Vaublanc	88	France	14.06.2021
S. Helena Itália Moreschi	94	Brazil	16.06.2021
S. Hedwig-Marie Hergenbahn	73	Norway	16.06.2021

# The Clean Nature Project

**S. Paula de S. Jose Gobbi**

*Brazil*

“You don't throw the garbage away, you only change the place of garbage on the planet”, said the Brazilian Zen Buddhist, Monk Coen, in a lecture at a meeting of Religious. Predatory consumerism is almost “law” on the planet... And where to find a place to dispose of so much waste produced? The sanitary landfill system reduces the impact of garbage on the world, especially the contamination of soil, water and air..... however it's a partial solution.

According to Greenpeace, the rich nations find a disposal option in peripheral countries, which lack legislation on the subject, doing this either with a contract or clandestinely. Adults and children go to the garbage dumps to take what is usable in a frightening mix of waste, including toxic waste.

The advent of information technology has only aggravated the situation. Instead of being recycled in the countries of origin, electronics are discarded to poor countries. According to a report by the ILO, 80% of electronic waste (e-waste) is sent, most of the time illegally, to poor countries. It is a depressing panorama and a huge challenge to be faced with appropriate legislation. The good news is that, once the legislation is implemented, there is a clean treatment option for urban solid waste.

Thanks to the partnership of a company in Unaí, Minas Gerais, with academics from the Pontifical Catholic



*Unaí Plant – Minas Gerais, the first and most sophisticated*

University in Goiania, a clean treatment project was made possible. The study developed a 100% Brazilian technology for the integrated treatment of urban waste. The construction of a plant – the Clean Nature Plant – which converts solid urban waste into ecological coal with minimal environmental impact.

The Clean Nature model recycles the material, obtaining clean energy from garbage transformed into coal. It also generates income. The carbonized urban solid waste is chemically decomposed by the heat of the pyrolysis process (high temperature, without oxygen).

Residential, industrial and urban waste are the raw material for the industrialized coal. Waste can be organic, plastic, tires, paper, wood, among others. There is no need for selective collection. The goal is to reduce the environmental impact caused by dumps and landfills.

Those responsible affirm that the Clean Nature system is available and can be used in any part of the world. The Clean Nature system has the advantage of being compact, therefore, it can be installed in an industrial zone or any other area. It is a zero-waste solution. Due to the production of clean thermoelectric energy it compensates well the investment which is minimal

compared to the costs of landfills.

In short, the Clean Nature system is a highly ecological initiative that meets the worst environmental problem. It is the end of garbage dumps or landfills in the city. It offers an excellent opportunity to protect nature while we grow financially. What about cleaning up the world by earning money?

In addition to reusing solid waste, it also generates employment and income. The carbonization plant contributes socially and ecologically to the entire population.

The project is being considered by businessmen from Brazil (several municipalities) and Germany, England and the United States. Most civilized countries are currently concerned about the final destination of solid waste, whether urban or rural. Today, the municipality that has an open-air dump is undergoing legal proceedings to deactivate it.

In short: “From garbage, coal. From coal, energy. From energy, movement. From movement, to production. From production, to wealth... The project is already saving the forests, as a world that makes charcoal from garbage doesn't need to cut down trees in search of firewood and charcoal”.



# Climate March

## S. Jona Chinnappan

France

In union with the General Council, the JPIC Commission of the Province of France has tried to create awareness in the congregation by suggesting various activities and practices regarding the conservation of natural resources, our wasteful practices and recycling.

For the months of May through July, the Justice and Peace team, once again, is trying to draw our attention to various environmental issues using both Laudato Si' and the United Nations goals for an ecological economy (responsible consumption) and simple living.

We grow some vegetables; we are also helping a new congregation in the diocese by giving them a piece of land to grow organic vegetables.

In response to the call of the congregation, some Sisters of the province participated in the Climate March for Ecology on Sunday, May 9,

2021 in Chambéry, Place du Palais de Justice. We had a good opportunity to make a difference, with the study of the Climate and Resilience Law, resulting from the work of the Citizens' Climate Convention.

There was a huge crowd marching to asking the government to



*Sisters marching for climate justice*



*The crowd demonstrating for climate justice in Chambéry*

improve the law. This law is based on the proposals of the Citizens' Climate Convention, a deliberative body of impartial citizens who are confronted with the reality of climate change day after day in our society.

This is an appeal from the Laudato Si teams for the whole of Savoy in connection with the CCFD-Terre Solidaire (Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development). It will be a way to show our commitment as Sisters of Saint Joseph on this issue.



# Pathetic Pandemic Plight of India

**S. Navya Neelamvilail**

*Province of Pachmarhi - India*

**A** lengthy article published on May 17, 2021 in India Today, a national weekly magazine has given a vivid picture of the terrible situation the people of India are facing due to Covid-19. It exposes the sorry tale of

fury. One source reports 22,662,410 Coronavirus cases, 246,146 deaths, and 18,665,266 persons recovered as of May 10, 2021, while many have said that the deaths from COVID are probably more than twice of those reported.

India wouldn't be facing this fate if Prime Minister Modi's government had taken adequate steps to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The government was lax in implementing safety norms and precautions were not taken against a possible second wave. As a result,

the virus, having dismantled the health infrastructure set up earlier, reduced the number of testing labs, and putting no effort into contact tracing. Furthermore, genome sequencing was not prioritised even after concerns were articulated about mutants causing a second wave, and the lack of both medical personnel and oxygen were never addressed. Vaccine rollout was very slow even though India is a leader in vaccine production and drugs to fight Covid were available only to the wealthy.



Maha Shivratri, Mar. 11

*Devotees gather to offer prayers during the Kumbh Mela 2021*

neglect, apathy and failure of India's political leadership.

Pictures of mass cremations, hospitals without beds or oxygen, bodies floating down rivers have been seen by the entire world. This second wave of Covid-19 is ravaging India with its

millions of people are paying a price for the monkey business of the Modi government during a pandemic.

The article in India Today details several reasons for this terrible situation. While India was able to control the first wave, it was not prepared for a return of

It appears that institutional collapse and bureaucratic cowardice facilitated super-spreader events: religious festivals and an eight-phase election campaign even as the second wave of pandemic was breaking. One example can be seen by looking at the

state of Uttarakhand (far north of the country) which recorded an 1800% increase in COVID-19 cases between 31 March and 24 April. This was due in large part to the fact that well over 1 million people had gathered at Haridwar for the Kumbh Mela, a Hindu festival at which pilgrims bathe in the waters of the Ganges and Jumna Rivers. The result

was that the number of Covid cases in India went up 500% (from 62,000 to 340,000) after the celebration of Kumbh Mela. The government did nothing to intervene in this. Massive election rallies were organised in five states of India where thousands of people gathered including PM Modi. The Election Commission of India remained a mute

spectator.

The Modi government is busy building a new house for the Prime Minister while the people of India are running pillar to post fighting the coronavirus. The people of India need action from the government to stop the spread of the virus and save the lives of the people.

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# Transformation: from Recycling to the Dynamics of Solidarity Cooperation

**Itomar Siviero**  
(Training Coordinator in  
the Transformation Project)

*Brazil*

In 2007, the Fraternity Campaign began “The Transformation Project” with the theme “Fraternity and Amazon” and the motto “Life and Mission on this Ground”. The Archdiocese of Passo Fundo, through Caritas, proposed a “Transformation Project” which aims at transforming, training and activity. With this challenge, we started the Transformation Project. The other institutions of the Catholic Church and Religious Congregations of Passo Fundo, Rio Grande do Sul, joined the Transformation Project. Unanimously, we coined the motto: “Care of life, Care of nature and Care of people”. With this motto, the project met: “[...] the commitment and the increasingly urgent challenge to preserve and recover the environment in which we live, seeking to articulate the need to care for life, educating for healthy



material collected by a group of recyclers for making Christmas cards which were given to many. The collected materials were transformed into sheets of paper, followed by painting, art, drawing and writing by the children, helped by the adolescents.

coexistence of humanity with nature, building alternatives to the exploitation of the environment and reducing the environmental impact, helping to build the human dignity of families, generating work and income through the recycling of materials. (Transformation Project, 2017, p. 11)”. Among the different Transformation Project programs that had an impact in Passo Fundo, integrated actions were developed. This year, the Cooperatives programs began, monitored by four recycling groups of Children and Adolescents (65 children and adolescents with activities when they are not in the classroom). This approach gave rise to making Christmas cards. It is a concrete action of transforming

The card was a simple way to express gratitude to all the employees of the Transformation Project. There was a letter attached which expressed to everyone that the form of gratitude was simple, but communicated the effort and result of the work of freeing people’s ideas in a concrete commitment to life and care for the planet, to be transformed into lived practices which are desirable to society, keeping alive the legacy: Care for Life, Care for Nature and Care for People.

The present initiative was covered by RBS TV in Mid-Day News with state coverage (JA/RS) and National News, (a print edition of the city of Passo Fundo, with regional coverage.)



# “Meeting in the Word”

**S. Rossella Passalacqua**

*Italy*

“Meeting in the Word” was born as a cycle of weekly meetings celebrated in the community of Pisa together with all those who wanted to join the community in its prayer on the Sunday Gospel. We have continued these meetings for more than two years. They began as in-person meetings, through which we proposed personal growth in relationship with the Word of God and a growth in the awareness of being a community that feeds on the Sunday Gospel and brings it into its daily life.

The pandemic made it impossible to continue in this form. However, we did not want to interrupt the relationship with those who participated and, in addition, from the first weeks of the lockdown we felt the desire to reach out to those dear to us with the Word of God, which alone could open paths of hope in a time of disorientation.

Sister Maria Giovanna Titone was the first to try her hand at making a video commentary on the Sunday Gospel. In time, we decided to expand the initiative to other sisters of our province so that the diversity and uniqueness of their relationship with the Gospel would be enhanced, in order to stimulate in those who listen to us the desire to grasp how the Word of God is alive and active in their lives. This journey certainly allowed each of us to bring out our own creativity, to discover gifts we didn't know we had and to put them in communion and at the service of the Gospel.

We also realized that our voices were carving out a space within a choir of male voices. In Italy, in fact, this formula of video commentaries is mainly promoted and used by men, whether clerics, religious or lay people. It is very

promotes women's initiatives.

To follow “Meeting in the Word - A Doorway into the Sunday Gospel” you can subscribe to the channel <https://youtube.com/user/possosognare> and turn on the notification signal.



difficult to find female voices. This fact has encouraged us to continue our service to the Word of God, praying and hoping that it may be a stimulus to open

We are grateful to the Lord and to those who are making this experience fruitful. And we feel we are promoting love and service to the



up paths for other women who wish to be a co-responsible presence in the Church. Exactly one year later, the 2.0 initiative has received a fine recognition from the female world of the Church; in fact, we have been recognized and included in the website of the Association “Women for the Church” in the section which

Gospel within our congregation. If any sister from another province, region, or mission would like to engage in this simple but loving service to the Word of God, we are willing to accompany and support her technologically, so that everything may be for the greater glory of God.

# One Year into the Pandemic

**S. Adelaide Canci**

*Brazil*

The Hospital Nossa Senhora da Oliveira belongs to the province of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry in Brazil. It is located in Vacaria (Southern Brazil), a poor region with extremely cold weather where much of the land is dedicated to growing apples and small fruits.

No one ever imagined that one day this hospital would go through a terrible situation such as dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. In January 2020, we set apart an area of the hospital for Covid-19 care because we were told that the pandemic was approaching Brazil and would soon reach Rio Grande do Sul.

We had to create a new “hospital” within the hospital. We created the Covid area with a lot of fear, anguish and uncertainty. New service teams were formed. We carried out tireless training, studies, research and little by little masks began to hide anxious and worried faces, brought by the uncertainty. We only had news about Covid-19; we didn’t have any concrete examples.

In the training sessions for the 420 employees, silence and uncertainty prevailed. The explanation of protocols and their use created fear and, at the same time, the expectation of what would happen. In mid-February 2020, the first case arrived. The Covid-19 care team was prepared and they started their work, with security, fear and, on the other hand, with faith and hope that everything would work out well.

In the beginning few Covid-19 positive cases were admitted, but with the death of the first Covid-19 patient, the whole hospital began to feel the sad reality. The community at large also realized that something very dangerous



*Sr. Adelaide (from right to left) accompanies the Bishop in blessing the sick*

was happening. A few generous ones thought of the frontline professionals who combat Covid-19 and began donating to the hospital. Every donation was motivated by courage, love, solidarity and the certainty of not being alone.

The first phase lasted from February to October. In November cases began to decline. There were a few Covid-19 positive cases admitted and the Covid-19 Intensive Care Unit had almost no patients. We had the happy impression that the pandemic was coming to an end. That’s when the second phase began in December and the cases tripled. Therefore, another Covid-19 ward was created to handle all the patients. In fact, we have three “hospitals” within the same structure. The work teams are tired, there is a lack of nursing professionals. Those we have

are working overtime to take care of the sick. Faced with this situation, a press conference was held twice a week to inform the people about the situation of the hospital and provide clarification on the use of protocols and care to protect themselves.

Through these press conferences we invited all Christian Churches to join in a faith-filled prayer chain asking God to help us end this terrible pandemic. For a month, twice or thrice a week, the people of the Church came to pray in front of the hospital, following all protocols.

The power of the prayer and supplication have lightened our fatigue and increased our courage, strength and above all, faith. We believe that the God of life will hear the cries of His people and will end this pandemic that is affecting all of humanity and destroying lives across the planet.



*Group of religious from different churches praying in front of the hospital*



# From Querida Amazonia to Fratelli Tutti: Impetus to Consecrated Life

**S. Eliana Aparecida dos Santos**

*Brazil*

The Conference of Religious of Brazil (CRB) held a national seminar in April for reflection and deepening of two themes relevant to the current reality, namely the document, the fruit of the Synod for the Amazon, “Querida Amazonia” and the Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis, “Fratelli Tutti”. The seminar is an annual event and brings together consecrated religious from all over the country. In 2021, we had five online CRB seminars, organized region-wise.

The events reflected on the important contributions of Consecrated Life, especially in these times of uncertainty and diverse challenges caused by both the pandemic and other realities. The theme was presented in four parts: 1) the wisdom mystique; 2) hearing the cry of the poor; 3) Inter-congregationality and sharing of charisms with lay people; 4) humanizing relationships.

From the reflections on the theme, several questions were raised, including: What attitudes awaken in us when we see the sterile and inert indifference towards the people in poverty and migrants on the streets in search of food and survival? What about our bond of universal belongingness which impels us to cultivate mutuality-complicity, sisterly / fraternal living? Do



*A young girl of the Amazon region*

we also feel fear, aversion, contempt, hostility and repulsion towards poor people and poverty? What cries have resounded in our ears in the face of human and ecological pain? Do we find ourselves refugees in numbing indifference? Are we aware that everything is interconnected? What has been our option in favour of the poorest? Do we effectively involve ourselves in confronting social and environmental injustice and violence?

All these questions have a reference in Fratelli Tutti which calls us to action – response. Keeping this in mind, the participants highlighted that it is urgent that the consecrated life be a path of daring hope; become more aware that it is a worldwide community and thus see itself as communities of imperfect men and women. The need to follow a successful path of forgiveness rather than revenge, to promote humanizing spaces based on sorority was also highlighted. It invited us to

proceed with creative and committed hope in favour of life.

Sr. Roselei Bertoldo (ICM), who participated in the Amazon synod as auditor spoke about her experience. She highlighted that: “we cannot forget our roots. We need to be aware of our identity of being a consecrated person”. She said that one cannot understand the Amazon Synod without reading *Laudato Si*, and quoting Fratelli Tutti she stated that “To care for the world in which we live means to care for ourselves. Yet we need to think of ourselves more and more as a single family dwelling in a common home.” (FT, no. 17)

The situation of the Amazon invites us to look at life as a community and to dream collectively which means not to look at the Amazon as outsiders. Sr. Roselei emphasized that “We are the Amazonian; this is everyone’s problem. It’s a glaring reality where life cries out. The Church is called to respond prophetically to this cry”.

# “To lead people, walk behind them”

**S. Barbara Bozak**

USA

The ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu spoke great wisdom when he said: “To lead people, walk behind them.” Although this is counterintuitive to most people’s perceptions of leadership, Lao Tzu believed that to be the kind of leader people want to follow, you must have a solid understanding of who you are leading, and that knowledge is best obtained from a position of service rather than of command.

The concept of servant leader is not the first one we think of in regard to leadership. We are more likely to consider the leader as the one who holds authority, telling others what to do or not do. This hierarchical, patriarchal model places the father / ruler at the top as the one holding all responsibility. It is the model we have seen most often in the church and in our own families. Society has embraced this model and lived by it for thousands of years. Yet this is not the example of leadership Lao Tzu speaks of nor the one Jesus gives us. Rather, they point to and model servant leadership.

In the gospel of John, we see Jesus, on the night before he died, taking a basin of water and washing the feet of those with him – the action of a servant for her/his master. And Jesus told his disciples to do the same – to be the servant-leader. He said “I have given you an example; you are to do as I have done for you.” In Luke 22:26-27 Jesus tells his followers that the leader among them must be the one who serves. We follow the example of Jesus in caring for

those in need, comforting those who mourn, bringing life to the marginalized. It is fitting that we go to the gospel to learn leadership from Jesus’ example.

Contemporary leadership literature has embraced the leadership model of Jesus – that of servant leadership. Business leaders have discovered that they are more successful when they are servant leaders, when they practice deep listening, persuasion and trust rather than relying on the exercise of power.

recognize their unique giftedness since she is committed to creating an atmosphere in which the other can grow personally, professionally and spiritually. She is committed to being deeply aware of who she is, where she needs to grow and how her interactions impact others. She recognizes the importance of creating an environment where it is safe to make mistakes and learn from them. In short, the servant leader is more concerned with others than she is with herself and knows that leadership



The servant leader helps those being served/led to become wiser, freer, more of the person God created them to be. She knows how to listen to every voice and to the spirit in herself and in others. She does not believe her ideas are the most important and must be followed, but listens deeply and gathers the wisdom of all. She understands that coming to decisions takes time because consensus and true community can only be built slowly.

The servant leader does all she can to understand others and

is about fostering relationships and building community.

Servant leadership is not easy. It requires that we examine and perhaps change how we understand the role of leader, recognizing that true leadership is collaborative, respectful of all, and rooted in unconditional love. This calls for deep humility grounded in honest self-knowledge. The most successful leaders are those who seek first to serve, as did Jesus. Each of us can ask ourselves where we stand on the journey toward becoming servant leaders.



# The CSJ Missioni project becomes European

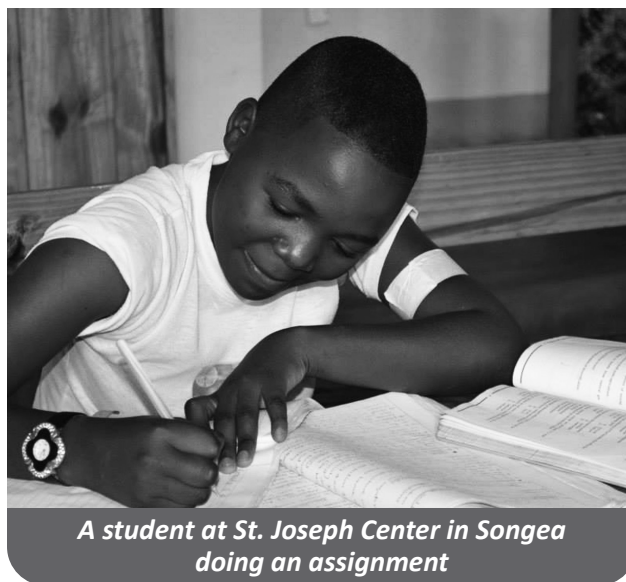
**S. Maria Giovanna Titone**

*Italy*

For years, thanks to the panettone solidarity campaigns, the St. Joseph Chambéry Center in Songea, Tanzania, managed by the Sisters of St. Joseph and sponsored by CSJ Missioni, has been created and grown. Today, this center welcomes 61 young Tanzanian women, 40 of whom are on scholarships, financed by CSJ Missioni. These years of fundraising have made it possible to expand the structure of the hostel, provide for the basic needs of the girls, finance scholarships and accompany and support them in their lives as students. "With the Christmas Campaign 2020 we wanted to take a step forward in this journey" - says Sister Maria Giovanna Titone, who followed the Christmas campaign online – "by financially supporting the girls who can continue their studies until they graduate. The objective of the project is to allow girls to access better paid professional activities, with the result of improving their standard of living, that of their families and, gradually, of their villages as well."

Since because of the pandemic it was not possible to sell panettone, we had the first online fundraising experience, and it became an opportunity for an expanded sharing of the mission. As Sister Clementina Copia, president of CSJ Missioni, writes: "In the Document of the 2015 General Chapter we read: 'Provinces, Regions and Missions in Europe will come together and share their resources to support each other...'. As of 2017, the European leaders have been meeting

regularly. They have also formed a Core Group, thus forming a real network of collaboration and meetings with the aim of bringing more life to all provinces, regions and missions in Europe. And it is precisely in this direction that the two meetings organized by CSJ Missioni with European leaders and communities in Italy came about. There were two very important Zoom meetings that made concrete some of the earlier input received from the European network,



*A student at St. Joseph Center in Songea doing an assignment*

namely, that of collaboration and mutual support in the mission."

The values that guide the work of CSJ Missioni have been welcomed by communities throughout Europe, thanks to the enthusiasm that moves the volunteers of CSJ Missioni. Francesca Sessa, volunteer and member of the Committee that guides the non-profit organization, said: "I have been collaborating with CSJ Missioni Onlus since 2008, following a trip to Songea, Tanzania, where the St. Joseph Hostel is located. The decision to undertake that journey together with other volunteers was the result of curiosity, which then gave way to a great sense of

responsibility: after seeing and knowing the reality of Songea you cannot stand still! For me, being part of CSJ Missioni today means contributing, in a concrete way and as a family, to the development of a fairer and more equitable world, in full respect of the cultural differences between peoples."

The solidarity between the different communities in Europe was visible, as Sister Clementina noted: "For some years now, our sisters in Europe

have been supporting the various panettone campaigns. In this way missionary projects have crossed national borders. Due to the pandemic, there was no panettone, but there was no lack of solidarity".

There was also appreciation from Sister Marian Connor, who knows the reality of St. Joseph Center in Tanzania very well: "In my experience with the students in Tanzania, I

have gained the hope that these young women can really make a difference in their society. This year, two girls will be leaving us to go study nursing and to complete their fifth year of Secondary School. At St. Joseph's Center these students receive confidence, encouragement, and of course, the educational skills they need. For one of these two students, we had to pay for everything, just because her family is so poor that they cannot provide anything for her. We need more sisters on the ground here in Tanzania to continue God's work with the female students." The challenges do not end, and they are for the entire congregation!

# Home Visits with Palliative Care

**S. Prabha Toppo**

*Province of Nagpur - India*

**W**hen patients leave the hospital and return home they often have no one to care for them, talk to them, or make them feel that they will recover from their sickness because the members of their household are out, working in the field.

Recently I, as a social worker at St. Joseph Hospital, have gone to visit the patients in their home and spend time with them.

We have a staff of doctors, nurses and social workers who are available for 24 hours a day to support this work which we carry out in 40 villages. These villages are quite far from the hospital, but it is my passion to go to visit the patients. The sister doctors and community members give me full support through their prayers and words of encouragement, giving me confidence a I go out to meet the many patients. These men and women have different medical and spiritual needs, some suffering from



*S. Prabha with a family, assisting care of a young boy*

different types of cancer, heart or kidney disease. Others are paralyzed or have neurological problems. We also find those in critical condition with some in the last days of their life. If they have no one to care for them we bring them to the hospital, care for them and prepare them for a happy death.

For some their suffering is psychological as well as physical. They are alone in the house, suffering pain and depression, with no one to share, to listen to them, to understand them. They may cry for death, but are not dying, I spend time

with them, only listening. My listening makes them feel that they have someone who cares, and often half their pain disappears, with their acceptance of themselves and their sickness. These are the patients who need more visits and as I make the visits I see God's hand in them. I have experienced that when a patient is bedridden they forget everything, even those things that might set us apart. There is no caste, no color, no religion; they only long to talk to someone who will listen to them – truly a God-experience for me.

## EDITING

S. Barbara Bozak  
S. Eliana Aparecida dos Santos

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

S. Navya Neelamvilail

## TRANSLATIONS

Anette Jensen  
S. Cristina Gavazzi  
S. Joyce Baker  
S. Margherita Corsino  
S. Maria Elisabete Reis  
S. Marie-Pierre Ruche  
S. Preeti Hulas  
S. Ivani Maria Gandini

## CIRCULATION

Rossella Galli  
[www.csjchambery.org](http://www.csjchambery.org)

## E - MAIL

[icc@csjchambery.org](mailto:icc@csjchambery.org)