

# Summary of educative transformation experiences published on assumpta.fr 2013

English version



“The last word of love or of truth is never spoken . . . we always desire more . . .”

(Notes intimes 154/06)

*Reaffirm our charism of transformative education in all our apostolic actions.*

*(Transformative Education 2006)*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Date</b>	<b>TITRE OF THE EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>PROVINCE/country</b>	<b>Page</b>
January 2013	The Transformative Education in this Year of Faith (Testimony)	Philippines- Thailand	3
February 2013	Education transformatrice au Dispensaire du Bon Pasteur	Afrique de l'Ouest Benin	5
April 2013	Transformative Education and Assumption Public School Thelpara	India	7
July 2013	KAUSWAGAN community project To experience God is to experience our interdependence with all reality	Philippines - Thailand	9
August 2013	Assomption Minoos : Un processus de découvrir la mission que Dieu confie à chacun de nous.	Japon	11
November 2013	Philippines-Japan : Transformation - from 2 halves to doubles !	Philippines - Thaïlande	13
December 2013	Diplomado de Madre María Eugenia	Mexico	16

## The Transformative Education in this Year of Faith (Testimony)



Last November 21-23, 2012 we attended the UNESCO 16th International Conference on Education in Bangkok, Thailand. The theme was focused on community: "THE HEART OF EDUCATION: Learning to Live Together!" It was a very enriching experience where our 9 College student-leaders joined sessions by topic built around the theme. Their participation in the discussion was highly appreciated by the other educators especially when they shared about their Assumption education and the vision of the young generation.

A number of universities approached us to inquire about Assumption College and invited us for partnership programs that may take different forms like student/faculty exchange programs, cultural and educational exposures or shared faculty formation. Every partnership is unique and the choice depends on the shared vision and mission of the school as well as the direction identified in our Strategic Plan.

In line with our thrust R I S E (|Relevance-Integrity-Sustainability-Excellence) TO WIDER HORIZONS, we purposefully design programs and activities that will provide opportunities for "Learning beyond boundaries" in view of our national membership in the ASEAN Community by 2015 and to enhance global perspectives in education

While in Bangkok, we formalized our partnership with St. John's University through the signing of the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) for different kinds of educational exchange and sharing which includes the Basic Education Department. This coming February 18 to March 19, 2013, two of their teachers will come for immersion into our culture and educational system for a month. Mr. Chainarong, the Chancellor of St. John's University-Bangkok wrote in his letter of request:

*"As you know, Thailand is a predominantly Buddhist country, with about 95% of the population Buddhist. These two teachers are based at Sahavith School outside Bangkok. The school is affiliated to St. John's in Bangkok. This is our way of "New Evangelization." When they have agreed to affiliate with us, we can go to them at any time and provide them with academic support as well as proclaiming the Good News. During their stay at San Lorenzo, the two teachers will in a way immerse in Catholic environment 24/7. With their stay at San Lo, both academic and religious experience will naturally be shared to other teachers and students. I would appreciate it if you would include them in any religious activity, including taking them to Sunday Mass during their home-stay. Our grateful thanks for your support and understanding. It is a privilege for us to be able to evangelize through Catholic education."*

Today, Mr. Kochi Masayuki, the chief of Kobe College International Program Center came to formally bring the MOU signed by the president of Kobe College for Women in Japan. This College was established in 1875 by two American lay women missionaries "to promote an educational philosophy based on Christianity and on the development of character and



intellect to live richly.” Their International Programs include open classes, club activities, short-term stay and other programs for international exchange and partnership with other schools.



In July, I accompanied 5 Communication students and one professor to visit Kobe College. It was a one-week intensive immersion into the Japanese culture complete with workshops on Ikebana flower arrangement, calligraphy, tea ceremony, Haiku, and the Bunraku ancient theater presentation. We also visited our school and community in Mino-o where our San Lorenzo High School students stay for the Student Exchange Program every year. When the students went for the overnight homestay with their host families, I had my homestay

with our sisters at the Ishinari community. I came home with a deeper appreciation for our mission in Japan.

Last September, the 2<sup>nd</sup> group of Kobe College students came for a 10-day stay in San Lorenzo. They had a program that included visits to the ecological sites and Outreach Centers. While in campus, they joined classes in Communication and Theater Arts, and watched the performing arts presentation of METTA (Marie Eugenie Theater of the Assumption)- Zodiac 1: The Myth of Prometheus and Pandora. Opportunities for mutual enrichment truly offer transformative experiences that can last for a lifetime!

The call towards global networking and partnerships, challenges us to offer a transformative education anchored on a strong value-system empowered by faith that will enable them to become effective agents of change wherever they may find themselves or whatever career they choose to pursue.

With the celebration of the YEAR OF FAITH, our Assumption Education continues to seek relevant ways of making this renewed evangelization a life-giving experience for the young ...making it our special gift to this generation and the next. As we review our Teachers' Training Enrichment Program, we made an option to have a more purposeful integration of the Catechetical Instruction, Liturgy and Faith Formation as part of the Values Education Program so that we can form and multiply faith-filled educators who can educate persons with "Character for life, life for God!"

Exciting! Challenging! Transforming! With Mother Marie Eugenie, we love our time! May we draw our inspiration to RISE beyond the horizons with a passion that impels us "to *make our world a place of glory for God!*" (SME)

New Year Greetings from San Lorenzo!

Sister Carmela Pesongco, r.a.  
San Lorenzo Community  
Manila, Philippines

# « TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION » in the Good Shepherd Dispensary

Health domain is also a privileged place for « Transformative Education ».

**Assumption Sisters' dispensary at Abomey - former kingdom in Benin** - has endowed with an education program in order to improve medical consultations and patients' states in the hospital.

To teach women to endow with means *to make out a balanced feeding*, implant in them *daily cleaning habits* for themselves and for their home, that is what contributes to a good health and opens to us a sphere for a real education. The staff's quality, the cordial welcome, that may also be an invitation to prayer, are an important agent to recovery for all those who often come to the Dispensary. The Sisters share the services, linked to the yearly Educative Project.

*The aim:* undertaking together to awake any person to the way of life and to open her to evangelical values.



## The main hinges of the Project:

- ✓ to sensitive persons in front of comportments harming health
- ✓ to wait upon their spiritual growth
- ✓ to promote a good collaboration among the caring staff members.

After brooms, floor-clothes and other rags dance ...once wiped out the traces of last year, a new year is starting with joy, in order to set up the necessary programs. We'll need a bit more than two days ...to set up together our new action plan. The collaborators team is kept as such, even if some ex-students having got their end apprentice's diplomas have been replaces by two new ones.



*In the name of the Lord!* Prayer, reading of the Dispensary Educative Project and work in groups: the point is to choose again axes and aims, and to fix means in order to work out a new action plan. Its setting is widely made easy by the staff's steady and peaceful spirit.

Once grounded the year program with its main activities, time is for entertainment, and we celebrate the staff's birthdays.

Since our arrival at the beginning of the year, patients have been expecting. They are now numerous to come and we are so glad when they see their children full of life.

A new point this year! We make vaccinations again, as they have been left for some years.

Joy too *when arrived two AMA*: little by little they take place in the group and are happy to be among us. Everything is so new for them, and they don't stop asking questions. Their wish: to know Beninese people and constitute with us a well united team.

As for now, *we have to make up the Dispensary inside rules*. Entering upon a new insertion implies a lot of difficulties to be assumed, and makes necessary a home rule requiring consent and signing from everyone.

A new year can't start unless *the Lord blesses it!* So our Vicar-General has celebrated in the Dispensary a splendid Opening Mass, animated by the *Anyé Chorale*. He pointed out *the part of faith and thanksgiving* in the manifestations of healing from the Lord. We like to note the high presence of faithful people from our Parish and of patients who come to our Dispensary, those from the district as well as from the Parish. Before the final benediction, our Vicar-General has blessed each room of the Dispensary to ward off devils.

Our grotto dedicated to Our Lady of All Graces is a blessed place for many patients, and for those coming with them. The staff and even school children come there to pray. And every Wednesday, the Community sings Vespers with the patients who wish to come. This common prayer is always a happy moment praised by everyone.



May God give us health and joy in the service for our ill brothers!

Sisters Community  
Abomey Benin

## TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION AND ASSUMPTION PUBLIC SCHOOL THELPARA (INDIA)

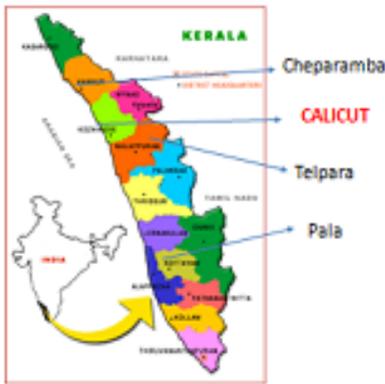
*Promote pedagogies that transform our notions about the “good life,” understanding that the quality of life is linked more to the qualities of relationships than to the quantity of things consumed.*

*Find ways of educating persons to become wise, to have a sense of beauty and an appreciation of a simple lifestyle.*  
(General Chapter. Orientation RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT ECOLOGY AND MIGRATION OUR WAY OF LOVING OUR TIMES)

**In Thelpara school (India),** this vision becomes everyday reality through this small structure that grows as a promise of Life.

Assumption Public school, Antonykkad Thelpara is a newly born Educational institution of the province of India. It was a long awaited dream of the Province, to have a school of our own and this is the realization of it. “Assumption Public school” is situated in a village surrounded by Rubber plantation, with natural beauty all around, a beautiful river running as boundary which originates from the forest nearby, and high mountains that separates Kerala from Tamil Nadu.

### Assumption presence in Kerala



The “school” at present functions in the sister’s residence until the proper school building is ready. It has at present only Lower K G and Upper K G. (kinder garden) with a total number of 45 children of age between 4 and 6.

The tiny tots of this school are from the locality, and mainly Christians. A few of them are non Christians mainly Hindus and Muslims. These kids play, study, and grow in the lap of Nature. They hear the song of the river, breath fresh and uncontaminated air and are free from any kinds of pollution. As they are away from the city, they are not much exposed to city life and its dangers.

Nature is our Mother. We form an integral part of its health and life. From this early stage onwards we teach the students how to take care and protect our mother Earth. In our system of education eco friendliness occupies an important

part. And we transmit this value in different ways. Besides taking care of the plants nearby, each one was given a seedling to take home. Children were very excited to carry home their plant. They were given instruction, to name the plant, and report its wellbeing to the teacher occasionally. Most of them gave their seedling the names of their favorite heroes or cartoon characters. It was reported that with the help of their parents each child planted the seedling and is taking care of it. From the part of the school we do visit the homes of all children to know their well beings, to interact with their parents etc. Thus the transformative education is not only directly to children but it includes parents and other members of family.

Another aspect of our Education is learning values. Children learn values at the initial stage of education. As they are loved, cared and appreciated at home it becomes easy for teachers to inculcate values in the budding stage of their life. We believe that values are ideals that give meaning to human existence which impel people to opt for priorities that will enhance their thinking, striving, and life style. Thus values are imbibed from childhood often unconsciously which is part of the transformation.

Every week one value is chosen. The choice is participatory, children propose and we take it into consideration. For one week we choose the value of ‘speak the truth’. It was proposed by children. When occasion comes for e.g. if one



says something which is not true, children remind each other to speak the truth. Innocence is one of the qualities of childhood. Let me share with you an incident related to this.

One day as I entered the classroom just to be with them for a short time, I noticed a photo pasted on the wall was scribbled and disfigured. I thought it was a golden opportunity to amend the habit of such an action. So I sat with them chatted with them and brought to their attention to what has happened to the photo. All the children agreed that it was not the right thing, but there was silence in class not knowing who scribbled over the photo and nobody was willing to own up. I recalled their choice of the value of the week "speak the truth" I told them every one makes mistakes but the beautiful thing is to own up the mistake and decide not to repeat it. Spontaneously one by one began to say , it is not me...it is not me...The beautiful moment occurred when I saw two little eyes staring at me wanting to say something.

Then I understood that little Vishnu (a five year old boy) wanted to own up the mistake. I took the opportunity and told the student that Vishnu will speak now .So he said softly that it was he who did it. I appreciated the child for his honesty and how beautiful it is to speak the truth. There was happiness in the classroom and they appreciated Vishnu for telling the truth. He too was happy and joined with others to sing and dance. This is one among many example how little children learn beautiful things which will remain with them lifelong.

Each moment is a crystal in formation. We allow each moment to fashion a life of choice for within each moment is the miracle of creation. We practice Transformative education in forming the little ones in small things. We focus on what is happening in the student rather than what the teacher is teaching. Often the need of the students is approached in a different way by individual attention and interaction. The classroom climate is informal and collaborative. Learning becomes a joyous activity when class room becomes informal.

To conclude in the tiny minds of our kids we instill values in different shapes and forms, indirectly as we take the role of a facilitator in their world of questions and curiosities. We shift our attention from subject matter to learning skills, from competition to collaboration, from success narrowly understood to achievement realistically conceived. Thus learning becomes a joyous activity and childhood full of sweet memories.



Sr.Celine Mathew  
Headmistress.

July 2013

# project

**KAUSWAGAN COMMUNITY (Mindanao)**

**TO EXPERIENCE GOD**

**IS TO EXPERIENCE OUR INTERDEPENDENCE WITH ALL REALITY**



*We need to acquire a livelier awareness of all that is linked to ecology, to the future of our common home – our planet – and how to live together over the long term. We know that the western model of growth is unsustainable. (...) To make these changes, we need to develop the awareness that we are only a part of the community that makes up creation: move from a position of dominance or respect, from utilitarianism to compassionate caring, from separatism to interdependence. This will require a real shift of perspective.*

*(Fiche Ecology et Migrations, General Chapter 2012)*



## The Present Context:

- A Christian-Muslim community where the vision of the peace sanctuary has now been adopted by the whole municipality with the assistance of Assisi foundation.
- The on-going GRP-MILF peace process with the MILF comprehensive draft and its implications
- The Muslims (especially the group of Delabayen) consider SVA as a partner for the work of peace. (this accounts for the increased number of Muslims in SVA this year).
- The teachers/ students have grown in the consciousness of shalom/ interdependence and have begun to bring the vision and understanding of shalom to their families, purok and in the colleges

where they are studying

The Irreplaceable Role of the RA: A Religious Community called to be a contemplative presence, introduced the Vision and the Project of the Peace Sanctuary in Kauswagan and has ensured the spiritual foundation, the on-going formation, and the accompaniment of this process particularly in St. Vincent's Academy.

## This project includes:

- 1) a (faith informed gaze) way of looking at reality, the continual discernment of the Divine Presence in that reality and
- 2) JPICS as our response and participation in God's plan in this context of Kauswagan (Shalom is our).

In the light of this role and the developments in our municipality, the Religious community together with our lay partners and the young are challenged to live communion through a deepened understanding and consciousness of our interdependence with God, humans and all of creation so that this consciousness becomes a Way of Life ( from 2010 city project)





**Thus this year (2011-2012), we choose to:**

1. Deepen our capacity to discern the presence of the Divine within us and in all of reality,

- by sharing in compline where we had a sense of God's pervading Presence throughout the day
- by a weekly study on discernment in living JPICS (focus on communion and interdependence) to be animated by teams

2. Continue to form and accompany our lay partners and the young to JPICS as the framework of their faith life,

- by spiritual accompaniment, formation sessions that will deepen the awareness of our communion and interdependence.
- Have a special sensitivity to the students who have special needs or challenges
- by intentional and processed "BABAD" on JPICS such as a visit to another peace sanctuary (Zamboanga with the aid of Assisi and Sr. Michelle, RGS) and in the homes of our scholars.
- by providing opportunities that will nurture those with possible religious vocations.

3. Live consciously our interdependence through concrete actions

- Continue to move towards zero waste and choose products that are earth friendly
- Harness the religio-cultural resources and create opportunities for different faiths to work together for JPICS
- Create structures that express our interdependence (ex. In our economic life, etc)
- Network with communities sharing the same vision of shalom (Assisi, the municipality, etc.)
- Coordinate with other Assumption Communities in Mindanao for our on-going formation towards a common framework of JPICS.



**OUR BOLD ACTION:**

In the July regional assembly: invite our three RA communities in Mindanao to launch a discernment on the future presence of the RAs in Mindanao. (Where are we called to be present and what is the form of presence we are challenged to live now?)

The irreplaceable role... in the light of our present context and the possible restructuring in the province) (one year)

Bold action already launched: Muslim student provided with Arabic and Muslim value formation during CLE practicum and an agreement with the parents of the manner of follow-up of students during their Friday prayer time.



**KAUSWAGAN COMMUNITY  
(Mindanao, Philippines )**

August 2013

# Assumption Minoo

a process to discover the mission  
that God entrusts everyone.

*"I believe that each one of us has a mission on earth... the final aim of religion is not just to seek our eternal beatitude but also to make us seek how God can use us for the spreading of His Gospel and for its fulfillment."*

(Letter of MME to Lacordaire in "Origins I, 2e part, Chap XI)

Let us share you our education experience. In the Assumption Minoo Junior and Senior high school, 359 girls are studying. Among them 11 are the Christians. Most of the families have the Buddhism back-ground. Our school mottoes are "Sincerity", "Love", "Joy". These words and values are well accepted in our non-Christian society. Their ages are from 13 to 18. Everyone tries to discover her proper mission through the various volunteer activities. We show them here:



## The Charity Day

We have the charity bazaar in which all members of the Assumption, not only the students but also the teachers and the parents of the kindergarten, the primary and high school, and the former girls' association. The whole benefit is offered to foreign countries (Assumption schools of Philippines, other Asian and African parts) and some parts of Japan (Kamagasaki, the welfare facilities, the local welfare association, the victims of the Touhoku earthquake, etc.).

## The Advent collect

Every year, during the advent the pupils collect their offering. And the Christmas celebration, they offer it to Jesus and then send the people who need any support.

## The local activity

The students join the Minoo festival (a local festival) of July as volunteers promoting the consciousness to the environmental protection. They work to sort rubbish from this festival during these two days. They live up the children's craft activity also.

## The student association activity

They try to be awakening to the necessity of the society. They make efforts to respond concretely. The cooking club helps the cooking practice of the handicapped children during the summer activity. It is the good experience for our girls.





### **The volunteer group**

This group started at the very beginning of Assumption Mino. That's why it is the one of our traditions. They as a group continue the sponsorship to support one Philippines child by their offering. They exchange letters and Christmas cards every year. They show friendship. There is also a movement to promote the resources recycling. One association offers a vaccine to the children in other countries who need the medical care in exchange of plastic caps. The girls encourage all friends to join with them in this activity. And they have the relationship with the local association through this activity to help a bakery run by handicapped people. These services are not big, each work is very small and quiet, but through their sincere continuation they build up a solid and confinable bond with other people. This is the characteristic element of this group.

### **The Choir and Hand Bell Choir**

Their service is not only in the liturgy for prayer in the school but they also bring their service to the neighborhood. They join the local charity concert and visit the hospital and other institutions for old or sick people.

The Hand Bell, this musical instrument is played by the team. The important point is not only learning this instrument but when they meet various people, they found the value to dedicate themselves to others. When they played in front of the people who were at the terminal care, they learned the gravity of life.

Through these various activities the girls have been awakened to recognize the meaning of their life. They understand the words of Mother Marie. Eugenie "Each one of us has the mission in the earth." Having found the significance of leaving oneself behind, the girls are given new energy to live.



I believe that it is an encounter with God, God who always gives us the life. And these experiences deepen their interior growth also. After the graduation they continue to live this value: offering themselves to the needs of others.

Rima Miyake vice- principal  
Sr. Therese Keiko Okada r.a.

# Transformation – from 2 halves to doubles!



**The Japanese-Filipino Youth Educational Program** is an education program based at Kasai Catholic Church (Japan) where it started in 1998. At the onset, it was a 2-week study tour to the Philippines of 5 Japanese-Filipino Youth with the purpose of giving them a chance to better know the culture and traditions of their Filipino parents. As the program developed, Japanese-Filipino living in the Philippines were given the same opportunity: to know more about their Japanese identity. And in some cases to meet and re-connect with their Japanese father.

The Japanese-Filipino Youth Educational Program is transformative in as much as it offers opportunities for discoveries, learning and friendship through various activities like workshops, camps, exposures, field trips and study tour in the Philippines. The program has been running for a total of 14 years.

The Japanese-Filipino Youth Educational Program is a parish-based program that aims to transform the lives of the youth. Although established and managed by a Religious of the Assumption, it is not connected with any of the Assumption Schools in the Philippines or Japan. It was a project of Assumption Tokyo (when the RA were still in Tokyo) and the Augustinian Fathers who directed and managed Kasai Catholic Church (a parish in Tokyo) where Sr. Remedios Locsin r.a. worked for 16 years. The two Religious of the Assumption Sisters involved in this program were Sr. Remedios Locsin and Sr Francis Keiko Miyamoto, the present provincial of the Japan Province. The program continues to flourish as it is now managed by the Japanese-Filipino Youth.

Currently, the over-all coordinator of the program is Sr. Remedios Locsin r.a. and assisting her is Celine Santillan, who is an alumna of the Associate Missionaries of the Assumption – Philippines. Both designed and facilitated the orientation and training and post – tour group sessions, managed the preparations and the conduct of the actual study tour.

“Bloom where you are planted” – Saint Eugenie Milleret said. But, what if one is unsure of his/her roots? What if some “roots” are missing?

This is the reality of some young people who are Filipino – Japanese – or as they are called DOUBLES, have to face. Born to Filipino mothers and Japanese fathers but because of certain situations, their parents did not stay together, through the years lost contact and they grew up not knowing their fathers. Not knowing their Japanese culture. Not knowing half of their identity. Feeling they didn't know themselves fully. They would say “half Filipino and half Japanese”.

In 2013, 5 young Japanese-Filipino, were again given the opportunity to participate in the study tour and visit Japan.

They visited places like Hiroshima, Koyasan, Kyoto, Tokyo, Osaka and home-stayed with Japanese-Filipino families. They also had an afternoon to interact with other Japanese-Filipinos and realized they undergo the same challenges like bullying, being mis-understood, learning to blend two cultures.



The participants of the study tour were invited by Batis Women's Center and Sr Remedios Locsin. [Batis is a non-profit organization that provides support to women migrant workers and their children.]

Prior to the trip, 4 preparatory meetings were conducted. These focused on Japanese and Filipino history and culture. Right before the trip, the participants joined an afternoon recollection with CLAY (Commission of the Laity) Facilitator Lirio Mapa. The recollection focused on the GIFTS they had received from God, that the trip itself was a gift and more essential that they themselves, their being Japanese and Filipino is a gift.

The study tour included visits to places such as Hiroshima, Koyasan, Kyoto, Tokyo, a home stay with Japanese-Filipino families, and visit to Assumption Primary School in Osaka. During the trip, on three occasions the group was gathered to reflect on the day's activities, share their learning, express their feelings and pray together.

### On their visit to Hiroshima-

"I can't help but think that the generation before me; my father's family suffered and endured the wrath of the bomb. It makes me sad but also proud to see how the people here have over-come the effects of the war. "

### On the visit to Koyasan

"It was beautiful. I could not imagine how they built the town thousands of years ago without the cable car. The commitment and perseverance the people had; they must have been very dedicated to their beliefs."

Part of the trip's agenda was to try to have participants meet their fathers. The three boys were able to meet their fathers.



### About meeting their fathers ~

**Tomu:** My happiest moment was when I met my father – although brief, I was happy to meet him and hopeful that it is only the beginning of our relationship. I was a bit sad to know that my mother was the reason for the separation but now, I know I can strive to see and even, be with my father.

**Joji :** In a way, so much has changed – and also nothing has changed. My life is the same, my work, my friends BUT now I know my father – that has changed me. It feels so good to know I have a family – I am so lucky to know my father, and met my cousin and grandmother! I never even dared to dream about this before but now – we are a family. I can't imagine that they

even said they would come to my wedding, when and if I do get married. I am overwhelmed that my family there would keep photos of me -it looked so well preserved!

**Mark:** Meeting my father changed in me: With conviction, I say: I will strive hard to go to Japan, I will change my ways and think of my future. I feel so blessed that I had this opportunity and because of it, I can make something of my life, of myself.

The group also shared that they observed that what was common among them was that family was of great importance. They saw this and felt it – that they needed a family. There was a certain desire to be with family.

Four weeks after the group arrived back in the Philippines, it converged to meet for a de-briefing.

**Mark said:** “After the trip, I realized I had wasted 2 years and didn’t study well but now I want to finish my schooling and I know I have to do well so that I can take more opportunities as they come my way. Now that I met my father I know it is possible to go to work and live in Japan. But even without that, I saw that other Japanese-Filipino like me, even if they don’t have much, they strive hard and do well – I want to try to be like that too.”

### In the end ...

Their thoughts and feelings went from a state of feeling like they were only ‘half’ [half Japanese and half Filipino] to being able to embrace their double identity - and basking in the thought that this is quite a unique gift.



They were reminded of the core values, (Filipino) hospitality, (Japanese) harmony and how both can bring about peace. They realized how true their recollection’s message was - they are a gift! Their life is a gift, and like Jesus, this gift can and should radiate – and make the world a better place!

What a transformation!

St. Marie Eugenie would probably say ... “take root in Jesus Christ and you will blossom anywhere”!

By: Celine Santillan  
Philippines

## MOTHER MARIE EUGENIE WORKSHOP IN MEXICO

# a transformation strategy

"I decided to take this workshop because I wanted to know more about the foundress of the school where my children were studying; I never imagined this would be the beginning of a life changing process..." (expresses a mother of students at Las Águilas School in Mexico).

Curiosity, enrollment process,... there are a lot of reasons why about 1500 people have already studied this formation program that has been in Mexico for 20 years. Students are diverse: teachers, catechists, parents, alumnae, church staff, etc.

This workshop is one of the strategies created in the Province of Mexico in order to spread Mother Marie Eugenie's vision: her life, her strong devotion, and her philosophy of education. It was created in 1994 by Sister Brigitte Coulon, who wrote 11 study modules that are taught fortnightly, in 2 hour sessions.

Through these modules students put their life in parallel with Mother Marie Eugenie's life, her historical context and devotion in Christ-centered actions, and compare it with their own.

Participants have shared their feelings about the workshop as follows: "When I was invited to take part in Mother Marie Eugenie's Workshop I asked myself: Why do I have to study MME life again...? But I have become aware that I'm not only learning about our foundress' life, I'm evoking moments of my own life and finding similarities in character and formation values, with those of MME."

"...it has helped me to retell my life, evoking experiences that I might have forgotten and that strengthen my



consciousness. Knowing MME life has helped me notice how a person can be transformed with God's presence, besides the magic of bringing everything together under Christ."

The 11 modules come together progressively, as one of the participants shares: "As I move forward in the workshop, I have noticed the importance of knowing and visualizing my own life, all the way from childhood and adolescence up to adulthood. I have discovered moments and situations that have made me the person who I am now."



These are the objectives of each of the modules:

1. **Discover how MME was able to live through her historical time period and home upbringing.** Take consciousness of the influence that culture has in our life, our way of thinking, acting, and even the way we react to circumstances or people.

2. **Discover the core values that formed MME** and relate them to our own personal life process.

3. **Discover MME First Holy Communion** as a main event in her life, seeing everything from God's perspective and in the context of God's divine gratuity.

4. **Learn about MME's childhood and adolescence;** consider that adolescence is a transitional stage and that all breaking off situations of this stage are part of our growing up process. Draw your own conclusions about our Assumption educational endeavors.

5. **Learn about MME's religious conversion** period as well as her strong devotion. Take consciousness about the deep meaning of conversion and check it in your own life.

6. **Understand the beginnings of the Assumption,** through its charisma and its first community.

7. **Read about how MME created her first community** of the Assumption and learn about her instruction manual, the Counsels on Education.

8. **Discover what the Kingdom of God is, according to the Bible.** Understand how MME began to see and think as a Christian in terms of God's Gospel and his Kingdom.

9. **Refer to MME'S difficulties and how she faced them.** Experience a deeper transformation to conflict by releasing it, in order to renew your spirit.

10. **Understand MME's last years;** discover how peace, hope and resignation were her strengths through these years.

11. **Recall the information** covered in this workshop.

One of the main objectives of the course is to have a vivid and active experience, so the methodology used throughout the workshop includes group work, video forums and reflection periods. At the end of each session participants have to work on tasks that



concentrate on their inner self: "...I have been able to get in touch with my deepest feelings and as a result I've written about issues I hadn't even thought about. I can't stop mentioning that I've found a lot of similarities between my life and that of MME's...", shares one of the participants.

This inner process also involves self-consciousness: "...I hadn't noticed that there were situations in my life that affected me deeply and have helped me shape the person I am today. There's no doubt, Assumption calls us, and it is through this workshop that I have noticed it..."

"...It gives me hope and consciousness about my own devotion and it's this inner dialogue that made my heart tremble...then I was sure that the phrase 'follow your heart' is real..."

People who have lived this experience perceive a self-transformation. They follow a real breakthrough in their mission as educators: share the Assumption charisma. All of them are committed to teach, accompany and guide their children or students through a process where common wisdom is forged in their inner self, own reflection and guided reading.

Sisters Marta Gamboa  
Brigitte Coulon  
Ana Senties

