

November 4th, 2021

Dear Sisters and Friends,

An old song composed by Gregory Norbet, OSB goes “Anything happens if we are open to see that creation is coming alive. The real is the beautiful transformed with love, and the wonder of new life, turn on right now.” These lines present to us an invitation of an attitude necessary specially during this time of crisis and pandemic. For some, these might echo their own experiences amidst this difficult times where they discover new graces and possibilities with great creativity. Indeed, in each moment of our life and in every opportunity, God reveals something new. Creation is in a process of being completed each day.

The online session organized by the **International JPIC Secretariat of the Assumption Family entitled: "A world on the move: Migrants-Refugees-Displaced-Victims of Trafficking"** has been an important step to sensitize us, to form us and to know how our sisters and brothers of the Assumption try to respond to this reality in the mission countries where we are present. We have lived the experience that it is possible to unite ourselves for a " Wider WE" as Pope Francis invites us today.

The program was designed in two parts. The first part was accomplished through Zoom Sessions using the Process: See, Judge, Act and celebrate this world in motion. We were 21 Religious of the Assumption Sisters who participated, as members of the secretariat, or as representatives of each Province of the Congregation, in addition to the laity and communities who joined or followed the session in the open spaces.

José Luis Loera Aguilar, coordinator of the Casa Refugiados Program in Mexico, spoke about the Movement of People today and the issues at stake. **Sr. Sophie Ramond**, RA gave a biblical approach to migration, experienced as exodus and exile. Her talk, "In a world on the move, the conditions and modes of Christian existence. A biblical approach" has strong contemporary resonances. Finally, **Father Fabio Baggio**, Under-Secretary of the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development, presented a synthesis of the Magisterium of Pope Francis on the theme of migrants and refugees.

The Superior Generals: Sr. Rekha, Sr. Felicita, Sr. Marie Françoise, Sr. Anne and Father Marcelo AA Assistant General, encouraged us to continue this path of commitment to the poorest and most vulnerable. The content and the presentations and experiences presented are available on YouTube.¹

We are now in the second stage of the program that aims to try to embody the calls or lights received in our respective mission fields. For this objective, 14 inter-Assumption groups were formed by regions according to the Continent and region of the participants. This is already producing great diversity : actions together, prayer assemblies, awareness meetings, formation sessions or transmission either by Province or inter-Assumption where this has been possible.

As Sister Rekha told us in her opening message, we hope “that the session will lead us to a paradigm shift in our apostolic options. Let our searches stimulate new reflections in our local contexts, inspire creative responses, and deepen our commitments to God's choices.” Let's try in our “small sphere of action”.

From the 6th of September till the 13th of October, we had the **virtual Canonical Visit to Asia Pacific Province**. The wonder of this new technology – Zoom – made possible our entry into the lives of our sisters in the nineteen communities of the four countries of the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and Japan. The theme chosen by the Province for the visit was: “**Behold, I am making something new! Listen, see the**

¹ Youtube https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=SIJPICAssumpta

signs of hope and understand the newness..." We navigated together this new form of closeness and communion and yes, we listened, we saw, and we allowed ourselves to be renewed, and we recognize God's faithful journeying with this Province. We discovered the richness of each culture, the complexity of their diverse realities as Asian people, and the presence of both the long tradition of Assumption and the new calls in our different insertions. We sensed their love for Mother Marie Eugenie and for the Congregation. We affirmed their commitment, together with their lay partners, "to make Jesus Christ known, loved and served" through Transformative Education.

We heard a lot of stories of goodness, communion, and solidarity. The sisters and lay are driven by the spirit of being gifted to give.

What is also inspiring for the Congregation is the desire of this new Province to continue exploring the journey of becoming fully ONE Province. The challenges before them might be overwhelming, but their steadfast faith in God and their capacity to transform challenges into blessing are their deep source of strength and hope to move forward. We were touched by this deep spirit of faith that enables them to face adversities and difficulties with inner strength, courage, gratitude, and hope. The nuances of the Asian soul present in each country, including interiority, silence, interconnectedness, deep communion with the cosmos and prayer of the heart, awakened our desire to deepen the way in which all these aspects enrich the charism of the Congregation.

The possibility of participating in a Zoom Formation Session is a gift of this pandemic period. We are so grateful for the contribution of our dear Sr. Rekha in the SEDOS Mission Symposium Session 2021. Her talk was about the **Biblical Trends in Mission for our Times**. She presented the Biblical Foundations of Mission covering the Holy Scriptures from the Old to the New Testament. She emphasized that Mission is God's Project. It was a beautiful way to express the love of the Congregation for the Universal Church.

On Saturday, October 16, two years after the launch of the Communications Plan, the **Communication Commission met with the various commissions and services of the Congregation** - Education, JIPCS, Youth-AMA, BGSD, Archives, Finance, and the General Secretariat - in order to evaluate its functioning and to agree on the necessary adjustments. The meeting was held in Auteuil with a member of each commission.

The meeting led by Sr. Mercedes was based on the synthesis of the questionnaire sent to each commission and service. In two years, there has been the creation of a new web page translated into three languages, the launching of the Magazine #Assumpta (three times a year) and the Assumpta magazine (supposed to appear once a year in November). The commissions have contributed greatly to these various publications. Due to the pandemic, only two magazines could be printed. We are waiting for a return to normal before printing and sending out the following copies. For the same reason the Assumpta magazine with feature articles is ready for printing but has not been edited. The CGP 2022 will be an opportune moment to see together what we are committed to.

This meeting allowed us to have a more global vision of Communication as it is lived in the Congregation and of the complexity that it represents. Communication is at the service of communion and mission (Capitular Document Lourdes 2018). This is why the commissions are the main providers of documents. The major challenge is to regularly feed the communication channels in order to make known the life and thought of the Assumption on the digital continent. The ways are diverse: a video or a photo accompanied by a brief commentary with a message for the web page; a longer article to share an experience or a

reflection in the #Assumpta Magazine; a brief commentary or a reflection on a document of the Church or the World, with an Assumption approach to bring our experience and our way of seeing or to express how these subjects are in line with our realities or with our charism.

The challenges are numerous but we are not losing enthusiasm! By putting ourselves to work, we will encourage the referent sisters of all the commissions whose task is sometimes heavy. Communication serves Communion, Participation and Mission, the three key words of the Synod on Synodality (Opening of the Synod. Address of Pope Francis October 9, 2021).

For this, we will continue to walk together, to form together ... to communicate more with each other. Tutorials developed in the three languages by Mercedes and Almudena will be available on youtube. A strategic plan will help us to focus on the essentials and to live more interconnected.

We end this paragraph by saying a big Thank you to the sisters who translate or proofread the documents. This is a real service to the Congregation!

Just two weeks after the visit of the Asia Pacific Province, we have begun the **canonical visit of the Province of India**. It will take place from October 24 to November 26. The visit began with a two-hour assembly to welcome and introduce each community. The Province is composed of thirteen communities in four states and nine dioceses. We are entering a new world again, in a Province born just after the Second Vatican Council in 1968. You will read more about it in the next issue! Sr. Rekha was able to go to India on October 28, so the visit is semi-presential, semi-virtual.

We also look forward to the **International Formators' Session** from the 1st to the 10th of December, it will be another grace moment of common formation as a Body Congregation. Fifty-six formators or sisters belonging to formation teams from all the provinces are expected.

Let us continue journeying together towards newness, welcoming surprises, witnessing the power of life, and dancing with delight, for God makes all things NEW, everyday!

In deep communion with each other,

Rekha, Sandra, Isabelle, Marthe, and Irene
General Community