



CONGREGATION LIFESTREAM

WE ARE DIFFERENT YET ONE

“The way of Jesus...to walk united with our differences.”

-Pope Francis

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Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, Casa Santo Spirito, Via dei Bevilacqua 60, 00165, Rome



“Behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.”
Luke 2,10-11

“May the light of Christmas shine in our lives and in the lives of those who are still sitting in the shadow of darkness and death, those who are experiencing war, violence, poverty and loneliness. It is for us to bring to those who have not yet heard or who do not yet believe that CHRIST, THE SAVIOR, is born. Like the angels and shepherds, may we be heralds of the glad tidings of Christ’s birth as our feet move us into the way of peace.

-Excerpt from M. Maoro’s Christmas Message

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

GENERALATE CONDUCTS ELECTION CHAPTERS

TUTZING PRIORY
SR. REGINA TESCH, OSB

Tutzing Priory held its election chapter presided over by Sr. Vania Maria Toscano assisted by Sr. Regina Tesch on November 18-19. Sr. Rachel Feller was elected as prioress of Tutzing to succeed Sr. Ruth Schönenberger. Sr. Ruth held

this office for two terms. We thank Sr. Ruth for her service in leadership during the last 8 years and Sr. Rachel for accepting the call.

During the second part of the chapter the subprioress was appointed and the priory councillors elected and appointed. The new team will start together with the installation of the new prioress on February 4, 2023. M. Maoro delegated Sr. Ruth to install Sr. Rachel as the new prioress. We wish Tutzing Priory with the new priory government a future full of blessings.

next page

IN THIS ISSUE

Election Chapters	2	Formandees Online.....	7
Back to Tanzania	3	Mission to Remember.....	8
Eucharistic Congress.....	3	Casa Retreat..	9
Koreans in Africa.....	6	Pope on Christmas.....	9
		Events	10

TUTZING PRIORY...from page 1



Sr. Rachel grew up in Marburg/Lahn in Germany. After her training as a nurse, she was employed in our hospital in Tutzing where she got to know our sisters. She entered in 1986 and had her

novitiate in Bernried. After her profession she was among the pioneers in the new community of Dresden / East Germany, where she gained experience as a nurse in the hospice service. Back in Tutzing she became tutor in the nursing school and its director. At the same time, she took over the office as first chantress since 1995.

In 2004-2010 she served as novice directress. Since then, she has also been active in retreat accompaniment and spiritual direction.

She has held the post of cellarer/treasurer of Tutzing Priory since 2013.

NORFOLK PRIORY

SR. KEVIN HERMSEN, OSB

The Norfolk Priory held its election chapter, presided over by Sr. Lumen Gloria Dungca, on November 27-28. A ritual was held before the



Present & Past Prioresses l-r: Sr. Rachel, Sr. Ruth, Sr. Hildegard Jansing, Sr. Hedwig Willenbrink

election in which each Sister received a small bouquet of seeds symbolizing new growth and opportunity in our monastic and missionary apostolates.



Sr. Rosann Ocken was re-elected as Prioress of the Norfolk Priory for 3

more years. Thanks to Sr. Rosann for accepting this additional term of office. Her second term starts on March 1, 2023 and ends on February 28, 2026.

Sr. Rosann is from Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA. She has held many positions during her religious life including formation directress, two terms as Prioress of Peramiho, Tanzania and superior of the community in Jinja, Uganda.



“The prioress must be concerned first and foremost for the bond of unity among the sisters. She works for their spiritual and professional growth, as well as for the progress and effectiveness of the Congregation in her priory.” (Constitutions VII, 755.1)



Present & Past Prioresses l-r: Sr. Rosann, Sr. Pia Portmann, Sr. Kevin Hermesen, Sr. Pia Rottinghaus

JOURNEYING BACK TO TANZANIA

SR. CHRISTIANE SPANHEIMER, OSB

Even years back in Haus St. Benedikt in Tutzing could not sever the ties once made with the places of my first missionary activity in Tanzania from 1975 – 1987.

Invited by the Diocese of Würzburg, I was allowed to fly to Tanzania once again from October 26 - November 9 more precisely to the Diocese of Mbinga and to Peramiho. The Health Institute in Litembo, co-financed by the partner diocese of Würzburg, was to be inaugurated.



Health Institute

Although a few days before departure, the news came in that the Tanzanian government had not given permission to open, we still flew! Bishop John Ndimbo insisted on taking me to all the stations in his diocese that were once inhabited by our sisters. I had visited most of them regularly 45 years ago with a team from the Litembo Hospital and had held the Underfives Clinic while examining and treating patients. At that time there was not yet the still like new tar road from DAR through the whole country to Lake Nyasa, the border in the west of the country. We could only enjoy in some places a pleasant ride on it during these days. As soon as we turned off, we were back on the bumpy roads of Africa: we whirled up the red dust in thick clouds, let it penetrate every fiber and crack and were shaken vigorously to the delight of my old spine.

On the very first day we went down to Lituhi, the once thriving station on Lake Nyasa where Sr. Tetwigis worked as a doctor from 1967-1973 after her time at Peramiho Hospital (1949-1966). What a desolate sight we saw! In short: the hospital and the entire station, so vital for the people in a wide radius of 200 km along the lake, have to be completely renovated. Bishop John is working hard to rebuild and definitely wants our

sisters to come back there!

We visited many other stations in the diocese in the following days and stood in awe of the great churches and parish buildings, dispensaries and health centers that decades back had been built by our Benedictine brothers, where our sisters had worked as nurses and teachers. Depending on the current staff and their interest, they are still in good condition and a help to the population, or more or less in the desolate condition like Lituhi. It's extremely helpful that the Diocese of Würzburg regularly sends representatives to visit their supported projects and check how the funds are being used.

The population growth in Tanzania is incredibly high. Families with five or more children are not uncommon, as they are still important for old-age provision. Already in my time almost 50 years back, we had family planning as a topic at our clinic days. It seems that this topic has not been intensified there.

Mbinga Diocese is with the highest number of Catholics in Tanzania. On Sundays the churches are overcrowded three times. If the priest does not offer enough time for confession, the faithful complain to the bishop! The number of those who want to join a religious order or apply for priesthood is still high. The number of parishes has also enormously increased. New churches and schools are being built everywhere. Bishop John has alone in his episcopal city of Mbinga schools from kindergarten to catechist center, a center for albino girls, a youth center, the radio station HEKIMA; he had a garden laid out with all sorts of plants, including tree seedlings, built a bakery and various craft schools; examples that are imitated by his priests on the outstations according to interest.

In the Diocese of Mbinga there *next page*



Sisters from different congregations

JOURNEYING...from page 3

is an unparalleled abundance of religious communities in healthy competition with one another. Even in the Litembo hospital, Augustinian, Franciscan and Salvatorian sisters work alongside the Chipole sisters, and Indian Borromeo sisters have built a school not too far away.

Yes, Litembo, my first love! The hospital has grown incredibly over the past 40 years and meanders down the valley with new buildings, new areas of activity, e.g. a dialysis centre, a department for premature babies. The Health Institute for 360 students has been built to train nurses/midwives, laboratory technicians and other medical staff. We wanted to be there at the inauguration, but unfortunately all have to wait for the government's approval.

Peramiho was the last place I visited. The loving welcome we received from our sisters was overwhelming. So many young women! The chapel and refectory had recently been enlarged. Now everything is bursting at the seams again. Everywhere young, happy, enthusiastic sisters who still need their monastic training, but also their professional. It was a joy and so uplifting to listen to their singing at the liturgy. The success of their formators! Only those who were once formators can appreciate it. Of the larger institutions in the Priory, I was able to get to know only the Nursing School and Mji Mwema, the Academy in Songea. Both showed me the sisters' concern and devotion to their fellow citizens.

In the coming year, the entire abbey will celebrate the 125th anniversary when Fr. Cassian Spiess celebrated the first holy Mass in Peramiho. An open hall church is being built there, designed by the 92 year-old Br. Kunibert Karg OSB. Until



open hall church

then, the sisters have yet to elect a new prioress, as Sr. Ruth Bartonico's term of office has expired.

The day of farewell, the end of these two weeks, which had evoked so many memories, came all too quickly. The veterans Sr. Maria Uhl and Sr. Heimrada Zahn with prioress Ruth and Sr. Gracia, the novice mistress, waved again at the door, when Bishop John Ndimbo, Burkhard Pechtl and I had to leave. I say a big "Thank You" to all who contributed to the success of these unforgettable days! The Lord bless everyone with his abundance and lead all efforts to success. I shall keep each one in my heart!



Visit to Peramiho Priory

BRAZIL HOLDS XVIII NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

SR. MADALENA MENDONÇA, OSB

The XVIII National Eucharistic Congress of Brazil took place in the Archdiocese of Olinda and Recife from November 11-15. It began with a prayer meeting at the Sé Cathedral in Olinda with 200 bishops. The Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, Dom Fernando Saburido, gave each bishop a gift, a replica of the wooden pectoral cross used by Dom Hélder Câmara that represents his simplicity. "The Eucharistic Congress brings this appeal for true love, committed to the poor, as in the example of the ministry of our Servant of God Dom Helder", said the archbishop. Upon receiving the cross, the bishops did not hesitate to

next page

BRAZIL HOLDS...from page 4



blissing of the wooden pectoral cross

remove their traditional metal cross and use the new wooden cross, as a sign of adherence to the Congress appeal, translated into the theme “Bread on all tables” .



wearing of the wooden pectoral cross

We were around six sisters from the priory house who were present. It was very touching to see our bishops use the replica until the end of the Congress.

The solemn eucharistic opening celebration took place at CECON (Convention Center in Recife). Six sisters from our Priory plus our formandeas participated in the outdoor mass,



Sisters in attendance

with the presence of cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, religious, seminarians and about 10,000 Catholic faithful from all over Brazil, according to event organization.

Cardinal Dom Antônio Marto of Fátima/Portugal was sent as a representative of Pope Francis. Before the beginning of the celebration, a letter sent by Pope Francis to the Congress was read. Dom Fernando Saburido in a tone of gratitude spoke of the Apostolic Nuncio, the governor of the State of Pernambuco, other civil, ecclesiastical and religious authorities present at the mass, “What comes to my heart are the words of Jesus: ‘I ardently desired to eat this Passover. It was with this deep desire that, although forced to postpone the Congress due to the 2020 health crisis, we insisted on the purpose of celebrating it and today we are happy to see it come true”. In his speech, the Archbishop emphasized that the purpose of the Congress is not to show that Catholics are the majority or that the Catholic faith must be 'compulsorily forced on all', as well as that the event is not remembered for its celebratory grandeur, “but for the love that all Christians have for Jesus and that in the Eucharist they are living tabernacles, prophetic testimonies of God's love in society.

The second day was devoted to theological symposium. We sisters registered for the symposium, participated in the main conference and went to the workshops we had chosen.

On the third day we attended the public catechesis given by Cardinal Antonio Marto. He spoke about the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives and that without it we become empty. In addition, the Eucharist also brings joy and peace to our lives and to the communities that gather around it.

next page



Cardinal Antonio Marto

BRAZIL HOLDS...from page 5

On the fourth day Dom Walmor, President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Brazil spoke about: "Eucharist, Food for the Mission". Every afternoon public catechesis took place. This catechesis was open to the public with free admission and took place on the stage of the Catholic Fair in the events pavilion, from 2 pm to 4 pm.

In addition to the very significant Symposium and Public Catechesis, the 148 parishes of the Archdiocese of Olinda and Recife held the First Eucharistic Communion, at the same established time, at 5 pm to 3000 children. The children of our Colégio Academia Santa Gertrudes also received Jesus on that day at the Cathedral of Olinda. It was a great joy for us.

The last day of the XVIII National Eucharistic Congress left a milestone, the inauguration of Casa do Pão, the House of Bread. It was a legacy of solidarity with homeless people. It served as a landmark of the congress which took place with the cutting of the ribbon and then a festive lunch with the bishops together with the homeless people.

I do not think that there are more words to express how spiritually rich the entire XVIII National Eucharistic Congress was. The closing mass had more than twenty thousand people who piously accompanied the procession. The photos will speak for themselves. Eleven sisters from our Priory were in attendance.

KOREAN CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES IN AFRICA MEET IN NAIROBI

SR. SIMON LEE, OSB

Being called as a Missionary Benedictine Sister to a foreign country is a special gift and challenge. Since I have personally received so many graces through missionary work, I want to recommend international mission experience to the sisters. Moreover, as Korean missionaries in Africa, we have a privilege to attend a meeting of Korean Catholic missionaries in Africa (KAM) every year.

This meeting was launched by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Korea (Committee for Foreign Mission Work and Pastoral Care of Overseas Koreans) in 2012 to encourage and support Korean missionaries in Africa. It has been steadily held every year except in 2020 and 2021 during the height of the pandemic.

This year the meeting took place in Nairobi, Kenya from November 5th to 9th. There were 41 Korean missionaries (11 Priests and 30 Sisters) from 10 different countries in Africa. Bishop Moon Hee Jong of Suwon Diocese and 2 priests from Korea attended the meeting.

The meeting usually takes place for 4-5 days and all the expenses of the meeting like airfare, lodging and food are provided. We enjoyed

next page



Crowd of 20,000 in attendance for the closing mass of the XVIII National Eucharistic Congress

KOREAN... from page 6

various Korean snacks, hot spicy noodles, kimchi, large crab, seafood soup, Gimbab, Jabchai and we could bring some leftovers.

What was more important than food was that all of us, 9 Korean Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing in Africa attended this meeting. Sr. Benedicta Yeo, who has been missionary in Jinja, Uganda for more than 30 years, attended for the first time and Sr. Terra An from Jinja, Sr. Anita Park from Tanzania whose missionary period is only a few months, were also present. The other 6 were Sr. Pascha Park and Sr. Serva Shin from Kenya, and Sr. Marie Johann Lee, Sr. Claudia Lee, Sr. Germana Kim and Sr. Simon Lee from Namibia. In the evening, young and old missionaries shared their experiences, such as praise and appreciation of their mission fields, personal difficulties and challenges. We rejoiced together, gave thanks and praise to God for calling us as missionaries.

We also listened to the latest news of the Church in Korea. We checked the status of KAM, elected executives and chose the venue for next year which will be in Johannesburg, South Africa. The highlight was a tour of the beautiful Lake Naivasha.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Priors of Nairobi, Peramiho and Windhoek and Jinja Community for allowing the Korean Sisters to attend this meeting. Special thanks to the Nairobi Priory for their warm hospitality, which allowed us to stay a few

days before the KAM meeting and to visit Chemchemi Institute where our two Namibian Sisters are studying.

Lastly, I hope that many Sisters, especially our Korean Sisters will consider more the international mission and be sent to places where they are needed.



l-r: Sr. Germana, Sr. Terra, Sr. Pascha, Sr. Serva, Sr. Benedicta, Bishop Moon Hee Jong, Sr. Marie Johann, Sr. Claudia, Sr. Simon and Sr. Anita.

INTERNATIONAL FORMANDEES MEET ONLINE

SR. MICHAEL MARIE ROTTINGHAUS, OSB

What happens when you gather the Generalate with 24 religious formators in one room for many days?

Particularly if they are all missionary Benedictine sister formators!

One theme which came to the forefront was that of Internationality which transformed into

next page



Korean Missionaries in Africa with Bishop Moon Hee Jong

INTERNATIONALITY...from page 7

interculturality. This was the overriding concern of the International Formators Meeting which stretched from October 12, 2022 – November 4, 2022.

Let us look at just one outcome of the IFM meeting in Rome.



Online Meeting of Formandees

In order that our candidates around the world could be opened to our internationality in a more real way, the formators surfaced the plan to set up, with the use of the internet, connections between all the various formation groups, i.e., Temporary Professed, Novices, Postulants and Aspirants.

Our Manila Priory through Sr. Mary Paul Baul took up the baton to lead in this effort. Already on November 23 the first internet connections were made with the formators across the time zones from 7 p.m. Manila time to 5 a.m. (same day) USA time. This was a feat in itself. Our sisters and formandees in the Manila are doing a grand job of getting us altogether.

Up to now December 10, 2022, besides the Formators all the various groups have been connected. Let's look at some of the responses from the various groups:

"The postulants for Windhoek said thank you very much for the meeting, they are very happy



Online Meeting of Formandees

and grateful for the sharing. Waiting for the next meeting"

"The aspirants, postulants and novice from Angola, They Said Thank you."

"Aspirants from Punalur. Thank you very much."

Postulants from Nairobi are grateful for meeting their companions thanks for the organizing team"

"Juniors from Peramiho Priory...Thank you very much! Looking forward for the next meeting.

Asante sana!

A MISSION TO REMEMBER

SR. MARIANNE RAZON, OSB

Sr. Cecille Ido and I flew from Manila to Kerala, India on October 2 for a month-long mission assignment. We were met by Sr. Rimolda and Sr. Fausina at the airport .



l-r: Sr. Benedicta, Sr. Fausina, Sr. Marianne, Sr. Rimolda, Sr. Cecille, Sr. Christina & observers

When we arrived at the convent, Sr. Benedicta, Sr. Christina, and Sr. Marie Rose were waiting for us along with the five young observers who were all dressed in beautiful saris to welcome us in a customary Indian blessing. *next page*



Indian Blessing

A MISSION...from page 8

This was a rare opportunity to briefly witness and experience the life of Ora et Labora of our Indian sisters in Punalur. The sisters' simplicity left a lasting impression on me. They are hospitable and even went to great lengths to make us feel at home. Another thing that I appreciated was the tranquility of the place. It was as if the stillness was constantly inviting me to pray and commune with nature. Thus, the rubber trees around the property added to the serenity of the place.

On our last day, the sisters prepared a sumptuous meal and a simple program showcasing their talent in singing and dancing.

It was a brief yet profound experience for me to be one with our sisters in Punalur and to graciously conduct lessons that would help them deepen their love for our Benedictine vocation.

AN ECHO OF THE CASA RETREAT SR. BEATA KATUKU MBUVI, OSB



The annual retreat of the Casa Community, Rome was from December 4-11. Our retreat master was Fr. David Glenday, MCCJ, the former general superior of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus. Just to echo what some participants expressed about the retreat: "it was a deep spiritual biblical retreat; powerful, enriching, it deeply provoked or rather enhanced a deep spiritual yearning for the word of God." The simplicity, prayerful mood and contemplative spirit of the retreat master was contagious. It positively impacted on the retreatants the mood of prayer. The opening conference gave an impression of it all, "When you spend time with Jesus, you acquire a new quality of listening, relationship and mission". Something new must happen. The grace we were to seek during the retreat was that of the essential, the one thing necessary. Our reflections in the morning sessions had the theme of celebrating Abba, Father: the God who comes. In the afternoon, we spent time with Mary praying to God who comes.

In our personal prayer, the retreat master

invited us to make the prayer of Our Father, the main theme so as to discover how God had answered our prayers in the past, to discern what Abba wants to fulfill in our retreat and lastly to explore our desire. Prayer is the noblest, most sublime and most vigorous act which elevates us to God. The gift that Jesus has given us is the gift of prayer. He taught his disciples to pray through praying. Prayer is contagious. It is a spark that ignites desire. As disciples of today, we ought to constantly ask Jesus to teach us how to pray.

Every moment in our journey of faith is an opportunity to grow. Every day is a moment of rebirth. God has His hands on, fully involved in our faith growth processes. In the way things are, the way we are, the spirit of God is at work. In all our inadequacies, fears, even in our unfaithfulness, God is with us. As missionaries we are to render the Father present wherever we find ourselves.

POPE: WE MUST REDISCOVER THE TRUE RICHNESS OF CHRISTMAS

Source: Vatican News, November 11, 2022

By Lisa Zengarini

LIKE TREES WE NEED ROOTS

Pope Francis drew attention to the significance and the symbolism behind the Christmas Tree and crib.

"The tree, with its lights", he said, reminds us of Jesus who comes to illuminate our darkness, our existence often locked up in the shadow of sin, fear and pain". But it also suggests the idea that, like trees we need roots, "solid foundations" to remain firm, grow and resist the winds of life. It is therefore important "to cherish the roots, in life as in faith", Pope Francis stressed.

JESUS' LITTLENESS

He then reflected on the the significance of the crib, which "speaks to us of the birth of the Son of God who became Man to be close to each one of us". "In its genuine poverty", the Pope said "the nativity scene helps us to rediscover the true richness of Christmas", a different Christmas "from the consumerist and commercial one". It helps us "to become intimate with God, with the fragile simplicity of a small newborn, with the

next page



GENERALATE CALENDAR

2023

Ongoing Daegu Visitation,
November 9- January 31, 2023
-M. Maoro Sye & Sr. Katharina Mtitu

January 7-8
Torres Novas/Madrid Discernment Process
-Sr. Vania Maria Toscano

January 14-15
Peramiho Discernment Process
-Sr. Regina Tesch

January 16-31
India/Generalate District Visitation
-Sr. Lumen Gloria Dungca

February 24 – March 19
Ndanda Visitation
-M. Maoro Sye & Sr. Katharina Mtitu

March 1
-Start of the International Juniorate
Program in Rome

March 18-19
Torres Novas Election Chapter
to be done simultaneously:
- Sr. Lumen Gloria: Torres Novas
- Sr. Vania Maria: Angola

March 25-26
Peramiho Priory Election Chapter
-M. Maoro Sye & Sr. Katharina Mtitu

April 20-June 24
International Weeks of Encounter
Arrival in Rome: April 18 & 19
Start of IWE: April 20
Travel to Tutzing: May 26
Departure from Tutzing: June 25



Sr. Gloria Haule from Peramiho Priory to Tutzing Priory
Sr. Immaculate Namanda from Jinja/Generalate District to Tutzing Priory



CONGRATULATIONS to Sr. ANA PAULA DE LIMA of the Olinda Priory on her Final Profession held in Buique on December 17.

REST IN PEACE

+Sr. Maria Linus Halene, 90, who died in Tutzing on November 6.
+Sr. Maria Breuer, 90, who died in Tutzing on December 10.
+Sr. Gliceria Florentino Diniz, 91, who died in Recife on December 26.

POPE...from page 9
affection of the swaddling clothes that surround him”.

THE TRUE RICHNESS OF CHRISTMAS

The Pope therefore invited to rediscover the surprise and amazement of littleness through the nativity scene, "the littleness of God, who makes himself small, who is not born in the splendor of appearances, but in the poverty of a stable”.



**THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED
THE GENERALATE**