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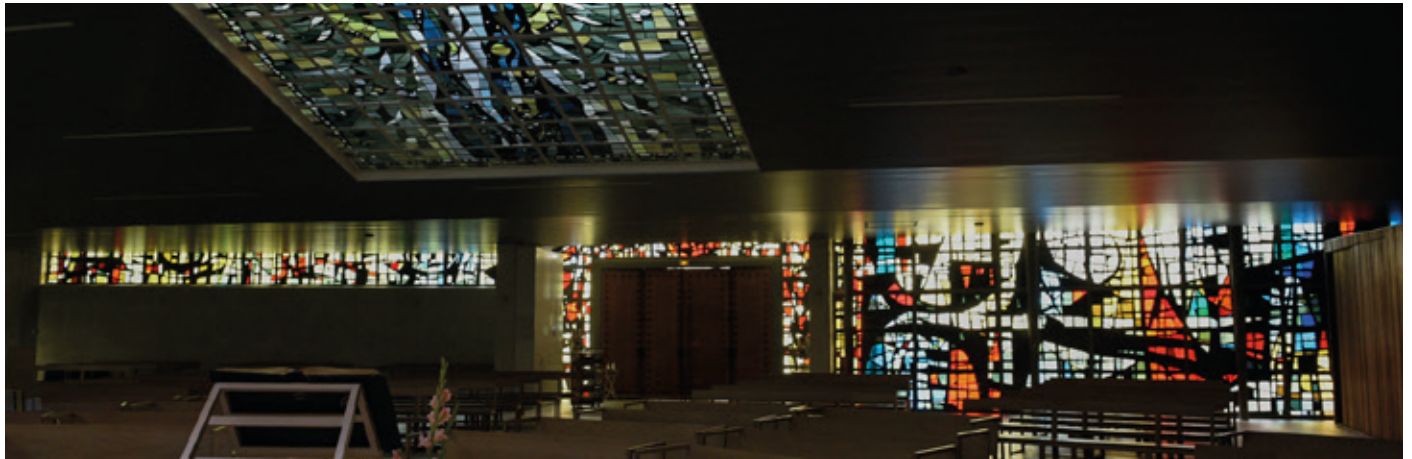
Religious of the Assumption magazine

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summary

"Each one of us has a mission on earth" (Marie Eugenie's credo)



#ASSUMPTA

Year 2025 - n° 14

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COMMUNICATION

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editorial

Music, an Experience of God



When we speak of the origins of our community, we invariably recall the gathering commemorating 200 years of the Congregation worldwide and 60 years of its presence in Ecuador. As former students and teachers, each of us began our Christian and Assumptionist journey at different times, and it is Saint Marie Eugenie who allowed us to come together in this shared mission. Our community, formed (so far) by women from different generations, enriches our experience and enables us to connect with the global Assumption family.

We began as a group united by the loving memory of our school years, where music shaped our experience of God and our social awareness. Over time, we realised that nostalgia and the desire for a safe place were not enough. And so, we moved from singing “we are heirs, let us plough the furrow and feel the weight of the earth” to truly feeling it and choosing a life in community, growing through formation, uniting in prayer, and committing ourselves to our congregation, with our mission of evangelisation and animation through music.

We have made music central to our mission, as it helps us encounter Jesus and share that experience with the whole Assumption family. Through music, we unite our communities in Ecuador and Mexico, echoing the founder's vision in song. Music continually reminds us of our roots, values, and heritage.

And it is this same music that opens our eyes to the world, allowing us to express the realities of our peoples, while recognising ourselves as a society with shared histories and experiences, going through the same pains and joys. But music is not only an expression of devotion; it also restores our hope and confidence that it is possible for this world to be a place of glory for God. It encourages us to continue working toward building the Kingdom and to surrender our lives to Jesus Christ.

In community gatherings, music becomes a vital means of expressing God's presence and uniting us in worship. Through music, we honour our Father and deepen our shared faith, transcending time and distance together.

And so, music continues to be an essential element in the mission of evangelisation, in the daily life of communities and personal journeys, reminding us that beauty and spirituality are intrinsically linked on the path to holiness and communion with God and our Church.

ASSUMPTION VOICES

Province of Ecuador and Mexico

Original Spanish

general community

“On our pilgrimage, we continue to perceive these seeds of Hope.”

“Let us keep firm in the hope we profess, because the one who made the promise is trustworthy. Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works.” Heb. 10,23-24

We are pilgrims with the certainty that Hope does not disappoint. We continue walking together, guided by the Spirit in this Jubilee year. A Hope that has a face: JESUS! Hope that is also a seed that we welcome every day with the confidence that it is God who will make it grow and who always leads us along the paths of life.

On our pilgrimage, we continue to perceive these seeds of Hope. We share some of them with you:

ONLINE JPIC SESSION OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ASSUMPTION FAMILY

This online session was organized by the JPIC Secretariat of the Assumption Family, with the theme...A world of living beings sharing a common home: new ways of inhabiting the earth and acting on behalf of migrants in the world.

It took place from July 7 to 11. Depending on the day and time, participation fluctuated between 150 and 100 people daily (twice as many as in the 2021 session). This highlights a growing awareness and commitment to JPIC among the members of the Assumption family. Each day, the session began with words of greeting from the Major Superiors of our respective Congregations, who encouraged us in this mission. The topics covered were:

1. “Integral Ecology in Laudato Si” (Ms. Elena Lazida) The relational approach that invites us to a holistic vision and challenges us to an ecological conversion: human, environmental, political, and spiritual relationships. And the three basic principles of Laudato Si: Everything is interconnected, Everything has been given to us, Everything is fragile.
2. The “Integral ecology” (Sr. Maamalifar M. Poreku, member of JPIC (UISG). A call to commitment to justice, peace, and integrity of creation, in line with the charism and values of the Assumption Family, for systemic transformation.
3. Climate crisis, migration, and development: caring for life (Ms. Gaia Mormina,



Formation as a synodal journey throughout life



lay Scalabrinian). With her, we remember that migration is not a phenomenon but a permanent fact of humanity. The eloquent testimony of a Venezuelan migrant in Mexico gave a face and heart to today's reflection.

4. "Priest, prophet, and king: Committed hope" (Sr. Cécile Renouard, R.A.). Our Sister completed the deepening of integral ecology in a profound and practical way. She presented us with the six doors for ecological and social transition. These six doors are related to the experience of the Transition Campus in Forges and the main lines of the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

We concluded by sharing the calls and commitments of our respective Congregations JPIC based on our General Chapters. A diversity and missionary creativity, a journey we make together with the Hope that the Kingdom is already among us.

A WINDOW ON THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

Sr. Rekha participated in and presented papers at two workshops organized by the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences: (i) Religious Formators and (ii) Migrants in Asia.

1. Formation as a Lifelong Synodal Journey

The FABC Central Secretariat organized a workshop for Formators of religious women and men as a follow-up of the FABC 50th Anniversary Document. The event took place at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from August 28–31, 2025. The keynote address, delivered by Sr. Rekha, was titled "Towards a Synodal Formation Journey for Synodal Religious Communities." Her reflection explored the theme of religious formation in the light of the Jubilee Year, the Synod on Synodality, and the FABC 50 Document.

A total of 67 religious Formators—Religious Sisters, priests, and brothers—from nine Asian countries (Bangladesh, China [Hong Kong and Macau], India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam) participated in the workshop, representing the rich diversity of the Asian Church.

In her address, Sr. Rekha invited participants "to embrace formation as a lifelong synodal journey." She emphasized that formation should not be viewed

Migrants in Asia: Challenges and the Way Forward - Malaysia 2025



merely as a preparatory stage for future ministry, but as an ongoing process of personal and communal conversion. This synodal path, she noted, calls for deep listening—to the Holy Spirit, the Sacred Scriptures, the Church, the charisms of one's Congregation, and the cries of a wounded world.

"As we embark on this lifelong journey of synodal formation," she concluded, "we become better equipped to make our consecrated life more relevant and meaningful in our ever-changing world."

2. Migrants in Asia: Challenges and the Way Forward

A workshop titled "The Situation of Migrants in Asia and the Way Forward" was jointly organized by the International Catholic Commission for Migration (ICMC), the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Team from Rome (JPIC), Caritas Asia, and the Office of Human Development (OHD)—Climate Change Desk (CCD) of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). The event was held at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from August 31 to September 3, 2025. Sister Rekha was among the invited speakers and presented a paper titled "Biblical and Theological Approaches to the Issue of Migrants and Refugees." In her presentation, Sister Rekha began by exploring biblical narratives of migration, illustrating how movement and displacement are woven into the story of salvation.

"Jesus' mission—His extraordinary outreach to those on the margins—announced the coming of God's Kingdom," she noted. "Like Israel, the Church is entrusted with the mission of building a world that is more just, inclusive, and peaceful, where every person has the freedom to choose whether to migrate or to stay, and where those who do migrate can always find a home in their host country."

In her concluding reflections, she connected these scriptural insights to the contemporary realities of migration in Asia, offering an urgent call to respond with faith, justice, and compassion. Sister Rekha invited the participants "to renew our commitment to embody the just and compassionate love of Christ, fostering a culture of inclusive hospitality that makes God's loving presence visible in today's world."



Canonical visit to Central Africa

CANONICAL VISITS

The General Council has begun the round of Canonical Visits, a time of grace and “visitation.” A time of deep listening to perceive with special attention the signs of hope that God shows us if we are alert to welcome and recognize them.

Visit to the Province Of India

NAMASTE! The divine presence that is in me is also in you. From the moment we landed in New Delhi, this greeting from a welcoming heart that sees the presence of God in those who arrive accompanied us throughout our visit. - Beyond the institutional fundamentalisms that divide and threaten harmonious coexistence among differences, we were able to perceive in this multifaceted, multicultural, and multilingual people a sign of hope, a culture deeply rooted in compassion and hospitality.

We had the joy of meeting adults, young people, and families who welcomed us warmly. Almost everywhere, we had the joy of meeting and listening to the Local Church through the various pastors and bishops, who are happy that we are responding to the mission in their dioceses.

We realized how the Province is clearly on the peripheries, whether in the parish or in the school, with a specific focus on the marginalized and the poor.

The assembly, the celebration of the first vows of our Sisters Priscilla, Rupali, and Reshma from the Assam and Jharkhand region, and all the meetings at the end of the visit helped to strengthen our communion, to celebrate together, and to look to the future of the mission with hope.

Visit to the Province of the United States of America

“The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed.”

From August 17 to 31, Françoise and Sandra were sent

to make a Canonical Visit to our Sisters in the United States Province. Currently, the United States Province is composed of three Communities in three States: New Mexico (Chaparral Community), Massachusetts (Worcester Community), and Philadelphia (Philadelphia Community).

It is a country experiencing a political, social, and economic crisis that is felt most acutely by the poor and the migrant population. In this immense and complex country, the Assumption Sisters, together with many people of good will, are trying to offer gestures of the Gospel and closeness that humanize and keep alive the fundamental values of the nation in these difficult times.

The presence of the Assumption is significant in our small sphere of action. Three vibrant, multicultural Communities are sources of life for many people whom they serve and with whom they share their life and mission. They are Communities with open doors whom the people love and value and who, at the same time, know how to weave bonds of solidarity with different realities in the country.

The memory of the Sisters who have recently passed away—Diana, Therese Margaret, and Cecilia—has left a mark on the Province and on many lay people. The Sisters have a sincere desire to live a quality Community Life. In each Community, they have a clear option for the poor and seek to serve the most vulnerable together with others. Pope Francis' call to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants is clear and courageous as an option for this Province. The Communities are linked and committed to the Local Church and other organizations.

Visit to the Province of Central Africa

Central Africa is the youngest of the Provinces in the Congregation, both because of its recent establishment as a Province during the 2024 General Chapter and because of the composition of its

members. It is a Province full of vitality and in full growth. The Communities are on the go, open and eager to continue consolidating themselves as Assumptionists rooted in their vocation and in their particular contexts.

For this visit, we organized ourselves into two teams. Sisters Marthe and Sandra visited the territory of Cameroon, and Sister Rekha joined them for the territorial assembly. The Communities of the DRC received a visit from Sister Rekha and Sister Lerma. The visit ended with a two-day assembly in Kinshasa and the celebration of the perpetual vows of Sister Rachel and Sister Ivette.

Both countries are experiencing complex political situations and areas where the population is suffering the impact of war. In the midst of this situation, we thank God for the many young women who continue to heed God's call to follow Jesus in the Religious Life, for the opportunity to make a difference through the mission of transformative education and listening to the people in these difficult times.

International Community Project in the Canary Islands

The International Community has finally come together; Sr. Rekha and Sr. Dolores were present at this moment of initiation. Monsignor Eloy Santiago, Bishop of Tenerife, blessed them and welcomed them into his diocese as they make their way to discern where God is waiting for us to serve our migrant brothers and sisters.

During this stage of adaptation, listening, Community consolidation, and discernment of the place of mission, they will live in the house next to the Social Centre in the Alegría neighborhood.

Let us continue our pilgrimage, being signs of Hope wherever we are. May God grant us an outlook like

that of Mary, Mother of Hope, a gaze that knows how to marvel at God's action in hearts and at the doors that open even in the most confusing and difficult situations of our world. With her, we trust and hope that "nothing is impossible for God."

SISTERS REKHA, SANDRA, LERMA, FRANÇOISE AND MARTHE

General Community

Visit to India



Canonical visit to Central Africa



Visit to the USA



International Community of the Canary Islands



education

Transformative education at the national centre for transformative education In kabuga Kigali – Rwanda

“The Assumption remains committed to advancing the Centre’s core mission of education.”

This project was initiated in response to the Province's observation that secondary school graduates lack the skills needed to drive societal transformation upon entering the job market. They require ongoing training that would foster meaningful change, enhance their knowledge and develop their talents.

Our long-term vision was to empower individuals to use their skills to contribute to societal transformation and the growth of our Church.

We aim to share our charism, as a catalyst for change and a means of transmitting values that can contribute to this growth.

The primary beneficiaries of this education would be, first and foremost, the teachers and educators in our schools, the former teachers and students of Rwaza and Birambo, the young people in our secondary schools and vocational schools, and other education workers across the country.

Our objectives inspired by the 2006 chapter's statement on transformative education are to:

- Share with young adults our passion for transforming society based on the Gospel.
- Educate them in the core principles of life, justice, peace and freedom.
- Help each person discover their vocation in society and in the Church.
- Help young people and adults find meaning in their lives by reconciling with their history.
- Support youth in healing from historical wounds and embracing personal responsibility.
- Deepen understanding of Rwandan culture, so that the men and women we train become active responsible contributors to their society's future.
- Provide training in conflict management and resolution.
- Offer training in entrepreneurship and the management of small income-generating projects to support youth seeking employment.

TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDED

1. Training in the Assumptionist educational charism

We began by training the educators in our schools to deepen their understanding of the Assumptionist educational charism. Simultaneously, we trained young leaders from various teams, with a primary focus on leadership development.

The second phase involved training former students, who initially showed great enthusiasm but disengaged due to a lack of dedicated leaders. We continue to maintain contact with them and have integrated two key figures into the administration and management committee of CENETRA.

Additionally, a Lay Assumptionist group was formed at CENETRA. It was organised into six fraternities that study Marie-Eugénie's spirituality modules. Their leaders engage in deeper study of the material to share it effectively with other community members.

2. Training young people seeking employment

We have formed small groups of young job seekers to develop their entrepreneurial skills and foster teamwork. They have gained the ability to launch and manage small income-generating projects collaboratively. Some have successfully ventured into the fields of commerce and transportation.

3. Training young people in trades

We faced a major challenge, namely the fact that, in our country, training courses to develop people's skills are funded by governmental or non-governmental organisations. Trainees are provided with accommodation, meals and travel expenses, and they receive a small subsidy for their needs.

This hindered our goals, as the lack of financial incentives dampened the motivation of younger participants. We had imagined motivating people psychologically to engage in their training, but they sought programmes offering official certification or diplomas upon completion.

Recognising this, we shifted to offering certified training courses to enhance employability in the labour market, after securing approval from the National Office for professional training. Once permission was granted, we recruited around 20 young people for programmes in professional trades related to the hospitality industry, including: culinary arts, catering and service, and reception and accommodation, etc. The training combines both theory and practice.

"Each module is based on values relevant to social life in general, entrepreneurship, employment access and job security."

We conducted integrated training in values: human values, Assumption values and evangelical values. These values were acquired through osmosis but also through experimentation.

This values-based training has enabled young participants to integrate better into the broader Assumption family while pursuing professional development. They have shown enthusiasm for hospitality professions, which offer strong opportunities for career placement.

Some participants have been directly employed by CENETRA in various departments. This gives them a secure future in terms of obtaining paid employment. It also ensures CENETRA has staff trained in our values, who work with professionalism and integrity.

This type of training continues today as a short six-month programme. Admittedly, it only reaches a small cohort of approximately 20 young people per session. Participants are supported in finding long-term employment or creating their own businesses at a dedicated training centre.

CENETRA staff also participate in this training, and the facilitation team supplements it with spiritual training that deepens their faith and commitment to the

Church.

4. Training for young people organised by other groups.

In our strategic plan, we also planned for training courses led by external partners. We were impressed by the Ministry of Youth's training initiatives, which aligned with our goals: empowering young people to develop their talents, take charge of their own lives, contribute to their community and country's development. The objective of these programmes is to promote social transformation and economic empowerment. Visiting groups from these initiatives continue to inspire us with innovative methods and teaching techniques for fostering self-empowerment.

Training at CENETRA is yielding tangible results: young participants are thriving and demonstrating responsibility in their activities. They take pride in being part of the Assumption community and actively promote the training to attract others.

The Assumption Together vision is increasingly realised, reflecting the values of the Kingdom and the Assumption. Participants admire St. Marie Eugénie, celebrating her with devotion and embracing her values, particularly her passion for the Kingdom and adoration. They dedicate themselves to inspiring other youth, sharing their enthusiasm and commitment.

Our young trainees are growing in leadership and showing great maturity, generosity and strong commitment to serving others.

Conclusion

The Assumption remains committed to advancing the Centre's core mission of education. However, securing funding for training programmes continues to be a significant challenge. We aim to raise awareness of the intrinsic value of training to foster greater appreciation and support.

SISTER CÉSARIE MARIE MUKARWEGO

Province of Rwanda - Chad

Original french

echo of the Archives

Our Sources: exploring and creating them

“From the sources, we receive a new perspective on reality and become able to participate in building the present and the future.”

« Roots and sources. “From the sources, we receive a new perspective on reality and become able to participate in building the present and the future. Every person, every family, every people receive from its roots the strength to stand on its own feet and the sap that allows new life to grow. Being rooted is therefore an important need for Communities and Congregations.” (Excerpt from the Vademecum of the RA Archives, approved by the General Chapter 2024)

In the footsteps of Marie Eugénie de Jésus... exploring the sources

More and more pilgrims are travelling this path to the sources, to the sanctuary, the chapel and the museum in Auteuil, or asking to be accompanied to Lorraine to discover the places where St. Marie Eugénie spent her childhood. One of the most recent pilgrimages to Lorraine was that of the parish of Notre Dame de l'Assomption in Passy, Auteuil parish. Around sixty people, including priests, lay people and sisters, took part in a two-day intergenerational pilgrimage. On this occasion, the group visited the church of Basse Rentgen, in the commune of Preisch, to celebrate the Eucharist, where they were warmly welcomed by Father Matthieu, the local parish priest, and a few parishioners. “Marie Eugénie” (or rather her photo) was waiting in the choir of the church, as a girl of the place. After a contemplative tour of Preisch, the group set off in the footsteps of Our Lady of Consolation.

In fact, a copy of Our Lady of Consolation, patron saint of Luxembourg, was in the chapel of Preisch at the time of Anne Marie Eugénie's baptism. When Mr de Gargan, the new owner, asked Marie Eugénie if she would like a souvenir of her childhood, she replied that the statue of the Virgin Mary, which she used to dress with her mother, would give her great pleasure. Mr de Gargan therefore offered the statue to the Congregation. After several moves, it is currently located in the chapel at Auteuil.

The original of this statue, the Comforter of the Afflicted, has been in the current Notre Dame Cathedral in Luxembourg since 1794. Patron saint of the City of Luxembourg and the Grand Duchy, her veneration was first attested in 1624. Now placed at the back of the cathedral choir, she appears to pilgrims as a clothed statue, in accordance with a tradition practised in Western Christianity since the end of the Middle Age.

After entrusting the pilgrimage to Our Lady of Consolation in the chapel of Auteuil and paying their respects in the chapel of Preisch, her former “home”, the parish pilgrimage



Group of pilgrims at Ste Ségolène



Group around the statue of St. Mary Magdalene (Preisch)

group had the joy of participating in the Marienlob, a hymn of praise to Our Lady, Comforter of the Afflicted, in Luxembourg Cathedral: a long prayer consisting of sung litanies to the Blessed Virgin and prayers of intercession addressed to her. Accompanied by the Virgin Mary, the pilgrims continued on their way to Metz, the birthplace, the Milleret family apartments, the cathedral and the church of Sainte Ségolène, the place of Anne Eugénie's first communion. This is one example among many of the return to the roots that pilgrims from all over the world experience every year.

Writing the annals... creating the sources for tomorrow

During the international session of Archivists in 2023, participants spoke about the annals, emphasising their importance in ensuring that no link in the chain of history is lost and in creating the sources for tomorrow. To encourage their redaction, a chapter of the Archives vademecum is dedicated to the annals. Here is its content:

«The narrative of events and the memory of these events are essential for retracing the history of a Community or an Institute. That's why writing annals is important for the legacy we leave to future generations.

A- Why do we write annals?

- To honor the value of the present moment: each era is important and shows that the Assumption is alive, happy... we often idealize the past. The annals are witnesses to life.

- To demonstrate our unique responsibility to participate in history: a Covenant History lived in diversity. We try not to keep alive the memory because we don't want to decide for others that our "little grain" (our humble experience) won't contribute to history.

- To pass life on to future generations: with the different faces it takes on in continuity, with the holiness it can reveal.

B- What are annals?

- The annals are not the Community's diary, meeting

book or filing folder containing all the Community's papers.

- Annals are written in a specific place (notebook or computer).

- The annals are a narrative. They are therefore different from a fact sheet or a summary. Details and impressions are important for a lively narrative.

- The annals are viewed from a distance, by someone who has lived through the event, who is a witness to the event as it is happening.

- The annals leave room for individual experience. But they are not just an expression of the editor's feelings. The editor tries to capture what the Community, the group, is experiencing.

- The annals follow chronological order, but it's not a question of writing everything... It's better to tell the story of one event in detail than all the events in general.

- There's something intimate and discreet about annals. We sometimes push open the door to Community intimacy when contemplating an event. This is why the annals are not published in the present. They are not used as a source of information for the present. They remain there as a witness to history for the future. This allows for freedom of writing.

C- What form should the annals take?

The writer can use a digital version, but must print it regularly. It is important to include pictures.»

So... grab your pens or computers and start creating the sources of tomorrow!

SISITER VÉRONIQUE THIÉBAUT

Archivist of the Congregation
Original French

ama

Assumption Volunteers in England

The Assumption Volunteer Programme (www.assumptionvolunteers.org.uk) in England was established in 1999 to **empower young adults to share their gifts and talents** in collaboration with the Assumption, while living out the Gospel through service, love, and social action. Volunteers offer their skills and invited to embrace a simple lifestyle, usually within **disadvantaged communities**, while experiencing a culture different from their own.

Over 180 volunteers have participated in the programme serving in the UK, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, India, Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico, USA, Lithuania, Italy and Belgium. In the UK there are currently two Assumption Volunteer communities: in **Newcastle** and in **Middlesborough** in the North-East of England. Every year up to ten young adults (typically aged 18-35) are invited to serve at one of these locations for a year. When spaces are available, we also welcome short-term volunteers for placements lasting between three and six months.

Volunteers serve at **Kids Kabin** (www.kidskabin.org.uk), a charity established over thirty years ago by the Sisters of the Assumption, which offers **creative workshops for children** aged 8 to 12 from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The volunteers receive comprehensive training, enabling them to lead the workshops and activities. However, their commitment to the community and support for the local mission is just one aspect of the whole Assumption Volunteer Programme.

"I can see the importance of the AV program in the North-East of England, particularly in fostering cultural tolerance. As Walker is a predominantly English community, the AVs offer a unique opportunity for residents to interact with people from other nationalities in a safe and supportive environment.

Children feel comfortable asking questions that may seem offensive in other contexts - especially cultural questions that need to be approached in a learning environment. It also provides a safe space for adults who may ask about my background or other cultural topics. I can confidently say that my time volunteering had a meaningful impact on the community. On my side, the program equipped me with invaluable organizational skills and nurtured my passion for art, especially drawing. It also strengthened my relationship with God, and I can proudly say that I am a Catholic who embraces and welcomes people with other beliefs." (Rasheed – volunteer in Newcastle from the Philippines)

Guided by the educational principles of St. Marie Eugenie and the philosophy of the Assumption, the programme is designed as an **enriching educational experience** for young volunteers, focusing on the holistic **development of each individual**. The Assumption Volunteer Programme rests on **four key pillars**: spirituality, mission, personal growth, and community living.

"I have developed a growth mindset through my volunteering at Kids Kabin. It has allowed me to engage in activities I never imagined I would try, boosting my confidence and encouraging me to approach each task with a positive attitude. One of the challenges I overcame was improving my problem-solving skills. I have learned how to negotiate and find solutions, especially when children are in disagreement." (Leah – Newcastle AV from Kenya)

Volunteers are encouraged to reflect on their experiences, deepening their understanding and commitment to social justice. During their time they develop personal and professional skills, learn independence and resilience. They are also



invited to build and nurture a sense of **community** through shared daily activities - such as household chores, cooking, and mutual support - which can be particularly powerful for those living away from home and their cultural roots for the first time. From a **spiritual** perspective, while most of our volunteers come from Christian backgrounds, their personal relationships with faith and God may vary greatly. Throughout the year, they have the opportunity to participate in spiritual retreats and recollection days, fostering a deeper connection with their faith.

"My volunteer experiences taught me that service is not just about helping, but about being present with others, sharing life, listening, and building meaningful relationships. By giving my time, I received so much more in return. I developed resilience, a deep sense of gratitude for the simple things, and a renewed desire to live with kindness and purpose. ...This year has been both a time of service and healing for me. Over the months, I learned to face my personal struggles and grief with greater resilience, and I now hold more hope for the future." (Nina volunteered in Middlesbrough from the Philippines)

In August 2024, the Sisters closed their community in Newcastle, but the Volunteer programme continues with the practical and pastoral support provided by the Assumption team in London, alongside assistance from Kids Kabin and other dedicated friends.

In addition to hosting international volunteers in England, we also invite candidates from Britain and across the European Province to **volunteer abroad**. We maintain strong connections with the Philippines, the USA, and Kenya - destinations that are particularly accessible to English-speaking volunteers.

"One of the things I had hoped for in coming to Kenya was precisely the broadening of my vision and intuition about the world, and indeed the universality of the Church, which a more authentic experience of such a different culture and environment can bring. From being welcomed into the homes of the Sisters' families in a mountain village or in the busy capital, to riding a motorcycle taxi through lush countryside, but especially in the everyday experience of life at school and in Kawangware more generally, this hope has been fulfilled in spades. ... Through the increased time I have had the chance to spend in prayer - from frequent Mass attendance, daily Eucharistic adoration, and the Liturgy of the Hours - along with seeing God at the centre of the lives of those around me, I have felt God's grace in making Himself better known to me. As a more reserved and less emotional person by nature, a longstanding challenge in my spiritual life has been knowing and seeing God on an intimate and personal level, rather than merely as a matter of abstract intellectual knowledge and assent. My time in Nairobi, Kenya, has been a great and unexpected joy in helping me grow in this area." (Daniel, UK volunteer in the Assumption school in Nairobi, Kenya)

We believe the programme offers something **truly unique** for young people. Although the current political climate has made international volunteering more complicated - particularly for youth from certain countries - the increasingly complex visa system and rising economic barriers are significant challenges. Political attitudes are often rooted in a culture of fear and mistrust, which only serve to reinforce the **challenges** young people face. As a result, it is more important than ever to encourage the **international mobility** of young people and emphasise the educational benefits of **intercultural experiences** offered by the Assumption through volunteering. Furthermore, we recognize the mounting pressure on young people to establish a career, repay student loans, or support their families financially. Given these challenges, offering shorter-term volunteering opportunities can provide a valuable alternative.

The process of joining the programme requires careful **discernment** from both sides. We are passionate about offering the opportunity to the right candidates, and some sponsored places are available for volunteers joining the UK project to help with costs. Applicants are normally **recommended** by AMA international partners, Sisters or lay friends within the Assumption family. Occasionally, former volunteers help recruit new ones by sharing their positive experiences. The selection process spans from the initial contact and getting to know the candidates, through informal conversations, the formal application, interviews, and background checks, all the way to the visa process and practical preparation for the mission. We **welcome applications** from young adults from **around the world** who wish to serve as volunteers, engage in full-time mission work (whether short-term or up to a year), live in small intercultural communities, and seek spiritual growth as well as personal development through the Assumption Volunteer (AMA) experience.

"Returning home, it feels natural to revert to the same familiar patterns as before I had left... And yet the memories, the relationships, I formed in Kawangware, the love of God and of neighbour shown to me, have changed me and will remain with me - and for that, I am truly grateful." (Daniel, UK)

ANNE MARIE SALGO AND SISTER FRANCESCA FILIACI
Province of Europe
Original English

treasures of the archives

In the footsteps of spiritual life of Marie Eugenie of Jesus

“All these works bear witness to the fact that Marie Eugenie of Jesus’ spiritual life is imbued with the spirit of the Church.”

Did you know that in 2025, some 800 people visited the Sources of the Assumption Museum, located on the first floor of the Mother House in Auteuil? What did they see? They found the books from the first library of the Community of the Sisters of the Assumption, the one from the very beginning. This new “Treasure of the Archives” is a proposal for a contemplative journey at a distance... How does it illustrate what visitors explore in the concrete search of Marie Eugenie and the first Sisters? How are Marie Eugenie’s own teachings reflected in what is found in the Museum? How does visiting it help us to meditate?

More specifically, what works are found behind the door of the library of the Archives and the Museum? Among other treasures, there are traces of the great spiritual authors who marked Marie Eugenie’s spiritual life and the drafting of the Constitutions of the Congregation: first and foremost, numerous works by Saint Augustine, Saint Francis de Sales and the Visitation, Saint Benedict and Saint Bernard, the French School of Spirituality, Saint Teresa of Avila and Carmel... The library also contains the Rules consulted in order to prolong reflection and enter more precisely into the work of drafting: in addition to the schools already mentioned, there are the rules of the Jesuits, the Trappists, the Dominicans, the Sisters of Charity and many others, with regulations of the Third Order, customs and directories. All these documents are classified in the “000 series - Rules and Customs consulted by our first Sisters”.

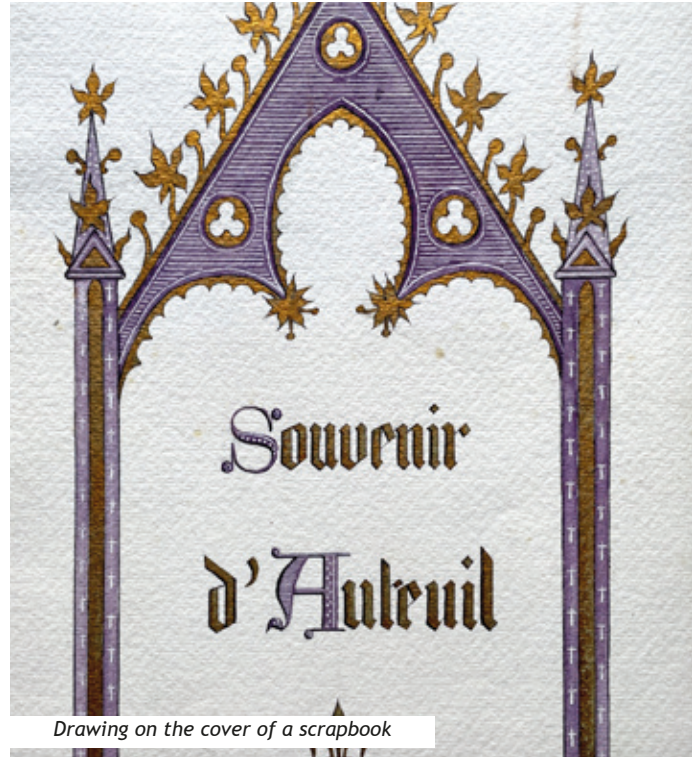
In the general library, the works of Bossuet and Bourdaloue coexist with those of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers of the Church. The reflections of Montalembert, de Maistre, Ozanam, Lacordaire, Lamennais and Veillot bear witness to a desire to deepen the thinking of the Church of the 19th century and the way of conceiving Christian commitment in society.

All these works bear witness to the fact that Marie Eugenie of Jesus’ spiritual life is imbued with the spirit of the Church. She draws on the richness of tradition, through numerous readings and encounters, to nourish her own inner work and that of her Sisters. Thus, the themes of likeness to Christ and union with God run





Marie Eugenie's personal library



Drawing on the cover of a scrapbook

through the teachings she imparts to the Sisters. She asks tirelessly: "Are you really working to form in yourself the likeness of Jesus Christ?" (ME, February 21, 1875). Elsewhere: "Our Lord Jesus Christ is, in fact, the way we must walk. He is the way of salvation. When we appear before God, it will be our likeness to this Divine model that will give us the right to enter heaven. This likeness is imprinted on each of us in very different ways." (ME, March 9, 1873)

The Lord, said Marie Eugenie, wants to imprint Himself on you... "He is there, with His eyes looking at you with love. His mouth is there, His open side is there, His pierced hands are there, His feet are there too, with the wounds inflicted upon them. You are under His divine breath! He wants to enliven your soul! Develop yourselves under His Divine gaze. Let yourselves be penetrated by this outpouring of graces that Jesus pours out upon you." (ME, December 22, 1855)

This likeness is like a seal that God has placed on us, a gift from Him. It is at the same time the fruit of a long work that leads us from imitation to union, before experiencing transformation. An invitation to seek sanctification, incorporation, conformity, unity, in order to finally become "other Jesus Christs".

Walking through the Museum, we find a multitude of illustrations and paintings made by the Sisters. The Congregation's archives also contain a collection of illustrated liturgical books, with scenes from the Gospel or representations of the face of Christ. During the time of Community recreation, the Sisters would draw and paint the mysteries of the faith that they contemplated during their prayer.

This reminds us that Marie Eugenie liked to use the image of the painter to describe this work of interior likeness, in particular the work of imitation:

- "When copying a model, one must make an

effort, to look closely and work hard to reproduce it accurately..." (ME, Chapter of July 8, 1876)

- "Ask a painter if it would be possible for him to paint or draw on a canvas a model that is constantly moving. Try, then, not to be a canvas that is constantly moving, full of life, activity, memories, events. Remove, simplify, pacify yourself, be silent, so that God can come and give you the only thing that is desirable, the only thing that is lasting..." (ME, Chapter of August 12, 1877)

- "If the Sister who paints a scenery, looked into the air instead of looking at her model, if she looked at it only from a distance and in a vague and general way, she would not produce anything like the scenery. In the same way, in order to know our Lord and form His divine likeness in ourselves, we must draw close to Him and do our utmost to imitate Him..." (ME, Chapter of March 10, 1877)

The Museum, located in the former chapel of the Little Convent or Convent of the Immaculate Conception, inaugurated in 1866, also contains a stained-glass window, a reminder of all the generations of Sisters who prayed in this place. Its bright colors remind us that Marie Eugenie liked to emphasize that the spiritual life has to do with light: it is about allowing oneself to be penetrated by God's light, to live the union that will bring about transformation. God's light can then radiate from our inner life to all those around us:

- The candle: "the body is the wax, the soul is the wick, and the Holy Spirit is the light" (ME, Chapter February 23, 1873) ... "Our spirit must be the radiance of His Spirit, our heart must be the radiance of His Heart" (ME, 3rd Sunday of Advent, undated, vol. 1).

- Two melted waxes that acquire the properties of the other, just as man, in union with God, can be imbued with God: "God mixes with our substance,

changes us, transforms us, deifies us..." (ME, Chapter of January 21, 1872)

- To be like "crystal reflecting all the rays of the sun" (ME, Chapter of August 12, 1877)

- 'God is in the depths of our soul, according to Bossuet's expression, like a sun shining through a crystal. If you expose a crystal globe to the rays of the sun, they penetrate it. But if, instead of a crystal globe, I took an opaque globe or covered it with veils, the sun would not be reflected in it...' (ME, Chapter of December 21, 1879)

Marked by the cathedrals that rise in all the great cities of France, Marie Eugenie also speaks of the light that transfigures their stained-glass windows, such as those of the Metz Cathedral, called the "Lantern of the Good Lord":

- When a cathedral is oriented towards a specific direction, it presents itself to the sun's rays in a certain way. It offers its apse to the light. It receives that light in a particular way. Well then, is our soul habitually oriented towards our Lord Jesus Christ, towards His feelings, towards His thoughts? (ME, Chapter of August 25, 1878)

Like many authors before her, Marie Eugenie also uses images taken from nature to evoke the abandonment by which we immerse ourselves in God, merging with Him and encountering His gaze that probes our innermost being. She often uses the image of the ocean to speak of abandonment to God's presence, of profound communion with Him:

- "We are in God, as the sponge is in the sea. We live in Him; we breathe in Him; but this presence of God in us escapes our senses. There are people, and I am one of them, who would like to be so imbued with God that the glory and presence of God would be perceptible to the soul. It is a grace that God grants at certain moments and then withdraws..." (ME, Chapter of August 29, 1881)

- "He alone is, and we are immersed in that ocean which is God; we are always in Him. He sees us everywhere, follows us everywhere, is in the depths of our hearts, gives us life, sustains us..." (ME, Chapter of August 4, 1889)

- "When we stopped to consider how quickly the waters of a river flow towards the ocean, did we not feel that, if we let ourselves be carried away, we too would be swept away by the current? Ah! If the stream flows into the river, the river into the sea, so all creation goes to God. We go towards God, we go towards eternity, and we will find everything in God! There we will find the people with whom we now live on earth. We will see them in heaven as shining stars, different in brightness, it is true." (ME, Chapter of November 21, 1872)

- God is like a bottomless and boundless ocean in which we are always present. He is always present, you are always in Him, so why would your soul not discover God's vision and presence always and everywhere, thanks to faith? Be faithful under this gaze and also, Sisters, be grateful under this gaze." (ME, Chapter of May 20, 1881)

Marie Eugenie invites us, through reading and deepening our spirituality and theology, to strengthen our spiritual life and to seek greater union with the Lord, the Source of our being — intelligence, will, memory, heart, desire — in order to be transformed into Him.

SISTER VÉRONIQUE THIÉBAUT
Archivist of the Congregation
Original French

Stained glass window in the first chapel of the Little Convent



spirituality

Edu-communicate with joy to communicate the Jubilee

We all remember moments of pure happiness: a summer trip, a shared celebration, the birth of a child, an unexpected encounter, a deep spiritual experience, or childhood days when play made time stand still. Though fleeting, these moments leave a mark, filled with intense emotion and inner harmony that makes us feel truly alive. Our bodies become laboratories of joy: dopamine sparks reward, serotonin lifts our mood, oxytocin deepens bonds, and endorphins foster well-being.

Yet, these moments are fleeting. Everyday life quickly asserts itself—routines, conflicts, fatigue and frustrations return. These often bring lower serotonin and dopamine, amplifying sadness, stress, and apathy. True happiness, however, lies not in spectacular events, but in finding meaning and joy in ordinary life.

Deep joy does not depend on external factors, nor is it reduced to a passing hormonal phenomenon. It springs from inner work: from the conscious decisions we make, the thoughts we cultivate, and the interpretation we give to the events of our lives. Mind, heart, and body align to generate a joy that can sustain us through adversity. Psychological science supports this intuition: it is possible to heal wounds, reconcile with our past, reshape limiting beliefs, and train the mind and heart to embrace joy independent of circumstances.

Yet, despite this striving for inner joy, our culture often obstructs this path. Advertising promises instant happiness: perfect cars, dream vacations, eternal youth in a bottle, giant televisions that attract crowds, perfumes that promise to transform identities. However, the highest rates of depression exist not in the poorest countries, but in those where these promises seem attainable. True joy cannot be purchased; it is cultivated within.

Here, the Gospel offers a powerful vision: Jesus of Nazareth taught that lasting joy lies not in self-sufficiency or accumulation, but in the Beatitudes—living open to God and others, finding meaning in suffering, and embracing justice, mercy, and humility. This joy is communion, not fleeting pleasure.

Educating with joy does not ignore suffering, but instills hope within it. God wants our lives to be full and joyful, yet suffering exists. We are given the ability to renew ourselves through giving and love.

This pedagogy of joy rests on two pillars of 21st-century education, as Jacques Delors noted: learning to be and learning to live together. Each person must be accompanied in discovering their purpose, talents, and role in transforming the world, and place in the

history of salvation. This privileged approach cultivates joyful, resilient hearts. Mother Marie Eugenie called this character education.

This enables joyful living amid adversity by developing virtues and skills—fortitude, patience, compassion, prudence, forgiveness—that serve as 'surfboards' for life's storms.

Christian pedagogy adds an irreplaceable element: spiritual experience. To do this, it is necessary to educate the interiority, that is, to teach emotional knowledge and management, silence, meditation, and, above all, to offer times and spaces for a personal encounter with God that allows access to a source of joy that saves, guides, and gives meaning.

These experiences are not escapism but a transformative impulse. When children, adolescents, or adults encounter the Love within, their interpretation of events changes. They discover a joy not dependent on success or the absence of problems, but on the certainty that they are loved and called to build a more humane, fraternal world.

Communicating jubilee means witnessing this deep joy, modeling another way of living, and fostering hope amid a culture that promises fleeting pleasures but gives no lasting joy. Educators must first experience joy themselves and transmit it in their lives. Only a heart on fire can ignite others.

Edu-communicating with joy means intentionally cultivating hope so that every classroom, family, and educational community becomes a space where transformative, Gospel-inspired joy is visible and lived daily. Thus, the Jubilee becomes a lasting reality—good news shared each day.

SISTER MERCEDES MÉNDEZ

Province of Spain

Original Spanish

Care, the meeting of two breaths!

“It transforms from within”

During a visit to the Montpellier community, I took part in a community meeting. The theme of one of them was my life experience as a nurse at Maison Jeanne Garnier. It's difficult for me to find the words to express what I live. So I decided to share, as I regularly do with the sisters in my community, some of my memorable experiences of care and encounters with patients, families and the nursing team or fellow caregivers.

At the end of my sharing, one of the sisters in the community summed up very well what I experience at Maison Jeanne Garnier. She spontaneously concluded the meeting by saying: 'It transforms from within'. Yes, that's it! It 'transforms from within' those who are confronted with the human reality of a person's end of life!

What's more, the wording used suggests that this transformation can also be read externally!

Starting with this 'shocking' little phrase, I wanted to explore a little deeper into what this inner transformation consists of, on the patient's side, on the side of the family or loved ones, and on the side of the carer. Here are a few personal reflections. I'll be speaking mainly as a carer and no doubt as a sister to all of you.

One of the theoretical foundations of caregiving is based on Virginia Henderson's pyramid of fourteen fundamental human needs. To be in good health, human beings must satisfy these fourteen needs. Each need has an impact on the others. The lack of satisfaction of one need reveals or leads to a health problem. This is where the carer comes in.

At the base of the pyramid is breathing. Normal, breath is given by God, according to Genesis! The spiritual dimension is at the top of the triangle, when all needs are met.

My little experience leads me to believe that when the body is altered, and this is the case during a serious illness, particularly for our patients at Maison Jeanne Garnier, the retained order of the fourteen needs changes. A new way of relating to oneself and to the world has to be found. The spiritual dimension,



which is inherent in every human being and expresses his or her deepest identity, uniqueness and integrity, then comes first in the scale of needs. In movement throughout life, this dynamism of Life (and we can speak of the breath of Life) will seek a new pace to find meaning in life as it is imposed by pathology. It's not unusual for this search to take place in a relationship...In my opinion, the relationship with oneself, with others (family, friends, carers) and with the All Other then becomes essential in the needs of life to find this new way of being, of living, of feeling.

Volunteer carers and chaplains are on the front line! But so is the carer! It is in the course of care that the relationship is forged and can enable this search for meaning.

Care takes many forms, and is not necessarily medical. This involves getting to know the patient and the relatives who accompany them when they arrive in the room, taking down their recent history, describing the environment, testing the equipment, offering to decorate the room so that a familiar world can be rebuilt...and reassuring them. This is a time to take care of, and it will set the tone for the rest of the stay.

Considering that the spiritual dimension (breath of Life) inhabits every being, and therefore the cared-for as well as the carer, what happens in their relationship?

The carer is invited, as a professional, to pay attention to all the patient's needs... and above all to this spiritual need that (re)surfaces in the life of the other person: this other person, confronted with an unprecedented situation of aggression from the illness, is invited to find a balance... to continue to live. The patient's spiritual journey will enable him to rediscover the meaning of his existence, a breath of fresh air that will keep him going until the end of his earthly life.

As a carer, I am called upon to identify where the patient is in his search for the breath of life, and then to join him in this search and accompany him. I'm called upon to take care not only of the needs of the physical body, but also of the spiritual journey being made by the other person. Sometimes the question of faith and God comes up.

Providing care in a professional way, using an appropriate and respectful posture, requires me not to shy away from my spiritual dimension, but to embrace it fully. It's a listening posture. It seems to me that the spiritual experience is a shared one. The patient's journey will take place to the extent that his or her own breath and my own breath come together. During the care, attentive and listening to the breath of Life, I allow the other person to express his or her own... I create the relational conditions of care that open up the possibility for the other person to name his or her breath and still make choices that are coherent with this Life that circulates despite everything. Not trying to do something, but being in communion in the search for meaning, here and now.

Treating spiritual suffering relies less on knowledge than on active, attentive listening. It is not so much a question of trying to explain, relieve, guide, advise or direct the person. It is about offering a quality of listening that attests to a quality of presence from which the person suffering can regain a certain self-confidence, redeploy and experience again that he exists as such, with his value and dignity preserved.

In other words, the professional accompaniment of spiritual suffering is really based on the inner posture, on the quality of being of the carer, which regenerates the patient's self-worth and "sense of being". This in turn nourishes the carer who provides support.

So yes, it transforms from the inside!

And it's worth it to be constantly invited to live at this level of my being. Yes, it's true, I'm shaken up and I let myself be shaken up. But it's so nourishing for my inner life, and it shows on the outside!

The Word of the Psalms, meditated on during the metro journey to Maison Jeanne Garnier in the morning, gives me words, thoughts, a strength that is imbued in me, and I can claim to be this Presence alongside my brothers and sisters in search of meaning and Life right to the end.

Accompanying spiritual suffering in this human way is the very heart and spirit of palliative care.

SISTER HÉLÈNE ROUGÉE

Province of France

Original French

assumption together

Each one of us has a mission on earth

The beginnings

The AT Community in India is diverse in many ways... Different states, languages, culture, traditions and its effects make the country a welcome space to spread the Word of God through the ways shown by our Foundress...

Over the years since the foundation of Assumptions Sisters in Pala, Kerala in October 17, 1968, the sisters' community has spread to Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Bihar and Assam with 13 centres, and addition of 157 lay members.

The AT Community has become more vibrant with the expansion to include all walks of society — religious (sisters), laity, Assumption Together, youth ministries, those handling educational institutes, social centres, AT projects and Assumption Mission Associates (AMA).

Through regular interactions, the community has strengthened its spirituality from the charism of Saint Mary Eugenie in her faith, vision, and dedication to transforming society through education rooted in Gospel values. The Covid pandemic opened many eyes to becoming living examples of God's discipleship.

The members have shared that the Way of Life has helped them overcome difficulties and face challenges after drawing strength from the presence of God in their lives.

The works

The AT community at the various centres are working in diverse fields consisting of children, youth, middle-aged couples and senior citizens. The members have local and regional gatherings. Plans are afoot to organise a national meeting in future.

The AT community in Kerala hold regular meetings, retreats, visit the elderly, help school students in teaching, assist in vocational training to youth, hold picnics and community gatherings. One of the AT members admitted that her resolve to pursue further education after marriage and becoming mother of two children was encouraged and supported by the sisters and lay friends of the Assumption.

The Jharkhand community helps the sisters in running an educational institute for the tribals and a social



Sisters Rekha, Marthe, Lerma and Sandra meet with the AT community of the Maharashtra region at De Nobili College in Ramwadi, Pune, on 3 August 2025.

project. The Sunday Eucharist is solemnised with the lay people taking the responsibility of celebrations every week. The sisters proudly state that the lay community is mostly managing the activities and works of the AT in the area.

The Bihar community holds regular meetings, pray before the Eucharist, share life experiences and carry out social works. The sisters of Maharashtra community run a residential school for tribal girls, a hostel for girls and social development projects. The AT members here hold monthly meetings, visit old age homes, organise pilgrimages, visit cemeteries on All Saints' and All Souls' Day, arrange meetings at the homes of members, get-togethers and actively participate in church activities.

The Assumption Sisters and lay community in Rajodi in Maharashtra celebrated the 25 years of the foundation of the Convent on July 20, 2025. Superior General Sister Rekha M Chennattu, Councilors Sister Marthe Ntuyumve from Rwanda and Sister Francoise Martin from France, India's Provincial Superior Sister Sherli Thomas, sisters of the congregation from Rajodi and Pune, AT members and parishioners attended the solemn mass celebrated by Vasai Bishop Thomas D'Souza and other priests. Vasai Bishop Thomas D'Souza released a souvenir book, covering 25 years of the Convent. Assumption sisters started the Rajodi foundation in the Jubilee Year 2000.

The Shastrinagar community is taking steps to form an Assumption Together Youth Group. To overcome the language barrier, an AT community is formed here for vernacular Marathi-speaking members that meet regularly. One of the members of AT Shastrinagar community, Mr Joseph Sakre, has penned, given music and sung a hymn dedicated to Saint Mother Mary Eugenie. The Shastrinagar community sings the hymn during their monthly meetings.

The Vithalwadi AT community was started on July 28 in 2013. Eight lay people took the Promise in December 2015. Over the years, the members have met regularly and developed a family bond.

The plans

Local, regional and national meetings provide an analysis of the works done over the years, its assessment, future plans and the steps to achieve it.

After attending the Assumption General Chapter 2024 organised in Paris from June 29 to July 28, 2024, I shared the experiences, projects and plans offline, through meetings, and online via videoconferencing with the AT communities of Kerala, Maharashtra, Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam.

One of the major steps taken was the launch of "AT India" WhatsApp group on the Happy Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 9 in 2024. Information of the Assumption Together Family across the country is shared on the social media platform.

We plan to prepare a directory of AT members with

information about their personal details, qualification, profession, location and vocation. Among our group are people from all walks of life — retired police official, senior scientist, former school principal, teacher, musician, professor, ex-government official, businessmen, entrepreneur, homemaker, social worker, politician and mediaperson.

After joining the AT...

Some of the members have accepted the increase of God's presence in their lives after joining the Assumption group.

By remaining anonymous, they have shared their thoughts...

"Prayer life has strengthened our faith, giving us patience, understanding, and time for others. AT has helped us remain grounded, accept weaknesses and work on strengths."

"My AT friends helped to cope with the painful loss of a family member."

"We share our difficulties, worries, seek suggestions and solutions and lift up our anxieties in prayer to God and St Marie Eugenie."

As sisters are engaged in the synodal journey, to live out the charism and spirituality of their founder, the lay community is also understanding and implementing the synodal vision of shared responsibility.

The assessment of a previous General Chapter states: "In our province as in the General Chapter, we have already had the enriching experience of being Assumption Together, of sharing friendship, prayer, spirituality and projects. Assumption Together has become a concrete reality."

I am taking small steps to strengthen this mission, involve more lay friends, better the communication between members, help each other in whichever way possible, deepen spiritual life, increase involvement in pastoral activities and become a good neighbour, living on the Word of God. Facilitating the environment for each AT member to have personal formation and discover personal mission as St Eugenie teaches: "Each one of us has a mission on earth".

M. JAMES MATHEW

Leader of Assumption Together
Province of India
Original English

communication

The Brand: Our Identity as an Apostolic Body on Mission

How are we communicating the Good News? How do we convey the message, rooted in the Gospel, so that it is perceived with authenticity, credibility, and hope?

I. The Apostolic Brand: Vocation and Essence

We are living in an era of unprecedented digital transformation. In this context, the apostolic brand becomes a coherent expression of our identity in Christ and our commitment to building the Kingdom (Congregation of Religious of the Assumption. 2020. Communication plan).

As our Superior General, Rekha Chennattu (2023), stated, communication is not 'merely at the service of the mission; it is an integral part of our being or our nature.' The brand, therefore, is a manifestation of our vocation and mission itself.

Understanding the Brand: Branding in the History of the Church

To understand the apostolic brand, it is important to understand the concept of branding. Pablo Pájez (2025) explains that the Church needs branding and, in fact, was a pioneer in practising it. This is demonstrated by the simple and profound symbols of the early Christians, such as the fish (ichthys), the cross and the anchor. These symbols were used to represent the community, define it, and communicate the important message behind the Resurrection.

From this perspective of strategic communication, it is essential to distinguish the two key concepts that shape this process:

- **Brand:** This is the intangible perception that the audience has of the institution: what they think, feel and remember of it.
- **Branding:** This is the strategic process of building and managing the brand (with its symbols and messages) in order to shape that perception in a manner consistent with the identity.

It is crucial to understand that the fundamental aspect of our institutions continues to be evangelical life and consistency in our witness. The brand, however, becomes the tool that enables us to make ourselves visible and communicate the message of the Gospel effectively. For our congregation, branding represents an act of spiritual stewardship.

II. Charism in Action: The Strategic Importance of Consistency

The importance of branding lies in its ability to make our charism visible and understandable to a diverse world, ensuring that our mission to extend the Kingdom

of God is fulfilled with vigour. For our brand to become an effective missionary tool consistent with the identity of the Assumption, it is essential to address three fundamental aspects that define our presence in the world: the vision of the Kingdom that drives us, the consistent management of our symbols, and adherence to the transcendent values of the Gospel.

i) The Brand as a Vision of the Kingdom: 'Adveniat Regnum Tuum'

The heart of the Assumption mission and the essence of our brand is the motto of Saint Marie Eugenie: 'Adveniat Regnum Tuum' - 'Thy Kingdom Come'.

This phrase is an apostolic programme that demands that our whole being be directed towards that one goal. Mother Marie Eugenie herself (1873) evoked in this motto 'something ardent, militant' that characterises zeal for the Church. Our brand is the visible face of that ardour and militancy in the new digital Areopagus (Hill of Ares).

The coherence of the brand is precisely the strategic effort to ensure that the external perception of the Congregation (Brand) reflects this internal vocation (Adveniat Regnum Tuum).

ii) Visual and Digital Coherence

The branding process is an attempt to summarise and make visible our apostolic identity and the seriousness with which we take on the prophetic mission in the digital sphere.

Visual Elements: Our visual elements, the logo (cross, star, boat) and corporate colours, are symbols that embody the charism.

Apostolic Strategy: The 2024 Chapter Document urges us towards Digital Transformation (Congregation of Religious of the Assumption. Chapter document 2024), and the unified brand is the tool for articulating this mission and being 'active missionaries' in a coordinated way.

As Pajez (2025) points out, visual consistency is essential because 'brand inconsistency can convey a sense of disunity, even if the internal reality is different.'

iii) Transcendental Values: Truth, Goodness and Beauty

Our brand must be guided by the values that arise from Jesus Christ, the true Light, which ensures that our communication is constructive, authentic and hopeful:

- **Truth:** For Saint Marie Eugénie, truth is anchored in faith and love for the word of God (Milleret, 1878). Our brand must be a beacon of authenticity that

communicates the 'Truth that sets us free: the message of the Gospel' (Congregation of Religious of the Assumption 2020. Communication Plan), cementing our apostolic credibility.

- **Goodness (Charity):** Goodness is the fundamental trait of God, His 'infinite goodness' (Milleret, 1879). Goodness requires 'disarming communication' (Francis, 2025) and using it to build communion, ensuring that our brand conveys hope and not aggression.
- **Beauty:** Beauty is the harmony and attraction of a life that imitates Christ, achieved by taking the Gospel as the rule of 'our thoughts, our words, our actions' (Milleret, 1873). Our brand must be attractive and professional, reflecting the dignity and transcendence of the Kingdom.

These three aspects: vision, digital consistency and values, demonstrate that branding is not merely an advertising gimmick, but an incarnational evangelism strategy. Every element, from the logo to the tone of the message, becomes an instrument that reflects the mission of the Assumption. It is at the confluence of spiritual identity and strategic management that charism becomes visible and resonant in today's world.

III. Conclusion: The Brand as a Witness to the Kingdom

Having analysed the essence of the brand and its strategic components, the final question is crucial: What mark do we leave on the hearts of those who encounter us? Our brand as religious of the Assumption is much more than a communication strategy; it is the visible embodiment of our charism in the digital world. In a context where images are devoid of meaning and words lose their weight, our coherence becomes the most eloquent language, ensuring that the mark we leave is one of spiritual authenticity and hope.

The real challenge is not to master the latest digital

platforms, but to keep alive the gaze fixed on Christ that characterised Saint Marie Eugenie. Every post, every image, every interaction on social media must breathe that 'ardent and militant spirit' that defines our zeal for the Kingdom. Technology changes, but the essence of our message remains: 'Adveniat Regnum Tuum'.

In the face of a culture of waste and superficiality, we are called to be artisans of encounter in the digital world. This means:

- Prioritising depth over superficiality
- Seeking truth amid misinformation
- Practising kindness where aggression abounds
- Offering beauty where the ephemeral predominates

Our brand, in short, is the inculturated face of the Assumption in the digital world. It does not require technology experts, but women whose hearts burn for the Kingdom and who know how to transmit that fire with the means of our time. This is not an optional task, but an essential dimension of our prophetic mission in the 21st century.

May Saint Marie Eugénie, whose gaze never strayed from Jesus Christ, inspire us to be in the digital world what we are called to be: credible witnesses of the Risen One and tireless builders of his Kingdom.

INGRID AZUCENA POJOY YOCUTÉ
Province of Central America and Cuba
Original Spanish





Direct their flight, but don't clip their wings



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