

Danish

English

French

Italian

Portuguese

CSJOURNAL

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry

September - October • Year 2024 - n . 5



GENERAL COUNCIL

SUMMARY

VOCATION TO RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE LIGHT OF HOPE

Sr. Elisa Fátima Zuanazzi CSJ

General Council



As we know, the world is changing and so is our life. Our way of attracting vocations also needs to be transformed. We don't have ready-made recipes, and we know that we can't use the same arguments from the past to talk about

Consecrated Religious Life. Consecrated life is not self-promotion, and sometimes the fruits are not visible. The challenge is to live this choice in faith, in a community with diverse members, according to the mission.

We live in a world that

GENERAL COUNCIL

Vocation to Religious Life in the Light of Hope **COVER**

JPIC

Italy: Vatican City State colors itself "green" **4**

Nirmala: Celebrating the Season of Creation **5**

PROVINCE/REGION/MISSION

Brazil: Missionary Presence **7**

New Saints **8**

Norway: My experience of the Extended Council **9**

Pachmarhi: Cyber crime and cyber security **10**

Pakistan: A time to listen to the cry of Mother Earth **11**

Bolivia: The cry of the earth, nature needs us **12**

Tanmaya: Embarking on a new mission **13**

Pachmarhi: Unity is strength, collaboration is power **15**



where silence has been lost, waiting is not easy, because it requires slowing down, not being dominated by activities, and creating space within ourselves for the action of God's Spirit. Sometimes the worldly spirit can enter our religious communities.

The seed of the vocation we receive from God is grace. I believe that all of us have had the experience of putting a seed in the ground and following its growth. I like to compare vocation to a seed. The seed carries within it a potential to be cultivated and developed, just like the people who come to us. The seed needs to be placed in the ground; it requires commitment, patience, and hope from those who care for it, and after a while, we can see the fruit of the mystery.

Vocation ministry requires sowing with hope, like Simeon and Anna, who

is often fast-paced, and exalts "everything now". It is consumed by activism and seeks to exorcise the

fears and anxieties of life in the pagan temples of consumerism or fun at all costs. In such a context,

patiently awaited the One who was to come. They received the grace of contemplating the face of Jesus. Along life's journey, they experienced difficulties and disappointments, but they didn't give in to defeatism; on the contrary, they kept the light of hope alive. It is in this spirit of pilgrims of hope that we believe in consecrated religious life.

We are aware that religious life is also going through a crisis of meaning and is in continuous transformation. Therefore, we need to urgently reawaken vocational formation in the light of hope. As Pope Francis tells us, "We need to rebuild a climate of hope and trust, as a sign of a renewed rebirth that we all feel is urgently needed".

The protagonist of the Life of the Church and Consecrated Religious Life is the Holy Spirit, who always humbly initiates things. In the face of so many movements and changes, are we willing

to let ourselves be led by this same Spirit, who is not a spirit of complacency, but a source of new possibilities?

We are living in a time of transition. Vocations come from different cultures, ethnicities, and places. There are new concepts of family. People are immersed in the technological world, live in different generations, and have different experiences. In short, they are part of a multifaceted society. This challenges us to think outside the box.

The new women in society are looking at how we live. Are we credible people, consistent with the purpose of life we have assumed? Is the Jesus we know and present our point of reference? Is our living space healthy and inviting all to feel at home? Are we women of prayer who love one another? Are we people of inclusion who love the poor?

Let's not underestimate ourselves, for we have the Counselor with us, the Holy Spirit, who will guide us and

make us advance to other frontiers of humanity as pilgrims of hope. We have a legacy in our hands, left to us by our founder and the first Sisters, and it is up to us to continue this legacy.

Fr. Médaille was a missionary. He walked, he sought people out, he prayed with them, he met with groups, he dialogued, he evangelized and he taught. Where are we present to witness Religious Life to the world? Are we on the streets with the poor, on the road with migrants, on the peripheries, in parishes, communities, and families? Are we with young people? Are we present to the urgencies of the world, in diverse groups...? How many Sisters dedicate themselves to encouraging vocations, and how much energy, passion, and time do we invest in forming new members? These are questions for us to reflect on and think about concerning ourselves and those who will be joining us.

"A vocation, while a gift, will undoubtedly also be demanding. God's gifts are interactive; to enjoy them we have to be ready to take risks. Yet the demands they make are not an obligation imposed from without, but an incentive to let that gift grow and develop, and then become a gift for others. When the Lord awakens a vocation, he thinks not only of what you already are, but of what you will one day be, in his company and in that of others."

Christus Vivit 289

VATICAN CITY STATE COLORS ITSELF “GREEN”

Sr. Veronica Shiju Pooppana CSJ

Italy



The Vatican will equip itself with an agro-voltaic system (agriculture and solar panels on the same land) to achieve energy autonomy. The Pope communicated this plan in an apostolic letter, in the form of a motu proprio,

entitled “Brother sun” which was published on June 26, 2024. The structure will be housed inside the Center of Santa Maria di Galeria on the outskirts of Rome. Francis wrote that this is both a contribution and a response to “the challenges faced by

humanity and our common home due to climate change.”

It is a state of the art facility that, using solar energy, will produce “not only the electricity needed for the existing radio station, but also the total energy needed for the Vatican City-State.”



Laudato Si', in which the Pope stated the importance of caring for our common home, inviting us to reduce emissions harmful to the climate and the environment, now comes to life in a project he has established.

The objective is to make Vatican City independent in regard to energy supply by the construction of an agro-voltaic system which combines the production of

renewable electric energy with the needs of the agricultural land below it.

Reiterating the importance of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, Pope Francis recalled in the motu proprio that on July 6, 2022, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations gave the UN General Secretariat "the instrument with which the Holy See, in the name of

and on behalf of the Vatican City State, consents to the United Nations' convention on Climate Change." With this instrument, said the Pope, "I intend to contribute to the efforts of all countries to offer, in conformity with their respective responsibilities and capacities, an adequate response to the challenges facing humanity and our common home by climate change."

CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF CREATION

Sr. Sheeba John CSJ

Nirmala/India



The Season of Creation Celebration 2024 was an auspicious occasion to honor each creation with its grandeur and glory, to listen and respond together to the cry of the nature and to protect and pray for our common home.

The theme for the first week was Mother Earth. The cries and groaning of our Mother Earth and all her

creatures echoes in our ears and hearts. And our spirit prompts us to approach her with a sense of care, concern and responsibility and to act with sensitivity and justice.

The way of creation, the theme for the second week, commemorates the mystery of creation. Reflecting on the mystery of creation we grew in immense appreciation of the greatness

of the creator and the beauty of the creation, especially the wonderful creation of the cosmos.

Nine stations were depicted with colorful paintings and photographs of nature, each with a message for us to understand, reflect and act upon it. The readings from the scripture and the book of Cosmos led us to the understanding that God is the



center of all Creation.

This celebration helped us to honor God as the Creator, uplift the sacredness of all creation and celebrate the power and value of Cosmos with gratitude and respect.

The third week focused on the gift of water, the one substance without which no living beings can survive on earth. Water is a symbol of hope and a reminder of the transformative power of the divine. From the waters of the deep in Genesis to the 'river of the water of life' in revelation, water plays a significant role in the salvation history. We thanked our creator for the gift of living water and prayed for the grace to use it wisely, respect it with humility, consume it sparingly and protect its purity, so

that the entire cosmos can be sustained with all its goodness.

The fourth week brought us to consider the Milky Way, the galaxy that is more than just an astonishing celestial body. It symbolizes the profound cosmic wonder and the concept of infinity in spiritual realms. Countless stars and celestial bodies, scattered across the endless canvas of the night sky, evoke a sense of wonder and amazement. The galaxy's enormity can make us feel small, yet interconnected, as we are made of the same cosmic dust as the distant stars. Contemplation of the Milky Way can inspire feelings of awe, humility, and a desire for deeper understanding, reminding us of the endless possibilities and infinite wisdom that the

cosmos holds.

God's creation is marvelous. But yet even nature's beauty calls us to something greater.

On October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, with the closing of the Season of Creation, we were reminded of the fact that we are all called to love: love God, love one another and to love every blessed creation of God. As pope Francis said: "Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically." Inspired by the life of St. Francis, we ask God to open our hearts and minds to appreciate and acknowledge God's marvelous creation of the universe and to strengthen us as we strive to love and care more deeply all of God's blessed Creation.

MISSIONARY PRESENCE

Sr. Vilma de Oliveira CSJ

Brazil



Illuminated by the refrain: “Take off your sandals and rest, this ground is holy ground”, I prayed to discern if this was the right time to embark on a missionary experience. After a few days, I decided and journeyed into the sacred land of our mission in Pará, in Cuçari, having heard the invitation of Sisters Célia List, Inês Leite Ramos, and

Talita, who are there following the missionary zeal present in the Sisters of Saint Joseph since our beginning.

I arrived in Cuçari stripped of everything, with only one desire: to accept and understand the reality of the place. During the visits I made, I felt the presence of God in the face of the families as they welcomed the missionaries

with a smile, offered the best they had, and did everything to put us at ease. What a blessing the people of God are! In their simplicity, they revealed to us the “multiplication of the loaves”, from the breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks they offered us, to the water to quench our thirst during our journey.

We had beautiful,



powerful, lively, and thought-provoking sharing after the proclamation of the Gospel of Luke 10:38-42, “Martha received Jesus” and Matthew 11:28-30 “Come to me and I will give you rest”. The people gave their time to listen to the message of the Gospel; the families gave everything and not leftovers. “Come, pray, eat, sing, come all and renew your hope in the Lord”! We experienced a testimony of faith and hope very much alive in the lives of those brave and hard-working people.

I felt like a foreigner in my country of Brazil, where I found happy, welcoming people, strong in their faith and full of the desire to hear the word of God. I realized how much the local Church strives, together with the Sisters and the Priests, to give attention to the people who thirst for God.

Our time was divided

in several activities: Visiting families, blessing the house, the sick and the family; outreach for basic health care in partnership with the health department of the local town hall; games with children and participation in the feast of their patron St. James.

The seed was planted in our hearts and inspires us to go forward with joy and faith. In this beautiful dynamic of meeting and sharing were present lay missionaries and Diva Rossi, a Sister of Saint Joseph of Chambéry.

After the mission week, some missionaries had this to say:

Sandra List Rizato: I reflected on the challenges of the mission. . . . I highlight the generosity and hospitality of the people of Pará, the joy in the midst of difficulties and the richness of experiences with the families and children.

Paula Gabriela Oliveira Silva: I valued the emotional exchanges and the deep faith of the people, highlighting the spiritual growth that the mission provided me.

Bill Clinton Nunes Silva: The mission made me reflect on my relationship with God when I observed the deep faith of the people of the area. I realized that the mission led me to question and strengthen my spirituality.

Marcio Deyvid Seixas Pinheiro: I emphasize the simplicity and genuine faith of the riverside communities that I visited. I felt spiritually enriched by the experience.

Sr. Diva Rossi: I saw the “living Gospel” on the faces of the people and felt called to support the local community in its challenges. I also emphasize the importance of the unity of the team in caring for God’s people.

NEW SAINTS

Sr. Lurdes Catarina Erthal	91	Brazil	29.08.2024
Sr. Elenora Castignani	99	Italy	04.09.2024
Sr. Pushpalata Ekka	74	Tanmaya	18.09.2024
Sr. Laura Bisinella	81	Brazil	18.09.2024
Sr. Luiza Anthonia	84	Brazil	02.10.2024
Sr. Nancy Ahern	89	USA	02.10.2024
Sr. Supriya Pookoden	69	Tanmaya	09.10.2024
Sr. Marie Alix Philip	96	France	12.10.2024
Sr. Vincenzina	95	Italy	12.10.2024

MY EXPERIENCE OF THE EXTENDED COUNCIL

Sr. Lucia Thy Vo CSJ

Norway



For me, before I came to the Extended Council 2024 in Nemi, I was quite nervous and wondered how I was going to manage it, because it was the first time for me to be part of an international meeting. I knew that the meeting would be very intense and my English skills are limited. I also discovered that I was the youngest participant in that meeting, both in terms of age and religious life. I also have had very little experience as a leader, which made me extra nervous. Now I'm sitting on the last day of the meeting reflecting on what I've learned and which baggage in "my backpack" I want to take with me after that meeting for my further journey. First of all, I am most grateful for the opportunity to participate in the meeting. I found that the meeting was intense and sometimes difficult to follow completely, but it was very interesting, enriching and informative.

Being able to see, talk



and share experiences with the sisters from other provinces, regions and missions, coming from different continents, helped me to open my understanding to something bigger than my province, to the whole congregation. I am inspired and passionate about building the unity of the congregation as a body. This requires that I dare to step out of my comfort zones and help others to be able to do the same. It's always difficult and scary when you step out of the safe bubble you're in, but if you don't dare to do it, you'll only ever live in this bubble. On

the other hand, thanks to the knowledge, information and experiences from the meeting, I am also inspired to share what I have learned from the congregation with the sisters in my province. How we in the province can practice synodal conversation/walking/listening – meeting and being met, listening and being listened to and having enough time for good discernment. In this way, I will understand my sisters better. This can help build unity in the province. All in all, the meeting is a blessing for my religious life going forward.

CYBER CRIME AND CYBER SECURITY

Sr. Deepika Sawner CSJ

Pachmarhi/India



On 31 August 2024, a seminar on “Cyber Crime and Cyber Security” was organised at the Amala Institute in Bhopal. Father Alfred D’Souza was the resource person. A total of 35 students actively participated in this insightful session.

The seminar began with a discussion on the growing importance of cyber security in today’s digital world. He highlighted the various types of cybercrimes that individuals and organizations face, such as phishing, hacking, identity theft, and ransomware attacks. Through real-life examples, he explained how these crimes have evolved as well as the severe consequences they can have on both personal and professional levels.

The seminar also covered essential

preventive measures and best practices to enhance cyber security. Father emphasized the importance of strong passwords, regular software updates, and the use of antivirus programs. He also spoke about the significance of awareness and education in combating cyber threats, urging students to stay informed about the latest trends in cyber security.

The session was highly interactive, with students engaging in discussions and asking questions about various aspects of cyber security. We

received practical advice on how to safeguard personal information online and how to respond in case of a cyber-attack. Overall, the seminar was a great success, providing valuable knowledge for the participants and raising awareness about the critical issue of cybercrime and the necessary steps to protect against it. The students left the session with a deeper understanding of the cyber security landscape and the skills to better protect themselves in the digital world.



A TIME TO LISTEN TO THE CRY OF MOTHER EARTH

Sr. Maria CSJ

Pakistan



On September 1st, the Pakistan region began celebrating the Season of Creation. This annual Christian celebration is a time to pray and respond together to the cry of Creation. Pope Francis proposed “the cry of the Earth” as our prayer intention. The call is clear: Every action counts, and we can all make a difference. With the theme: “To hope and act with Creation” we are invited to live this time with intensity, making use of all the materials sent to us by JPIC commission which included the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation celebrated on September 1st. At the General Chapter 2021 the congregation embraced the call to protect all of creation. By committing to care for our common home, we are planting seeds of hope for a better future.

From the beginning of September all the communities offered the creation prayer.

In this context they raised awareness with associates and youth groups on how to take care of mother earth. In the schools special activities focused on taking care of all species. Students were encouraged to “Say No” to plastic bags which are a threat to our environment. Plastic is a non-biodegradable material made from petrochemicals.

We must stop using plastic bags as they cause land pollution, water pollution, and soil pollution as well as the death of many animals.

It is time to act with love and responsibility. Every gesture, no matter how small, has the power to transform our world. In a world yearning for balance, the Season of Creation invites us to deepen



our contemplation of the connection between humanity and the environment. As we reflect on our responsibilities, we recognize the urgent need for eco-conversion—transforming our actions to protect our shared home. Pope Francis reminds us, “We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.”

“Let us pray that each of us listen with our hearts to the cry of the Earth and of the victims of environmental disasters and climate change, making a personal commitment to care for the world we inhabit.” Thus will we make our future sustainable together.

The whole month was beautifully spent contemplating creation and energizing each individual to be connected with our Mother

Earth.

Each day we are invited to live the appeal of *Laudato Si'* through integral ecology, caring for life in all dimensions. As women connected with the world, “we are called to lean toward and support one another and to care for and protect all creation,” a call of the 2021 General Chapter. May God inspire us to live an ethical life style and care for creation.

THE CRY OF THE EARTH, NATURE NEEDS US!!

Sr. Gabriela Cuéllar Durán CSJ

Bolivia



It is time to act!

The forest fires in Bolivia and Latin America have brought have become an environmental catastrophe because of the dense smoke and severe drought we are experiencing. Civil society has become a fundamental force to support groups of forest firefighters. The Episcopal Conference and religious communities joined hands

with the Civil Society to help indigenous and peasant communities affected and rescue wild animals fleeing the fire. The fires are putting at risk life, biodiversity, food security, health, and the economy.

This alarming reality of disaster is seriously damaging our Common Home, especially in the areas of eastern Bolivia (Santa Cruz,

Beni, and Pando), due to the inhumanely caused fires that affect all living beings created by God.

As Church and as the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph who make pilgrimages to these sacred places, we urge people to become aware of the ecological disaster that is causing respiratory diseases when smoke and polluted air



are inhaled by humans. Our role is to make people more conscious of not burning anything, taking care of our health and the environment.

Another activity that we are supporting as a Church is to carry out a Pilgrimage of Supplication, to ask God for forgiveness for our abandoning our Common Home, and to pray for rain, to have mercy on our fields, flora, fauna, and environment and, especially, on all God's sons and daughters. We are collaborating with a donation to the Conference of Religious for those most

affected in the Amazon region.

We all share the same sky. Each of us is responsible for taking care of our environment. The actions and decisions we make have a profound impact not only on our immediate community but also on the entire world. This is a call to a collective awareness for joint action so that we all take care of our Common Home.

God bless our beloved Amazon!!

EMBARKING ON A NEW MISSION

Sr. Nisha Matera CSJ

Tanmaya/India



On 6th August, 2024 we celebrated an historical event for the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph as we had the inauguration and blessing of our new mission in the state of Punjab. The province decided that it was time to spread our charism of communion in this state. Since it is our congregation's

first venture into Punjab to offer our services, it was an incredibly significant and moving experience for all of us. The ceremony included a meaningful liturgy and house blessing, followed by a dinner shared with all attendees. Sr. Philo, our provincial, together with two councillors, Srs. Nidhi and Sangeeta, were present for this momentous

occasion which was blessed by the bishop and several priests.

In preparation for this venture the new missionaries, Srs. Pauline, Gloria, and I (Nisha) embarked on an immersive journey to Punjab, a land renowned for its vibrant culture, rich traditions, and deep spiritual roots. Our month-long expedition



aimed to explore the heart and soul of this region, delving into its language, cuisine, religious practices, and social dynamics. This Mission Orientation had been organized by the Diocese of Jalandhar, Punjab, from July 1st to July 31st, 2024, for all new missionaries in their Diocese. Fifteen attendees, including religious men and women from eight different congregations participated in this enlightening programme.

As a new missionary, I was fortunate to receive a wealth of information about Punjab, its people, their daily lives, and the rich cultural tapestry that defines this land. Punjab, meaning “Land

of Five Rivers,” is known for its agricultural productivity, cultural heritage, and significant contributions to India’s economy and society. Language acquisition is crucial, and I am glad to have begun learning Punjabi. Punjabis are renowned for their hospitality. Every house we visited welcomed us with open arms, making us feel at home. I observed that people in Punjab are remarkably polite in their conversations, often using honorifics like “ji.” Younger individuals frequently touch the feet of elders as a mark of respect. Their warmth and hospitality led me to reflect on my own approach to welcoming

visitors. Do I treat everyone with equal kindness, or do I differentiate based on social status?

Regarding spiritual life, I found that both Christians and Sikhs in Punjab are deeply connected to their faith. In churches, people participate enthusiastically by clapping and singing. Many Christians are converts from Islam or Sikh but their deep faith and style of worship are truly touching. A blissful atmosphere is created through various postures, singing, and clapping. There is also a sombre aspect of life in Punjab with many having migrated to other countries, leaving behind elderly parents and vacant houses. While financially well-off, these families often live in loneliness, waiting for their children to visit. Yet at the same time, Punjab is experiencing an influx of people from other Indian states where there is more poverty, particularly Orissa, Bihar, and Jharkhand.

The orientation we received has been incredibly informative making us confident to begin our mission work in Punjab, supported by a strong network and a deep appreciation for the vibrant culture that surrounds us. We look forward to serving the people of Punjab bringing our charism and dedication to this new area of ministry.

“UNITY IS STRENGTH, COLLABORATION IS POWER”

Sr. Susmita CSJ

Pachmarhi/India



It is collaboration that enables a team to achieve its defined objectives and common goals or purpose. Collaboration builds bridges, motivating and empowering a person to give their best and to work effectively for an organization.

On 6th July 2024, a one-day seminar was organized for all the sisters of the Pachmarhi province involved in health care and for the staff of our hospital and school of nursing where 31 staff members participated. The resource person was Ms.

Marita Ishwar, an educator and great motivator.

The session began with a short prayer and lamp lighting followed by the introduction of the resource person by Dr. Sr. Shobha. Then Sr. Maurice the provincial superior addressed



the group, giving us a brief history of the beginning of the healing ministry at Asha Niketan Hospital and how challenging it is to work effectively in the present health care scenario.

After the introductions, the resource person asked the group “What are the things that make any event or work go well?” The group responded with points like planning, replanning, organizing, participating, sharing, active listening, respect for each other, feedback and so on. Then, in groups, we shared one “Wow experience” of our life related to collaboration.

We had another exercise of dreaming of the future of our hospital and nursing school, where everyone is very collaborative,

everything is running smoothly and everyone feels they belong. We were asked to observe the scene very carefully and listen to what each one was saying. Sharing this gave us much positive energy and enthused us. Then focusing on different groups: nurses, paramedical service providers, tutors and administrators, we discussed barriers to collaboration and presented the results with posters. This helped us to see the present situation more objectively and where we need to improve.

Using an “Empathy Map” we were asked to identify those persons who are barriers to our institution and shown the great need to understand them. One of the most important tools for collaboration is empathy

and compassion. Empathy is making an effort to put our feet in the shoes of the other. This is one way of helping each one to take responsibility for their action and to work toward the common goals of our institution.

At the end Marita also emphasized feedback which is essential to collaboration and explained about “learner centered feedback” and “empathetic feedback”. We began to learn and apply this feedback, doing it two by two.

The sessions were very relevant to the present time and we were greatly enriched and benefited a lot. The day concluded with the vote of thanks to the resource person and to all the participants by Sr. Susmita.

EDITING

Sr. Barbara Bozak
Sr. Eliana Aparecida dos Santos
Sr. Leni Menegat

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Sr. Laveena D'Souza

TRANSLATIONS

Anette Jensen
Sr. Cristina Gavazzi
Sr. Margherita Corsino
Sr. Maria Elisabete Reis
Sr. Marie-Joséphine Chorot
Sr. Preeti Hulas
Sr. Ivani Maria Gandini

CIRCULATION

Monica Bianchini
www.csjchambery.org

E - MAIL

icc@csjchambery.org