

Summary of educative transformation experiences published on assumpta.fr

November 2010 – December 2012

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)



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December 2010

Making Pastoral in the School from being a School in Pastoral

Hacer pastoral en la escuela
o construir una escuela en pastoral



For over a year, the pastoral teams of México's three schools, Aguilas, Querétaro and Carrasco,- around 20 persons (secular or lay persons) and religious,- have meet periodically with the objective of unifying our pastoral work and search for a way that can deeply touch lives and contexts where we have a presence.

The process, marked by reflection, interiorizing and work, was making clear for us that in order to achieve a stronger impact from the Gospel, both in our students as well as in our teachers, parents and all the educative community, we should exceed pastoral work from only the pastoral teams, dare to break the limits in which sometimes we have locked pastoral actions , in order to go out and let in... Look from new perspectives and believe again that we can find a concrete path in which each person inside the educative project might feel and live as a pastoral agent from its own specific role, or task.

Little by little, with help from other reflections about educative pastoral, that have been done by people from some Latin American countries, we have identified the difference between making pastoral in the school from being a school in pastoral. With a great deal of joy, we have once again acknowledge (recognize) that Ma. Eugenia's educative vision has from it's deepest roots, elements to integrate, unify and link what might be fragmented or dismantled as a result of the dynamic which presently defines the society we live in, but also as a result of the limitations and (inertia) in which we let ourselves be absorbed in.

To let know Jesus Christ, to extend his Kingdom, to allow Gospel to penetrate all the lives, personal and social spaces, has been the identity that we have inherited. To build "schools in pastoral" can be a mean that might enlighten us today and enhance us to reorganize our activities in one only action "pedagogical-pastoral" that would embrace us all and allow faith, culture and life to bind in only one wisdom, so it might move us towards the transformation of persons and society.



Meche Escobedo
Coordinación de la Pastoral
México

EDUCATING IS LIBERATING AND TRANSFORMING!

EXPERIENCE OF TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN THE MAYA ASSUMPTION CENTRE OF, SAN LUIS PETÉN, GUATEMALA...

The Maya Assumption Centre of Education is located in the municipality of San Luis, Petén, Guatemala, Central America. Our municipality has 109 villages, mostly indigenous Mayan Q'eqchi ', 90% speak that language in the rural area, 10% consists of migrants from other parts of the country among Mayan: Quiche, Pokoman, Achi , Pocomchí and speak Spanish. The process of research and reflection to create the centre began in 1992, with the concern of Q'eqchi catechists 'who wanted a training centre for their young daughters between 12 and 23 who had not been able to study.

At that time, the department of Petén was mostly jungle, forgotten by the government with its minimum health care and education among other pressing issues.



Indigenous women were the most marginalized among the marginalized. We choose the name of MAYA ASSUMPTION CENTRE, and the motto, At ixq waklin ("Women Arise"), inspired by the mystery of Mary of Assumption. She invites Mayan women to raise their dignity.

On May 28, 1995, the first group of young females arrived for technical, academic, and manual studies in makeshift spaces in the midst of the construction of permanent facilities. The first of many volunteers to MAC came to the centre to work voluntarily for one year in the field of training of young women. In 2007, the year of the canonization of Sister Maria Eugenia de Jesús we opened the School of Management of the Centre and its services to the youth population in the municipality of San Luis.

With this project, we managed to reach youth from other Christian religions and other cultures. It has been an area of co-existence between different cultures and religions in the area, strengthening dialogue, fellowship, and family spirit. In 2010, the Centre fulfilled 15 years of operation, and during this time, many young female alumnae of the Centre have realised their dreams. They have achieved the positions of teachers, accountants, nurses, and administrators. These alumnae are currently socially and critical conscious leaders of organized women's groups in their own communities. Students and alumnae are transformative elements in their families, their communities, even in its small range. The impact of education based on Gospel values in the pedagogy of hope raises closeness of men and women capable of living in dispute.

The Centre promotes an environment of co-existence and harmony among young people of different ethnicities, religion (Catholic and Protestant), ages, and cultures. It begins with respect for everyone; the name of JPICS is foundation of our education, beginning in training and orientating attitudes and values.

We are convinced that improving community values and co-habitation can be realised through the transforming power of education. Training is our daily passion with which we attempt to promote it. We evaluated the importance of working with others (no matter the religion or ethnicity).

We are aware that we must take every day's commitment from our mission to serve as educators

This has strengthened the ability to commit ourselves to the reality that faith has promoted liberation, embodied in education.



Una Nueva Evangelización a través de una educación evangelizadora.



Our call is still in the midst of diversifying through the experience of a family spirit, trust, freedom, and the capacity for empathy to see, hear, feel, love, and encourage the personal initiative of young people. With this challenge, we help them realise how to discover their vocation to commit themselves in the transformation of society.



Ethel Saavedra r.a.

March 2011

Seeds of Life Garden

A Community in Partnership with the Religious of the Assumption

I begin with the earth herself. We engaged in a process of reclaiming and replenishing land adjacent to our Assumption Center. Land which, after years of neglect, had become very hard, dry, compact – and rocky. Our work involved many hands over many weeks. After laying out our plots, we began the difficult task of digging and carrying away buckets of rock.

Next came sifting out the smaller stones, broken glass and debris. To replenish the soil, we used a combination of composts: “community compost” from the sisters’ compost pile, under the patronage of Sr. Mary Ann; “city compost” from our friends at the Regional Environmental Center; and “cowpost” from our pilgrimage with Fr. Aidan, A.A. to Roger’s Dairy Farm. The result: dirt was transformed into soil capable of holding moisture and supporting life. And, through this process of rebuilding the soil, then planting, caring for, harvesting and sharing the bounty, individuals became community. The work of the garden was boundary shattering – it provided a bridge to cross what can be experienced as chasm of class, culture and language.

The best examples of this individual transformation can be seen in our Garden Blessing. We were seeking closure: the work was done, but we didn’t want to just slip apart. We were looking for recognition of all the hard work, the food shared, the community we had become. And we wanted to find a way to ritually give thanks to the earth for her gifts and to our God.

And so, on Oct. 23 we gathered at our Assumption Center. We were: the sisters of the Worcester Community; Fr. Aidan, our garden guru; Guadalupe and Guillermina Dominguez and their children, members of our immigrant families; Kristen Penkala, Coordinator of Assumption Center; Ann & Steve Kaune, old friends but new to the garden. Circling our plots, Fr. Aidan, typically dressed in gardening clothes, led us in prayer; Sr.



Nuala, in song. As a sign of hope, we each planted a clove of garlic... as a sign of our stewardship, Fr. Aidan led the children in “putting our dear and gentle garden to bed for the winter” by covering it with straw.

Then, we all went inside for a shared meal: I provided Butternut Squash soup, made with squash and herbs from the garden; Guadalupe made Flautas; Guillermina made Mole; the Kaunes, dessert. In that very simple setting, folding tables and plastic tablecloths, I saw a real cross section of Worcester, of America. We represented diverse backgrounds, professions, languages, and levels of education – gathered at the table as equals.

What was especially beautiful for me to see was Guillermina, a Mexican immigrant who can be shy, insecure about her language skills. I saw her

physically leaning into the conversation, listening and following. Not just answering questions, but really engaged and telling her stories. I felt the truth of the words of our Rule of Life: the Kingdom of God is present now.

I want to quickly include the role of the Regional Environmental Center. They are an organization in Worcester, MA working for environmental and food justice. They provide material aid in the form of compost and seedlings as well as technical support. However, they also provide a broader perspective to our garden work by plugging us into a network of community gardeners who not only share similar challenges but also have a passion for social justice. The R.E.C. helps us to think globally and act locally.



And that brings me to... myself. This work in this garden – alone or with others – has challenged me to dig deeper; to turn over and sift through my own rocky soil; to allow myself to be both pruned and replenished. Borders and boundaries within myself – narrow definitions of sacred space and prayer – continue to be broken down.

I would very much welcome any questions, suggestions or stories of similar experiences.

Sr.Catherine Anne Soley, R.A.
Worcester Community



April 2011

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION IN THE RA GIRLS BOARDING IN AMBATT

INDIA

Transformative education, today as it was for M. Marie Eugénie and our first Sisters is realized through simple daily actions full of Assumption spirit. Our Ambatta Sisters tell us about their daily experience: attentive presence, accompaniment which gives direction to attitudes and relations.



We the sisters from the Ambatta community of Assumption are happy to share with you our experience of educating the girls in our boarding for transformation. Our boarding was started during 1985 in collaboration with the Jesuit fathers, to impart educational opportunity for the tribal girls of Surgana Taluka in Nasik, Maharashtra.

At the beginning we had very little infrastructure and facilities and we could accommodate only few girls. The parents also were not much motivated to send their daughters to schools since they are helping hands for their agriculture activities while the boys were always given preference for getting education. Through constant visit to the families we managed to convince

the parents about the importance of education for the girls. As a result today we have more girls than boys studying the 10th (final grade) class in our school. The ratio of girls getting educated is increasing year after year. Education of the girls has slowly become a priority. This is a positive change that is happening among the people in Surgana taluka.

Today we have 187 girls in our boarding from the age group of 10 to 16. These girls are with us for 3 to 6 years. During these years we try to know each girl and their social background by visiting their families and villages. We have periodic meetings with their parents. This helps us to know each child personally and guide them according to their aptitude and personality.

Our boarding is in the same campus of the Jesuit school and boys boarding. We live as a large family sharing with the Jesuits a common vision and mission of promoting the integral development of each child. So the education we are giving is aimed at building character, and developing a value based life and human skills. We are trying to inculcate values of straightforwardness, honesty, simplicity, and respect for others, hospitality, ability to forgive and accept forgiveness.

This gives the students freedom and spontaneity to express themselves as they are and how they feel about things. Recently there was a quarrel between 2 students and the junior student slapped the senior girl. She felt humiliated before all the students. She reported the matter to one of the sisters with an appeal that no action be taken on the girl who assaulted her since she is at wrong. The junior also came to the scene and apologized for her mistake and both of them went back hand in hand.





In the boarding the students are given different responsibilities to grow in leadership and to become responsible persons for themselves, their families and society. The different tasks allocated to different groups perform their duties with care and responsibility under the guidance of sisters. Recently we had organized a science exhibition in our campus and 82 schools have taken part in the exhibition. Being the host our students were given the different responsibilities to render service to the guest schools to make them at home.

All those who came for the exhibition were pleasantly surprised to see the way our children carried out the different responsibilities entrusted to them. Many of the teachers and educational officials appreciated us saying “your students are very cheerful, responsible, well behaved and highly disciplined.” It made us happy and proud to see the transformation that is taking place in their life which they manifest as the situation and need arises.

For the intellectual and human development we help them to develop wider knowledge of the world and encourage their creativity. We insist the students to dream high which in turn help them to think and act creatively. The students are provided with good library to read different books, news papers and share their learning in the groups. To improve their capacity for reflection and critical thinking we organize debates on different issues like child marriage, dowry system and various different problems the women are facing the society. We motivate the cleverer students to help the weaker ones. The students are encouraged to save little amount of money from what they have in order to help a poor student to help someone in need of medical assistance. This is to help the students to develop social responsibility and sharing with those who are more deprived than themselves.

Transforming relationships is a key to personality development. The campus offers healthy, respectable and concerned interaction among the boys and girls living in the same campus. The various cultural activities and works jointly done are helping them to grow in maturity.

Though the students are animists they have a great sense of God. We help them to discover the seeds of God’s Word already present in them and in their culture. They have their daily prayers and reading of the life of Indian saints. We help them to discover the intervention of God in their life in various situations and in the joyful and painful events.

As a whole when we look at the education we are imparting to the students in Ambatta we feel lots of satisfaction and joy. We see the students are growing up as good human beings, responsible, disciplined, well behaved with good value system and skills and talents, ready to face life with courage. They are radiating a positive energy in the campus.



Sr. Deepa Erupulumkattil r.a.

ASAMBLEA PASTORAL EDUCATIVA EXTRA-ESCOLAR

SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR-

On May 6th, 7th and 8th we participated in the **Extra-School Educative Pastoral Conference** (Insertion Effort and social projection) at the "Maria Eugenia" Retirement House in *Los Planes de Renderos*, El Salvador.

There we met with Secular people and Sisters from the Central American countries and Cuba to deepen and continue the process of Pastoral Planification initiated by the Province and to define the way we want to follow at a Province level as Extra-School Educative Pastoral.

There were three days of personal and community exercise about the three Stages of knowledge in the Pastoral planning process to help deepen in our educative job:

-Perceptive stage: we share the difficulties, dares and challenges that are created by our Pastoral actions in every of our particular realities.

-Analytical stage: the demand for a personal Conversion and a listen attitude from our Hearts

-Planning stage: the reflection about the participative planning process and the different Pastoral pedagogies that we are putting in action along with Jesus pedagogy.

The dialog and share spin about what characteristics of these Pedagogies are living in our Pastoral actions, emphasizing on the more important characteristics of **Jesus Pedagogy**, given chances to questions our own Personal life and our own Pastoral actions

WHAT ELEMENTS OF pastoral pedagogy and JESUS pedagogy
CAN NOT MISS IN OUR MODEL OF MINISTRY?

Here are some conclusions we reached:



A Pastoral Action announcing the centrality of the Kingdom, that is the fruit of contemplation, and draw up a personal encounter with God that has to be lived as a vocation, has to be inclusive, liberating and prophetic, accompanying processes that lead to personal and social transformation, which has to have a clear option for the poor and excluded, has to be critical and reflective, forming disciples and missionaries committed as God's church.

We were reminded of the importance of good planning in the area of Resource Management for the support of our work, as a joint responsibility. We conclude with some shared challenges: managing the property we receive to better serve conscientiously and responsibly, working to make the community members develop their potential and value their contribution, and to strengthen teamwork and community.

We are invited as laity and sisters to continue making way in Extra-Scholar Pastoral to strengthen the Pastoral Planning process as a province in the different works of insertion, from a journey of conversion, responsibility and training for making this the Kingdom of God wherever we are, in the reality we are living.

This meeting to share experiences help each other in a fraternal and convivial family, reinforced Assumption family to come back with encouragement and hope to our places.

Hna Ethel Saavedra r.a.
Comunidad de San Luis, Petén (Guatemala)

August 2011

Transformative Education in Kensington: Samuel Groups

"Each one of us has a mission here on earth" (MME)

In the past three years the Kensington community of the Religious of the Assumption has hosted two Samuel Groups [discernment groups for young adults]. We have been delighted with the way in which these have provided a pathway for young adults to move forward in their vocational journeys.

Believing that fostering the personal vocation is the heart of Christian education, we view these discernment groups as a **concrete expression of transformative education**. The aim is to allow the Word of God to speak to a young person's concrete life situation and their decision making; the groups simply facilitate the transforming work of the Spirit.

Intro to Samuel Groups

Samuel Groups were begun by Cardinal Martini in Italy in 1989. Each year he brought together about 200 young people (aged 17-25) in his diocese for monthly meetings on Sunday afternoons [4-9pm]. They were divided into groups of the same 7 or 8 people for group sharing, and had 2 sessions of Lectio Divina, as well as instruction and Eucharistic Adoration.

In Kensington we have adapted this format to a smaller setting and raised the age range of participants to 18-30s. In the first group there were 10 participants initially [8 remained], and in the second group 19 participants initially [15 remained].

The main aim of Samuel Groups is to help the participants to discern using the Word of God. Ideally the group will enable participants to discern their state in life, although some may be considering a career change or study choice. The slogan we have used in Kensington is "for young adults who are open to listening to the Word of God and putting it into action in their lives."



Methodology

1/ Timetable

The group meets once a month on a Sunday afternoon for 3 hours, over a period of 6 months (We are aware that a longer process, EG. 8 or 9 months, would be preferable.)

2.30pm: Arrivals & refreshments

2.45pm – 3.45pm: Lectio, including 20-30 minutes of personal prayer

4pm: Speaker and question time

5pm: End with evening prayer with the community

2/ Lectio divina and deepening prayer life

Introduction to Lectio divina and having a time of guided lectio at each meeting is at the heart of Samuel Groups.

When asked what they would like from the group, as well as specific questions about their life that they would like to address in prayer, many of the participants express a desire to learn how to pray. Individual spiritual guidance, the practical experience of lectio at the group and speakers on aspects of prayer all help the young adults to deepen their prayer life.

3/ A set period of time over which a specific question is to be addressed in prayer

On their application forms we ask the young adults to write what question[s] they would like to bring before the Lord during the time of the group. Some are very specific, for example about discerning if they are called to priesthood or religious life or if they should change career. Others, particularly from the younger participants, are less specific but express a real desire to grow in their relationship with God. We ask the participants to share these with the group at the first meeting, and then to discuss in more depth with their spiritual guides.



4/ Speakers

We have had a variety of speakers on different vocations, as well as on themes like silence, prayer and decision making. We are aware that the time for questions and discussion after/during the input is extremely beneficial.

5/ Collaboration

We have run the groups in conjunction with the Carmelite Fathers who serve our Parish Church. Each group was led by a Religious of the Assumption and a Carmelite priest. Religious from 10 different congregations have helped by providing spiritual guidance for the participants, and other lay people, priests and religious have come to speak to the group.

Having this wide variety of people facilitating the groups not only offers a rich representation of the diversity of ways in which Christians can live out their calling, but it also makes it clear to the participants that the Samuel Group is not aiming to gather recruits to a particular state in life [or to a particular religious congregation] but is centred upon their own personal discernment.

6/ Commitment

An integral part of the methodology of Samuel Groups is the commitment made by the young adults. We ask that they commit to attending the monthly meetings and to meeting with a spiritual guide to discuss their personal vocation journey once a month.

This level of commitment is often very hard for the young adults, who have many competing demands on their time and who are often used to being able to opt in and out of activities. On average 1 in each 4 or 5 participants hasn't completed the programme for a variety of reasons.

7/ Peer support and encouragement

One of the most valuable aspects of the group has been the peer support amongst the group, the friendships that have formed and the sharing at a deep level that takes place.

8/ Renunciation – creating space for God to speak

Influenced by Cardinal Martini's stress on minimizing the amount of TV watched to an absolute minimum, we suggested to participants that as a sign of their commitment to the Samuel group process they decide upon some form of renunciation during this time, ideally one which would create more space in their lives [EG. less internet use, or less TV].

Good practice being imitated

Not only has the methodology of Samuel Groups proved to be very successful with young adults, but there is a growing recognition among priests and religious that the methods used are a valuable way of helping young adults to discern. Several religious of different congregations are now interested in setting up groups in their own localities.

Sr. Cathy r.a has been running the groups in Kensington with Carmelite priests and from September 2011 will be working for the National Office of Vocation for the Conference of Bishops of England and Wales as Religious Life Promoter. One of her remits is to encourage the growth of discernment groups like Samuel Groups.

Sr. Clare Bernadette r.a. is planning to run a Samuel Group in Oxford, along with a De la Salle brother.

For more information about Samuel Groups and resources for running Samuel Groups:

<http://www.assumptionreligious.org/index.php?page=samuel-events>

Sister Cathy r.a.
Kensington



November 2011

ASSUMPTION EDUCATION TRANSFORMED LIVES

by Sr. Nancy Nyawira

In Kenya, confronted with the grave problems, like the drought and the inflation and price rise of the essential goods that aggravate the food insecurity, the sisters of the Assumption work with the most underprivileged. Their Transformative Education connect the integral human formation to the micro-production.

November 2011

The Assumption sisters initiated a project to make a difference to the families at Kawangware in Nairobi (Kenya). The idea behind the project was to educate, empower and develop the talents of young women in the slums who hopefully will be a light in their own spheres to transform them. The opportunity of being close to the poor has been a blessing and grace in achieving this educational goal. Kawangware is one of the biggest slums in Nairobi that has grown so fast since early year 2000. The sisters' convent is surrounded by slums. In a research we made, we came up with possible educational approaches:



- Accompany families
- Sessions on Self esteem & self awareness/empowerment
- Communication Skills
- Human rights and God's rights/Justice & peace
- Weaving project

We finally decided to initiate a weaving project for women that would incorporate the rest of the educational approaches we felt would facilitate in changing the moral life of the people in the slums. This project has gradually been taking root. Since 6th of April 2009 to 3rd December 2010, we have received three groups of trainees. The name of the group is **"Uwezo Ninao Weavers"**. A swahili phrase which means "I-have-the-ability Weavers". This name was given to the centre by the second group after a discussion. The selection of the trainees for the first and second groups was done through interviews. Only two out of each group persevered to the end and acquired skills to weave several things.

The intake of the third group was announced in the parish church and the success of this group was due to:

- Daily attendance at training classes, Monday to Friday
- Strong will power for a better personal and family life
- Display of some of the products during the announcements in the parish
- Gradual realization of the women that they are capable and do have potential.

Within a period of two weeks the women were full of excitement to see what their own hands had made. Each one was amazed to see how the floor mats with different patterns came about. Each trainee kept the floor mat she had made as a souvenir of the work of her own hands. As they progressed to making table mats, kikoy, fabric dyeing and screen printing, they grew in self esteem and confidence. A sense of belonging to the group and self appreciation also developed in them. They were no longer strangers to one another but had formed a family and worked as a team. The absence of one of the members was a concern for all and this ended in a sharing of their family struggles. This opened a kind of informal education through the sharing of their lived experiences as they did the weaving. It is amazing to see how such sharing built trust among them and gave them new ways of looking at family issues, greater self respect and a deep desire to change for the better. The group **“Uwezo Ninao Weavers”** lived up to its name.



On 3rd December 2010, two trainees of the first group, two from the second group joined the seven of the third group, eleven in all for a ceremony during which they received certificates of confirmation of their weaving training. It was a high moment of their life. The women expressed their joy singing, dancing kissing their certificates, patting themselves, etc. Their remarks speak of hope for a new life:

- *“I was delighted to work in such a group”*
- *“I was stressed for a long time but now I am happy to have met friends who have healed me”*
- *“This project is a God-given gift for women”*
- *“The group and the sisters have changed my life to be a better woman and mother”*
- *“True acceptance by my companions made me change step by step for the better”*



Transformative education is possible in our small spheres and is a true empowerment for many. One of these women exclaimed *“We did not only receive the training, but we were healed in many ways.”* It also broadened their minds. We brought them to meet with other women’s groups on occasions like Women’s Day, exhibitions, etc. were they interacted with others and learned from them.



December 2011

Knitting Friendships in the United States



Our knitting circle began a year ago in Assumption Center, located in a lower middle class neighborhood of Worcester, Massachusetts, USA. Its original impetus came from the need of families on the Border between the U.S. and Mexico, where our Sisters live in Chaparral, New Mexico. Although most winter days the sun is warm in Chaparral, winter nights are cold and windy.

We put a notice in the parish bulletin of St. Peter's (where our AMA's work) asking for volunteers to knit or crochet items for the families in Chaparral. The result was the knitting circle. It meets weekly for two hours at the Center. We

have about 10 members who come regularly, and also some members who knit at home and bring their work in.

When I think of the educational values of this small group, I do think that it is working its own transformation of its members.

The women are discovering more and more about life on the Border through the messages and photos received on the Internet. What a joy to see the scarf I knitted on the neck of a teen-ager in Chaparral! What a pleasure to read an account of how the knitted things were distributed to the children!

I think this exchange does put a human face on the whole question of immigration. It's no longer simply political and theoretical but it is personal...this child...that mother...that family...

Another transformation is that some of the families of Main South who are struggling themselves have given their winter gifts to help others in the Southwest. Women who are themselves newly arrived in this country are knitting for their compatriots across the Border.

The knitting group also provides community, friendship and support in an inter-generational and inter-cultural way. Its members are retired women, college students, working mothers and grand-mothers from different parts of the city of Worcester. All are welcome to come and add to making our motto come true: From Warm Hearts to Warm Hands!

Sr. Therese Margaret Duross, R.A.

Worcester Community



February 2012

Social Service

as an experience of transformation of reality

As a community, having an active presence on the grounds of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation and Solidarity
General Chapter 2006, 1st Orientation JPICS

At Instituto Asunción de México the sense and finality of education is *the transformation of reality based on the Gospel values*. Today, before so many situations that our country and the world are living, this *transforming education* becomes for us an urgency that cannot be postponed.

Février 2012

Reference framework

In Mexico, lay and religious have reflected during the last years in order to re-define our understanding of the Charisma and be able to express it in a unified way. We have called it "*The Identity Criteria of the Pedagogical-Pastoral Model – Asunción Mexico*":

- *Christening of Intelligences
- *Character formation
- *Develop the personal vocation with a community sense
- *Seek to make community
- *Justice, Peace, Respect for Creation and Solidarity
- *Know and love the Church

These action lines orientate today the educational project of our Province, conferring unity and strength to the educational action of Asunción México.



Education in the Social Sense, as a process

At Instituto Asunción México *the process of motivation* towards our social reality and the commitment to act accordingly, is already present in the *academic subjects*.

In addition, it is covered, *from the point of view of faith*, in the spaces dedicated to catechesis (workshops and retreats) and *is experienced* in the different options with social sense that we offer from Pre-School to Middle School (visits once or twice a year to institutions that work with: Down children, brain paralysis, homeless people, day care for hawkers' children, prostitutes, etc.)

Social service in CCH (High school)

In CCH (High school, 16 – 18 years old) the idea is to have students *make a careful study of their experience* of encounter and commitment with poverty and marginalization realities of our country so that they can *integrate it to their life project* and thus be *transforming agents* in México.



In this way, they participate in the construction of a society which will be fairer, more jointly liable, more fraternal and more concerned about nature care.

The students carry out a Social Service two hours a week during their 3 years of study, in one of the 20 institutions with which we have made agreements. The Services can be grouped as follows:

- Elementary school and Middle school for adults,
- Catechesis,
- Work with people with some mental disability,
- Old people homes,
- Pregnant women in a situation of social risk,
- Supporting children with homework
- Tutoring council for youngsters.

In this process, the Social Service coordinators (currently 22) play an important role. They accompany the students in order to help them deepen the encounter with *the different one*. In revision and evaluation moments, they help them express their feelings, attitudes and reflections, and process what they are living with a sense. Thus we manage to make the learning process something meaningful and transcendent in the kids' lives.

In order to favor a profound impact, we also have the space of catechesis, in which this experience is illuminated from the point of view of the project of Jesus.

We are conscious that the transformations that we perceive follow a *slow process* (cfr Pre-Chapter document Transforming Education), and that some of the changes cannot be touched or measured on the short term... but we have the conviction that the Social Service *is transforming* the world and building the Kingdom of God in México...

Some examples of Social Service sites are:

HORNOS –

A popular quarter some blocks away from our school. It is placed in a ravine. In that place there used to be a brick factory where some families that had emigrated there used to work. Presently, it is a quarter with high levels of social marginalization.

Our students have been going there for more than 11 years, accompanied by the coordinators, two alumnae and mothers of current students in our school.

They give support to children with their homework; they organize games for them and visit some elder women who live alone, talking and listening to them, watching their soap operas with them, washing up for them or helping them fold their clothing. The small transformations are expressed simply in their own words:

"The happiness I brought to that girl made me happy". Jimena - 4th grade

"Doña Carmen, who is 75 years old, taught me how to listen and how to think twice before talking, She also taught me that saying "I can't" is not a good thought if you truly want to be a happy person". Ana – 4th grade

"Lupita is an amazing lady with too many virtues and also very intelligent, who moved me deeply, opened my eyes to many things and managed to teach me so much that I feel really thankful. Lupita will always be a model to follow for me." Fernando – 5th grade

LA IGLESIA DE PIEDRA –

This is the Parish that our school belongs to. There, alphabetization classes are given for Elementary and Middle School studies. The users are adults who have emigrated from the country to the city in search of a job, or young people who have not finished their studies due to marginalization, parents' abandoning, addictions, etc. These people come in

search of a Certificate of studies in order to get a job, or simply for the sake or dignity of having finished a level of studies. The students express their experience as follows:

"I felt so proud when I discovered that all the people I prepared for Maths had passed their exam. I felt as if I were the one who had been promoted." Mario – 5th grade

"Every time I explained something to Mrs Rosita and she could actually understand me, I could improve my level of patience and I further developed the ability to explain things." Alejandra – 5th grade

"What else can I do for them?" Ricardo – 6th grade

"You become one of them, you talk and listen to them, you help them change and they help you change; it is a relationship where we both learn and we both grow." Pablo – 6th grade

FROM YOUNGSTER TO YOUNGSTER

Another group carries out their Social Service in the Community for Adolescents in Conflict with Law. Around 400 young people, between 14 and 23 years old, are interns there. Our students have helped them with reading and text analysis; they have organized communication techniques with the kids who are about to be released and they have also organized fun activities like table games, etc. Some quotes that express their experience:

"Why don't we all have the same opportunities?" Mariano – 5th grade

"How can we create social conscience in respect to the fact that our reality is a product of corruption from the upper level as well as the lower?" Nicole – 5th grade

"I keep on thinking of the responsibility of having liberty." Marce – 5th grade

"How can we generate hope and share light within our reality?" Pao – 6th grade

Little by little, prejudices are hurled down in the process:

"The first day I was quite scared, on the way I discovered kids who were very similar to me but with a different social situation" Alex – 5th grade

"Finding so much similarity between us and them and discovering that we are almost identical, definitely marked a change in my way of perceiving people who have committed a mistake, it helped me separate the action from the person's worth." Pao – 6th grade

Also, the students experience that they can make the change happen and that they can be transformation agents:

"I left my bubble and have been struck by other realities in my country. The social service..., working for my ideal world, contributing the little I can." Paulina – 6th grade

"Social Service is the moment when I feel more connected to life. It is giving what is most sincere in you and receiving what is most sincere in others in order to make a positive change, a transformation of moral sense." Payo – 6th grade

Conclusion

"By changing our way of looking at others, we start transforming reality".

The transformation that we have seen in our students is constant, we believe this will allow them to build life projects and professional options that will create a different world.





This starts in the way one sees others. The students pass from a prejudiced or indifferent glance to another one that sees the other one as a human being like them. Someone that can enjoy, dream, fall in love, cry; someone who struggles in the same way, who has the same dignity and the same rights.

This takes them to questioning themselves about what they can do for the world to be different, a world which has more justice and is more humanized for everyone.



Elsa Vázquez Pérez
Coordinadora de Servicio Social
Instituto Asunción de México

Assumption- Passi- where faith is dynamic and transformative education is concretely lived...



Passi, a progressive agro- industrial town boasting of two sugar centrals, was the site of the Assumption's third foundation in Iloilo province. It is located 47 kilometers from Iloilo City.

The Assumption came to Passi upon the request in 1968 of the Auxiliary Bishop of Jaro, Msgr. Jaime Sin, to Mother Marie Denyse, Superior General. Accordingly, three sisters were sent to Passi to start the foundation in 1969.



In 1991, Assumption-Passi enjoys the unique privilege of being the first Assumption School in the Philippines-Thailand province run by an Administrative Team chosen from the lay faculty. This is the result of Assumption's thrust: the participation and empowerment of the lay collaborators. This is also in line with the Church's vision of sharing with the laity her mission of evangelization.

Impelled by a sense of mission and faith in Jesus Christ, the community of lay was formed and became the "critical Mass" who were then responsible in carrying out the big task of running the only Catholic School in the fast growing city of Passi. This made a great impact in the lives of the lay collaborators, especially the teachers who were part of the transition period.

The community travelled far and hard. The initial “yes” meant a lot of struggles and birth pangs. “Unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.” (John 12:24) It was an arduous journey, a painful process, yet fulfilling. The community depended on God’s strength, recognizing his work through the lay by the complementarity of their gifts put into service. “I am glad to boast about my weakness, so that the power of Christ may work through me ...”



In 1994, the Assumption apostolate in Passi along with the other consolidated member schools: Assumption- Iloilo, Bo. Obrero, and Santa Rita Academy, was strengthened because of the mandate for Consolidation. This meant better opportunities and privileges among the member schools in terms of on-going formations for lay administrators and teachers. Assumption Iloilo was mostly instrumental for the marked improvement in instruction and facilities of the consolidated Schools in Panay.

As the community moved into progress and development as an emerging component city of Iloilo, Passi recognized the role of Catholic Education in the formation of the young and with the parents’ urgent request a High School Department was established. The Assumption Central Coordinating Team (ACCT) facilitated the approval of the opening of the first secondary private school in Passi City. It was in the year 2001 when the High School was opened and produced its first 36 graduates on March 31, 2005. It was on the same year that Assumption School Passi City Iloilo, Inc. was granted Government Recognition by the Department of Education.

The mandate for Lay Empowerment and Consolidation ushered the growth of Assumption School- Passi. The two mandates enhanced the Lay-Religious Partnership in the fulfilment of Assumption’s TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION which had bore fruit from the Lay Educators’ personal and communal transformation.

This year marks Assumption- Passi’s 20th year of Lay Empowerment and at the service of the faith in 42 years, the school community continuously commits itself to the new challenges as it approach its Golden Jubilee in 2019 full of hope and drawing their strength from the faithful God who constantly accompanies them and calls them to follow him more closely through a committed life of service.

Assumption-Passi will forever be true to her battlecry:

"Come and see what God

has done..." (Psalm 66:5)



More than Just Classroom
Teachers:

A Transformative Education Experience

*By: Maria Reylan M. Garcia, daughter of the
First Assumption Passi Graduate*

The screeching sound of chalk driven against the blackboard was heard far too many times that the shrill was already familiar to be ignored. For more than two decades, the classroom teachers of Assumption School Passi were accustomed and unassuming of responsibilities bigger than their lesson plans and the mandates of their religious superiors. They had a routine to follow and it was easier while it was structured. Never then did it occur to them that in 1991, they, the simple classroom teachers, will be placed on the start point of a bitter-sweet race. In 1991, Assumption School Passi became the first and the only lay-empowered Assumption School in the Philippines-Thailand Province.

While the turnover surfaced as a fearless feat, the leap of faith initially struggled in getting the height needed to keep the school running. Mrs. Belinda Panes did not know how to begin. It was a living metaphor of starting out from scratch, when a classroom teacher is to be given the task of running an entire school as its Chairperson. But as the baptism of fire was already scalding her and her colleagues, the growing distrust of parents further blistered their spirits. Without the sisters' habits and veils, the capacity of the lay to manage the school was in question.

But trying to win the community's trust back was not their only challenge. Externally they were attacked squarely with stereotypes but internally they were tortured with factions in their working relationships. There were clashes of opinion and overriding of personalities among them. In addition to, since they were lay, their lives, unlike the sisters, were not isolated to the pressures of personal commitments. Teachers like Mrs. Stella Grace Tagnong frequently find themselves facing crossroads, lured by job offers which were less demanding and better paying.

Yet the school similarly found refuge amongst others and amongst themselves. Ms. Eva Pasaporte, in her more than thirty years of service to the school, identified the spiritual strength taught and modeled by the Assumption sisters to be the buoys that kept them afloat during the hurly-burly of the turnover. Ms. Menelda Pauya noted how the community spirit through the existence of the Consolidation (a collaboration of Assumptions schools in Panay) became the school's sturdiest support amidst the toughest times. Indeed, they were toppled down and as they rose they even wobbled, but the teachers learned and most importantly they pursued and moved forward.

The mission of transformative education and the potential joy of seeing its blossoms yielded the teachers' commitment and honor to stand by their selfless fiat to lay empowerment. Assumption School Passi's take on transformative education sourced inherently from the teachers, from the lay, who were testaments of transformation themselves. They, like other schools, comply with the promise of bringing up students to become academically proficient and socio-culturally responsive with the numerous proofs of alumni excelling in a wide spectrum of professions. However, they, unlike other

schools, run an extra mile not simply by evoking but by channeling the change to their students who still have unchartered hurdles.

It has been twenty years since the Assumption School Passi was weaned from the management of the Assumption sisters. It has been twenty years since the simple classroom teachers took charge. It has been twenty years of metamorphosis, struggling to wiggle out from the pupa of sustaining the school's fervor. But it has also been twenty years since Assumption School Passi have bore witness and became living testimonies of St. Marie Eugenie's ideals of education... "*to allow the good in every person to breakthrough the rock that imprisons it and bring it into the light where it can blossom and shed its radiance.*"

The screeching sound of chalk against the blackboard is now muffled for a couple of people known long ago as simple classroom teachers. Now, they sit behind long tables, planning and directing programs and activities school year after school year. Now, they have attained the trust and confidence of parents who are at constant support to the endeavors of the school. Now, they have a handful of committed faculty and staff determined to bring out the inherent and cultivated goodness in every child. Now, they are more than just classroom teachers. Now, they are transformed. They are empowered.

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION: FROM STUDENTS' VIEWPOINT...

"...to allow the good in every person to break through the rock that imprisons it and bring it into the light where it can blossom and shed its radiance."

Assumption School Passi has been a nesting place for pupils and students alike who aspire to soar high, armed with a character founded on Christian values, intelligence and skills, and a heart for others especially the least. This gift of Transformative Education in the Assumption will hopefully inspire these young people to make a difference wherever they will be.

✚ Assumption is one of the best in terms of forming great leaders, not only mentally but also socially and spiritually, and I'm privileged and honored to be formed by this school.

- Ezekiel Ramin Aguilar
Year IV Student

✚ Transformative education gives me confidence to discover those things that I would like to know, build my self-esteem and boost my morale, give me inspiration and determination to lead and to initiate things in accordance to God's providence. But most of all the virtue that I could always have in myself, my loyalty to Saint Marie Eugenie.

Justice Savannah Pamplona (Grade VI Pupil)

✚ I am very happy that my parents let me study here in Assumption School Passi, because I have learned a lot from this institution not only in terms of academics but most especially in molding my spiritual life and my relationship with my fellows.

- Joe Vincent Pasit
Year II Student

✚ My Assumption Education has molded me into someone who has the capacity to serve other people and has enhanced my leadership skills. I have become "someone" because of my Assumption Education.

- Francis Gideon Tagnong
Grade VI Pupil

✚ Being an Assumptionista, I am aware that there are many people who need my help, and that I have duties and responsibilities towards the environment, community, and country. Assumption Education taught me the importance of being an authentic person, a Christian, the importance of friendship, and family.

-Auser Jann Pagunsan
Year IV Student



June 2012

In Tanzania

St. Marie Eugenie School: "God's Handiwork"

In the country of Nyerere (1922-99) who made education as the first priority, the sisters of Assumption continue to invest in the day to day activities of the school with the objective of transformation through education. Involving the parents is essential to our pedagogy but it is always remain a challenge for us.

St. Marie Eugenie Pre-Primary and Primary school is unique and special for what it offers to the children in Iguguno. It responds to a great need of the society and is a challenge for the Sisters since the population is largely Muslim.

The school began with twenty seven students in March 2008 and soon after the number increased to fifty three students. At present the school is made up of forty-two girls and fifty-six boys and seven teachers. Sister Adria Bibiana is the Head Mistress. Sister Joseph Oiso, her deputy, takes care of the environment and Sister Restituta teaches religion, drama and takes care of the children's nutrition.



There are lay teachers such as Mr. Aron, an experienced retired Primary teacher. He is an academics teacher and deals with disciplinary matters. Miss Basilia teaches penmanship, art/decoration and prepares the classroom materials. Miss Leah is charged with craft activities and is the class teacher of Standard One A. Mr. Aron is the class teacher of Standard One B.

With time, the number of students increased dramatically as news about the school spread all over the village. Initially the children came from very poor families, some could not afford to have breakfast, others did not have the proper attire and did not feel free to relate with the others.

The students who came later to the school found a new page open before them as they admired the children's straightforwardness, freedom of speech, intellectual sharpness, simple and joyful attitude. Although it is a Day School, the children like to come every day. They come dressed for school even during the weekends where they unfortunately find no one. They then take the initiative of going to look



for the Sisters to remind them that they must go to school even if it is not a school day.

Now the children like to greet everybody in English expecting them to respond in English also, whereas no one speaks it!



They also like sports and competing with other schools. They played football with the students of two neighboring Primary schools and have won every time. As a result the villagers are proud to send their children to St. Marie Eugenie Pre-Primary and Primary School because of the changes they see in them.

Problems facing the school

As mentioned above, the villagers are now very happy and proud of the school although not always cooperative. They are not used to collaborating in the upbringing and education of their children. For example, when the Head Mistress writes letters to the parents inviting them to come to the school to be informed about the progress of their children or what is needed from them, very few come especially when it has to do with school fees.

Ways of learning

During their graduation on November 23, 2010, the number presented by the students amazed the guests. It was the first time the parents responded so positively. There were more than a hundred and fifty parents eager to see what the children were going to present. The day had been very well organized by the Sisters and the staff.

The night before, they prepared a well decorated tent in front of the four classrooms. Early the following morning the desks were arranged and at eleven all the children, called by alphabetical order, took their places and were requested to stay there until the end of the day. The day was really centred on the graduates. They entertained the parents and cleverly presented their needs to the guest of honour, Mrs Song'ongo, a mathematics teacher of the Accounting and Finance Institute at Singida.

The children showed their parents how they spend their time in school. For example the way they use the "pink tower", a material which helps them form words, and many other learning activities. The day was exceptional. Everyone laughed heartily and admired their creativity when they recited their poems. They were also touched by their seriousness in sharing their teachers' need for a meeting/faculty room, especially when it rains, as well as the need of funds so as to be able to drill a well.



Another request was to have more land since the present area is too small and the school is expanding. Many of the parents had a positive reaction and supported the request of adding thirty acres to the present five acres. The specific talents of the students were rewarded. This was true for LaiLat, a thirteen year old dwarf girl who looks like a six year old. She is always very cheerful and loved by everyone.



Hopes

The school aims at creating a committee and soliciting more cooperation from the parents as they come to understand the school's project and see the transformation in the children and even in themselves when their children return home.

Sister Patricia Immaculata
Iguguno Community

October 2012

Un tour du monde à travers nos établissements scolaires Assomption

L'année scolaire 2012 – 13 est maintenant bien lancée, sous l'élan du Chapitre Général : *l'Assomption aujourd'hui, à l'écoute de Dieu et de la vie, sur les chemins de la communion, de la sagesse et de la prophétie.*

Un bon nombre de nos établissements dans le monde –selon les Pays et les Continents-, suivent un autre rythme. Pour certains d'entre eux, l'année scolaire est en voie d'achèvement.

Mais quelque soit la période scolaire, nous avons de bonnes nouvelles à nous donner, de manière à **saisir l'action dynamique de Dieu** qui ne cesse de créer et recréer l'histoire.

Voici quelques « échos » qui nous font participer à **la joie des transformations** à travers les Continents.



En Afrique, sœurs et laïcs à Bafoussam (Cameroun) renouvellent chaque année leur projet, en restant à l'écoute de la réalité, particulièrement au problème de chômage des jeunes :

«... nous sommes soucieux de préparer les jeunes à être capables d'assurer leur avenir avec compétence et confiance.

Nous avons choisi 2 filières : BAC F8 (Sciences et Technologies de la Santé et du Social), avec la filière Brevet de Technicien (BT ESF) (Économie Sociale et Familiale).

Elles offrent aux jeunes la possibilité d'acquérir des connaissances qui préparent aux diplômes de Baccalauréat ou de Brevet de Technicien en 3 ans et de leur donner accès à un métier stable et améliorer ainsi leur niveau de vie familial et par extension, contribuer au développement de

leur milieu.

No objectifs:

-Rendre les jeunes capables d'assurer leur avenir avec compétence et confiance.

-Leur ouvrir la possibilité d'un engagement efficace dans le développement durable et la promotion humaine de leur milieu, par l'exercice d'une profession de service dans les secteurs sanitaire et social.

-Dans une ambiance catholique, former les jeunes à l'honnêteté, à la responsabilité et à la conscience professionnelle. Développer le goût du travail bien fait, pour qu'ils soient, à leur tour, capables de changer et d'améliorer les structures sociales ».

Au Collège N. Dame de l'Assomption à Daloa (Côte d'Ivoire) les élèves de la 4eme, encadrées par Sr Viviane, ont partagé avec joie le fruit de leur découverte : « Tous les hommes sont frères, malgré les différences de couleur, de races, de continents, de pays... »

La représentation a consisté à un voyage dans tous les continents, à la découverte des peuples d'Asie – d'Europe – d'Afrique – d'Océanie – d'Amérique, partageant les mêmes valeurs de liberté, d'égalité, de fraternité.

Elles ont mis l'accent sur un élément, un symbole historique ou culturel qui les caractérise. Cette représentation brève, mais riche en couleurs et en enseignements, nous a permis de comprendre que nos différences sont source d'enrichissements.



The Pope School of Chekereni (Tanzania)

In 2009 the sisters started to build the school. They opened the school in January 2011 with no electricity, but connected to solar panel. In the first day few students came but they continued to arrive. The sisters shifted to the



second building which was not completed: without windows, doors, the floor was rough, so all the sisters stayed there. The students didn't have enough beds so some slept on the floor.

The transformative education at work, by the staff

- The Students have become more responsible of their studies and daily activities.
- Care of trees (creation).
- Love, care and concern for one another.
- The students have developed critical thinking. They no longer take 'yes' or 'no' for an answer. They want to know why and the

consequences.

- Developed team work spirit from the teachers which introduced the need for remedial class.
- Opened up new possibilities to the students with low ability and low self esteem to regain their confidence and work harder than before.
- They can even challenge the best students and take initiatives in various responsibilities.

The transformative effects from some students:

- "Since I came to this school many things have changed in me, I didn't know how to plant maize now I know. I have improved in my discipline. What I like most is the collaboration of my fellow students. And all the good care we get from Sisters and Teachers. The competition which is in the academic makes me aware that I have to work hard" (Bahati Lemnge)
- "Behavior, before I started my secondary education here at St. Marie Eugenie my behavior was not good, now I have changed" (Mary Immaculate)

En **América Latina**, la transformación se traduce en **compromiso social**:

En **Ecuador**, jóvenes de 16 años de la Unidad Educativa de La Asunción de Guayaquil, acuden cada sábado al sector marginal de *Bastión Popular*, al encuentro de cerca de 90 mujeres analfabetas.

Durante el proceso (4 años), estas mujeres obtienen el título de final de primaria, lo que les confiere más seguridad en ellas mismas. Les permite también enfrentar la vida de una manera más digna frente a su pareja y en la sociedad; y a la vez las capacita para acompañar a sus hijos en proceso de aprendizaje.

Para los jóvenes, este compromiso les ayuda a conocer más la realidad y ser sensibles a ella; a generar un compromiso de vida más humano y solidario; así como a aprender a establecer relaciones fraternas, sencillas y cercanas.

También, la Unidad Educativa de La Asunción organiza cada año una campaña de prevención de abuso sexual infantil, dirigida a niños entre 5 y 11 años, de sectores marginales de la ciudad de Guayaquil (alrededor de 8 escuelas, y unos 3000 alumnos).



El objetivo es prevenir al abuso sexual infantil, a través del diálogo de niño a niño. Nuestros alumnos entre 11 y 14 años realizan esta campaña. Los temas abordados son: autoestima, identificación de sentimientos, valoración de sus partes íntimas y medidas de auto protección frente a una amenaza de abuso.

Esta acción ha permitido detectar casos de niños-as que han estado siendo abusados y, que a partir del diálogo, se han dado cuenta que deben decirlo, cosa que no hacen habitualmente en sus familias.

Au Brésil à l'occasion de la célébration du **Centenaire de la présence de l'Assomption**, nous avons eu des moments de réflexion sur l'éducation, comme notre façon d'avoir une action transformatrice dans la société.

Un groupe d'éducateurs de l'Université Catholique de Rio, nous a parlé sur *l'éducation populaire*, comme une *action clef* pour viser une transformation sociale. Ils nous ont confirmées dans ce travail de libération et de développement que l'Assomption réalise depuis 100 ans. En effet, une caractéristique de l'éducation populaire, c'est d'aider les personnes à développer leurs propres capacités et à reconnaître leur propre dignité de citoyens et citoyennes, sujets de leurs propres histoires et de l'histoire de leur peuple.

Ils ont fait un parallèle très intéressant entre Marie Eugénie et Paulo Freire.

La pensée de ce grand éducateur Brésilien de notre temps, rejoint sous plusieurs angles celle de Marie Eugénie, malgré qui n'était pas croyant. Il considérait que toutes les personnes sont capables d'être éduquées et il croyait qu'il fallait leur faire confiance, en *ne leur coupant pas les ailes, mais en leur orientant le vol*. Cette réflexion nous a fait sentir une vraie fierté d'être les filles de Marie Eugénie. Elle nous a confirmées dans la certitude de que, en suivant sa pensée, nous rejoignons la vie, les problèmes, la soif et les rêves des hommes et des femmes de notre temps.

In **Asia**, our school in **Minoo, in Japan**, is committed in transformative Education: Choir Club and Hand Bell Club (High School) perform in public many times through the year, for example, in our school of course, in home for the elderly, in the municipal hall, in the hospital, etc. and even in a hotel lobby when they are invited. It is a completely voluntary work to make people happy.

In these days a lot of children do not have enough knowledge of nutrition and get bad habit of eating. Assumption Primary School regularly gives children the chance to know the way of healthy cooking by inviting professional cook and also how to plant useful vegetables in the small garden. And school also holds the same course for mothers.



En **Europe**, **l'Institut Assomption de Boitsfort** s'investit dans un programme d'attention aux "*dys*" : Le nombre d'enfants présentant de la dyslexie, de la dyscalculie ou de la dyspraxie est en augmentation interpellante dans notre société.

Au sein de notre établissement, depuis 2 ans, l'équipe éducative a été sensibilisée à cette problématique. Des journées pédagogiques nous ont permis de percevoir la réalité de ces troubles et de recevoir des « astuces », des moyens, afin de minimiser l'impact de ces difficultés sur les apprentissages scolaires : pas de questionnaire recto-verso, utilisation de craies jaunes, adaptation des horaires d'examen (30 min supplémentaires) ...voilà quelques uns de ces moyens mis en place.

L'action la plus « Assomption » est, peut-être, l'attribution d'un tuteur volontaire pour chaque élève présentant un trouble « dys ». Le principe est simple : un élève « tuteur » est assis à côté d'un élève « dys », il se rend disponible quand cet élève éprouve une difficulté pour noter un devoir, pour la compréhension d'une consigne ou tout simplement quand il s'agit de compléter des notes...

Des valeurs comme la solidarité, la serviabilité et la responsabilité peuvent germer de cette expérience où la découverte des différences est un véritable chemin d'enrichissement mutuel.

En España, el *Equipo de Titularidad* reúne regularmente a las Hermanas que participan en la docencia. En Marzo 2012, les presentó una panorámica muy completa del equipo y de los colegios: las líneas prioritarias en las que se está trabajando, la realidad global de cada uno de los colegios y los desafíos ante los que se encuentran.

Algunos datos significativos de esta presentación nos ofrecen una visión de la riqueza de esta Provincia: tienen 9 colegios; 31 Religiosas de la Asunción participan en la misión docente, junto con 548 profesores, al servicio de 8336 alumnos.

Entre los desafíos más importantes se contemplan:

- ✚ mantener una oferta educativa cristiana
- ✚ potenciar la misión compartida entre religiosas y laicos
- ✚ favorecer el nacimiento de nuevos líderes (función directiva)
- ✚ educadores competentes y motivados empapados de la tradición y las esencias de santa M^a Eugenia y mejor preparados



- ✚ cambio pedagógico capaz de formar alumnos competentes, autónomos y comprometidos con los valores cristianos
- ✚ mayores sinergias entre la escuela y la familia para educar desde proyectos compartidos
- ✚ tener en cuenta el impacto de los medios técnicos y audiovisuales en la generación actual (prioridad a las tecnologías y el aprendizaje de otras lenguas)

Que les transformations reconnues et célébrées, *si humbles et modestes soient-elles**, continuent de nourrir notre joie et notre espérance, qu'elles nous accordent aussi la créativité pour **continuer de redécouvrir et recréer notre charisme éducatif Assomption.**

¡Animo a cada una y a cada uno!



La Commission Internationale d'Education
(Philo Thomas, Cécile Franquin et Ana Senties)

*Texte pré-capitulaire d'Education Transformatrice 2006

THEATRE AS PEDAGOGY FOR LIFE

Since a few years, several teachers in the **Assumption Institute in Boitsfort (Belgium)** have tackled to expand expression arts ateliers inside the Institution . Those teachers have in course of time realized the urgent necessity for proposing their pupils laboratories for creation and expression



The rhetos's play (I) setting logically enters into these general dynamics. Beyond a mere entertainment, crating a show wishes to be, above all, a pedagogic purpose. We did want to use theatre as a pedagogy for living, as a place for thought and action where everyone is induces to know oneself, to commit oneself and to surpass oneself.

So the stage management works as ateliers for the first months. They aim at a better knowledge of oneself, at creating a spirit of company, at, little by little, preparing the pupils to assume a part in the play.

In a first time, everyone is brought to discover and accept his body, next to bring out his whole potential of expression. In a society where young people use to hide behind machines to communicate, we insist on the incarnation work "to be centred and strong on one's two feet" (with exercises chiefly from oriental techniques Tai Qi).

In a second time, we work on reading and emotion expression. The exercise is often difficult but very rich. From his living, the pupil is induced to carry up his emotions, the aim being to be able to assume and use them in the theatre action. The experience is sometimes catharsis; it provides the pupils a space to fully and physically express their emotions. God knows how much they need it!

From December, come the discovery of the play, the working of the text and the constructions of the dramatis personae. Each pupil assumes being responsible for a role. It is a real engagement requiring sacrifices and a lot of efforts. The beginnings are often complex, but ,time going on, the play and the dramatis personae are better understood, everyone's self reliance increases and starts finding pleasure. The play takes shape and little by little magic starts working.

During the whole process, the actors are coached by other fellows (assistant-stage, manager, wardrobe-keeper, accessory-managers); those people realized for the actors a huge work with great teacher art.

Here is really the goal of the adventure. To be able to build collectively and to live with a strong story to tell, to feel its energies dancing in us, and on the stage to vibrate to misfortunes and joys lived by the roles. This experience provides something vivifying, vitalizing, capital probable. Since ever, men act life





on a stage to understand its mystery, to share their hopes and their stress, to think about their “humanity”. And precisely at school, beyond competences, aren’t our young people first in their humanity apprenticeship, discovery and experiment? Aren’t they always, as we finely said in old times, in “humanities”?

In a world in crisis and mutation, we think it is necessary to strengthen our pupils’ reliance, group spirit and humanist consciousness. We need young people rightly incarnated, well in their bodies, in their heads and in their hearts, strong for their hopes, their freshness and their ideals. In Assumption, in lineage of Marie Eugenie’s pedagogy, teachers daily improve and encourage that approach. Simply, theatre wants to take its

part ...and we hope that our pupils-actors and you audience, you may feel and share life taste during these two hours.

(Speech read as an introduction to the play “Théâtre-ambulant Chopalovitch”)



M. Nicolas Gazon
(teacher in the Assumption
Institute Boitsfort, Brussels)

(1) Last year in the Secondary School (i.e. Terminal Class)

December 2012

Marie Eugénie's invitation to « love our time » urges us to pay attention to one of the phenomena having an impact on every parcel in our earth nowadays, the migration phenomenon : to examine their causes and consequences, and to understand their implications on our mode of life, our apostolic priorities and our pedagogical systems.

(General Chapter 2012 Report)



“Puente de Esperanza” **in Madrid, Spain**, is an inter-congregations plan. The religious of the Assumption in Spain Province have a share in its animation.

This fine plan is a local answer to a global problematic, lived in a network, in communion, meanwhile bringing the originality of our education charism, being signs of hope with the others sharing the work.



Education task is exciting, as it was for Marie Eugénie, and it is still for me, as I am now outside the institution educative setting.

Retirement allows me to be able to work in a Centre for migrant people where the Assumption works among twelve other religious Congregations.

It's a hard work, but it is captivating for me. It requests to go along together, migrants as well as local people, the main point being to come to a renewed society, according to Marie Eugénie's dream.

“Puente de Esperanza” has now been living for seven years. The number of people received in our departments goes increasing. We

are constituted in commissions: Reception, Employment seeking, Informatics, Geriatrics, Sewing, Volunteers. All these commissions are animated by volunteers: sisters and laics, we share this mission in everyday life.

Reception is a very important element in our way of working. Even if each atelier and commission is always ready to welcome some one, this reception work remains nevertheless a group's special task, assuming this special responsibility, as soon as some one in need arrives at the Centre.

Reception requests we offer excellent information either to get profit from the Centre, or to direct people to other services, ordinary but so much important. For instance: to know where they can have a wash, some food, where to go to bring a document, what are the inquiries they can find out...

We also receive people who are seeking for a job. As we are in a crisis period, we can only offer a direction or an inquiry allowing them to seek by themselves through internet or in place where they have a chance to get a positive answer.

In other cases, we act as a mediator between this person and he who can offer a work or a job. In that case, our mission is to see to it that it is an impartial agreement and that in the very beginning a real understanding is setting between employer and employee. Then we do know very well laws about those cases, as well as migration decrees and clauses.





The Centre also offers a Spanish atelier, as we believe that knowing our language may make easier the asker's integration and allow him to enter more easily in work world.

Nowadays, in this crisis time, we are conscious of the numerous challenges lying in wait for us; one of them would be to take a greater care of those whose situation is getting worse and worse. Here is our belief, for all of us, when we see some of them who, extra an economical need, are suffering of their family absence, lack of security and of papers that could allow them a minimum of legality. Moreover, they often live alone and lost.

Through this everyday coming of so many people from all countries to our Centre, our stronger belief is to contribute to "another possible world", a changed world. We feel that it happens when we share the mission and achieve to catch the best of their people, that making us "persons" and allow us to offer something else to others. So we walk along to a more equitable and more human society, a changed society: this earth we all wish, and we try to make is possible, even if these times are hard.

Poor teach us how to look at reality. Their suffering moves us and awakes compassion in us. This com / passion, where who is feeling compassion and who is suffering are both aware of their being vulnerable. Here's then when we can go forward together. It's just together that, progressively, we transform and change ourselves.

Thrilling is this mission we are called to in the Assumption. The main fact of believing that "another world is possible" and that with our very small action we can build it, gives us strength to go on trying to do it everyday.

Hna Belén Frias r.a.
www.puentedeesperanza.es



*December 18th is the International Migrant's day according to the United Nations decision