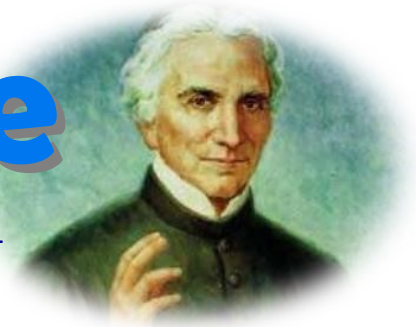


# Vivere Insieme



## Family of Providence

### HEALING THE WORLD - CATECHESIS of Pope Francis

*During the general audiences from August 5 to September 30, 2020, Pope Francis offered catechesis on the situation of the pandemic, with the following topics:*

- Introduction - 5 August
- Faith and human dignity - 2 August
- The preferential option for the poor and the virtue of charity - 19 August
- The universal destination of goods and the virtue of hope - 26 August
- Solidarity and the virtue of faith - 2 September
- Love and the common good - 9 September
- Care of the common home and contemplative dimension - 16 September
- Subsidiarity and virtue of hope - 23 September
- Preparing the future together with Jesus who saves and heals - 30 September

*We transcribe some expressions from the last audience.*

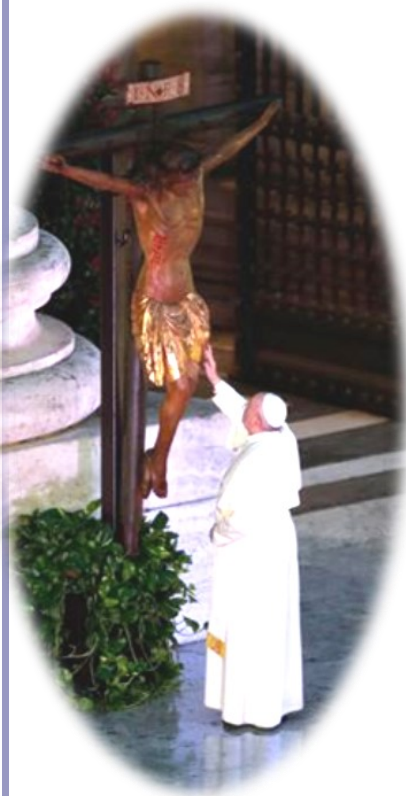
#### ***Preparing the future together with Jesus who saves us***

A small virus continues to cause deep wounds and to expose our physical, social and spiritual vulnerabilities. It has laid bare the great inequality that reigns in the world: inequality of opportunity, of goods, of access to health care, of technology, education: millions of children cannot go to school, and so the list goes on.

These injustices are neither natural nor inevitable. They are the work of man, they come from a model of growth detached from the deepest values. The waste of leftover food: with that waste one can feed everyone. And this has made many people lose hope and has increased uncertainty and anguish.

This is why, to emerge from the pandemic, we must find the cure not only for the coronavirus — which is important! — but also for the great human and socio-economic viruses. They must not be concealed by whitewashing them so that they cannot be seen.

And certainly we cannot expect the economic model that underlies unfair and unsustainable development to solve our problems. It has not and will not do so, because it cannot do so, even though some false



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prophets continue to promise the “trickle-down effect” that never comes.

You yourselves have heard the theory of the glass: the important thing is that the glass become full and then overflow to the poor and to others, and they receive wealth. But there is a phenomenon: the glass begins to fill up and when it is almost full it grows, it grows and grows, and the trickling down never happens. We must be careful.

We need to set to work urgently to generate good policies, to design systems of social organization that reward participation, care and generosity, rather than indifference, exploitation and particular interests. We must go ahead with tenderness.

A fair and equitable society is a healthier society. A participatory society — where the “last” are taken into account just like the “first” — strengthens communion. A society where diversity is respected is much more resistant to any kind of virus.

Let us place this healing journey under the protection of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Health. May she, who carried Jesus in her womb, help us to be trustful.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can work together for the Kingdom of God that Christ inaugurated in this world by coming among us. It is a Kingdom of light in the midst of darkness, of justice in the midst of so many outrages, of joy in the midst of so much pain, of healing and of salvation in the midst of sickness and death, of tenderness in the midst of hatred.

May God grant us to “viralize” love and to “globalize” hope in the light of faith.

2

## *Deliver us from the virus*



*Deliver us, Lord, from this virus, and from all other viruses.*

*Deliver us from the virus of widespread panic, which instead of instilling wisdom, throws us helplessly into the labyrinth of anguish.*

*Deliver us from the virus of discouragement, which steals the strength of the soul, thanks to which we can better face the difficult hours.*

*Deliver us from the virus of pessimism, which does not allow us see that, if we cannot open the door, we can still open the windows.*

*Deliver us from the virus of internal isolation that is disintegrating: the world continues to be a living community.*

*Deliver us from the virus of individualism that makes walls erect, and blows up all the bridges around us.*

*Deliver us from the virus of empty communication in massive doses, which is superimposed on the truth of the words that reach us from silence.*

*Deliver us from the virus of impotence, as one of the most urgent things to learn is the power of our vulnerability.*

*Deliver us, Lord, from the virus of endless nights, since you do not stop reminding us that you yourself have placed us as watchmen of the dawn.*

*José Tolentino Mendonça – Avvenire, Sunday 11 October*

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In this pandemic time, spontaneously our thoughts turn to our sisters and their heroic service.

## The Sisters of Providence among the chlorosis in 1855

From July to September 1855 cholera raged in Friuli like an exterminating scourge. The most critical period took place from July 17th to August 26th, with the peak on the 7th of this month; on that day 125 chlorosis were recorded in the city of Udine, of which 53 died on the same day.

What did the Founder do? Once again he launched his spiritual daughters into the heroic service of charity. If the grenades did not hail, as in 1848, the risk was certainly not less. The disease was an invisible snake and could strike and knock down suddenly. Who cares? The heroism of the sisters was identical, because the spirit of dedication was equal and full.

....

The epidemic also penetrated the Casa delle Derelitte and several girls and sisters were affected. Four of them died: two orphans and two religious. The first to fly to the sky was an eight-and-a-half-year-old orphan, Caterina Forte, who died on June 28th at ten in the morning.

*“And here - Tinti writes - the Mother Superior Maria Lucia De Giorgio shone with virtue together with her religious daughters in the intrepid and most loving assistance to the sick dear; but ouch! that she herself, a true victim of charity, contracted the fatal disease, which quickly killed her on July 28th, leaving the whole community desolate, who appreciated the rare qualities of the deceased mother, and therefore they felt greatly what a grave loss it was for the congregation”.*

The tradition of the house says that Mother De Giorgio contracted the disease precisely because she wanted to assist herself La Forte, so as not to expose the other sisters to the danger of contagion. She died at two in the afternoon, only four hours later the child she had attended. She had just turned thirty-six.

...

In the sad story of those days, something singular and moving happened. Who had been De Giorgio's companion and emulator in assisting the wounded in 1848, she was also in the care of cholera and in death. We allude to Amalia Borghe-se, in religion Sister Maria Gioseffa, who died three days later, on July 31th, together with another ten-year-old orphan, Antonia Venturini. It seemed that she did not want to part with her beloved sister and mother.

And on August 5th the disease struck the twenty-six-year-old Orsola Desitz, hospitalized in the Casa del Provvedimento.

There were no other victims besides these five; but several *sisters and girls were infected* “... several of those who in the pious house were struck by the disease, contracted it in their nursing to chlorosis”.

We would like to know the names of all those 'several' who contracted the disease by assisting the chlorosis. But it is enough that God knows them. Undoubtedly, Father Luigi had reason to console himself for the serious losses, in seeing how his spiritual daughters proved themselves ready for the most heroic obedience.

And the town and Friuli were edified by their heroic example.



# Hospital of Udine, 9th ward

Article published in the newspaper, *Messaggero Veneto*, on 5 November 2020 entitled:

GIFTED THE IMAGE OF SAINT LUIGI SCROSOPPI TO THE HOSPITAL

THE ORGANIZATION THAT INSTALLED IT, IS SATISFIED WITH A 'THANK YOU'

**I**t is one of the many stories, in this terrible year, which instill hope and help us make peace with an increasingly evil world.

It all started in the middle of April during lockdown in a hospital room, with just a look outside, and ended these days with a 'thank you', sounded so pleasing as to cancel any financial profit.

The protagonists of the story are the former mayor of Remanzacco, today councillor, Dario Angeli - one of the first in the region to get infected with corona virus - and an anonymous owner of an organization, Saint Daniel which works for 'Santa Maria della Misericordia' maintenance.

*"From the bed in which I was forced - says the councillor, who last March, after a few days of home isolation, had manifested respiratory problems that had forced him to be hospitalized - I stared from the ward in which I was, no. 9, reserved for infectious diseases, I had noticed that it was dedicated to 'our' St. Luigi Scrosoppi, the Friulian priest, founder of the house of the Sisters of Providence in Orzano, my village.*

*That familiar name kept me company during my hospitalization, finding it right out there, in those difficult days when I was alone and unable to see my family, it seemed almost a sign. Let's say, it made me feel at home.*

*Sometimes later, after being discharged from the hospital, I returned to 'Santa Maria della Misericordia' to carry out a control visit, and I realized that the name was missing.*

*Amazed by what had happened, I asked at the reception for information: I was explained that it was only temporary, as a result of some maintenance, once the work was completed, it would return as before."*

*And there an idea flashed: 'It came naturally to me to make a proposal. I asked, Could I finance the placement of a beautiful image of San Luigi Scrosoppi next to the title? surely, the hospital replied, authorizing me'.*

In these days, the work has been completed, as the councillor had thought, something like a gesture of devotion and homage to a personality who has left a strong mark in Friuli and not only that but also a strong social sign.

Continues Angeli - *"The fact is that, when I called the owner of the company to pay for the work as had been agreed, I heard the answer: 'Nothing is needed, I have already received the compensation: an elderly man, who was so emotional, approached me while I installed the image and he said, "THANK YOU".*

*There could not have been a better payment. I think it's a rare example, which I like to share".*

The benefactor wants to remain in the shadows, he with his company, so as not to spoil the 'purity' of the gesture.

*"I did not imagine - concludes the former mayor - that my purpose would have materialized precisely in this dramatic period. What to say? We also take this as a sign, because perhaps, in situations like this, something else can be used in addition to science.*

*I hope that the image of St. Luigi Scrosoppi can convey trust and hope to the sick and to all the staff engaged in a huge effort".*

Lucia Aviani



# The commitment of the outgoing Church

*Even in times of pandemics and social distancing, the heart of the Church in Bolivia has continued to beat strongly.*

*At the very beginning of this pandemic, when the fear of going out affected relationships, and the limitation of movement reduced living spaces, we realized that, as a church, we had to help our brothers.*

*And we Sisters of Providence with the Charism of Father Luigi are part of this Church.*

It is true that this is a time of trial for everyone. But above all, those who risk being left out, with no alternatives, are the poor homeless and without the possibility of having at least one meal a day. We have received home and securities from life. We have received for free, we must donate for free. Nobody should starve from the coronavirus. Charity can never fail.

And this is what Father Luigi taught us Sisters of Providence, "To save souls with charity".

The first problem that arose is how to operate as a united church, because until now everyone had acted within his own little world.

And here the unity was realized, and in this I saw the first sign of the Holy Spirit, an extraordinary occasion and for this we must thank all those who contributed: priests, religious and laity of the city of El Alto, in Bolivia.

So the solidarity train started

quickly, thanks to various suppliers who helped us collect food to distribute.

I cannot hide the fact that I too, like the others, was very scared, hesitant, almost afraid ... I kept thinking that perhaps it was something greater than me, than us and that perhaps we had embarked on a project we would never have lived up to.

But whenever these feelings gripped our hearts, something inexplicable gave us confidence and strength to carry on.

And it was a profound experience of Faith in the midst of tears and cry for help and despair of many families who, as a consequence of the coronavirus, were left without work, therefore without the possibility of having a piece of bread to feed their children.

We also met many elderly people who live alone and abandoned by their children, hungry and in need of everything, because the pandemic has also taken away

their dignity as a person.

We offered them food: (pasta, legumes, sauce, soft drinks, personal hygiene products and ... much more), all the result of the simple collaboration of all those who wanted to contribute to the collection, even with a small shopping bag; in the end the municipality of the city also joined.

Today I take this opportunity to thank the Lord who allowed me to participate in a totally new mission: in these brothers I found Christ.

I also thank the religious Family and I am proud to represent it in Bolivian land.

*Testimony  
of Sister Sabina Machaca  
El Alto, Bolivia*

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# Providence in a time of pandemic

In the Community Centre of 'Father Luigi Scrosoppi', Sorocaba/SP, we the sisters, teachers, children and their families were surprised by the arrival of the pandemic and, due to the sudden interruption of activities, we did not even have the opportunity to say goodbye to each other.

The rooms remained empty in the Centre as the days were passing, and, in front of this situation, our concern for the children emerged, because when they were coming to the Centre they were protected and fed and were happy to live their childhood in a healthy and joyful way. Now they are isolated inside their own homes, in a very confined spaces, with little or no ventilation, without adequate food and above all, at the risk of suffering domestic violence.

Sisters and teachers have immediately decided to respond to these challenges; the most urgent thing was hunger, because many families without regular work, felt the negative effects of the impact of the pandemic in the same first week. We therefore, sought the collaboration of some entrepreneurs to help us prepare baskets with basic foods, and at the same time, thus reinforce the importance of solidarity with the poorest.

Surprisingly, the Providence was generous and abundant with us, in fact, we began to receive a lot of help and were able to distribute the meal to families every day; we could also help some, namely, homeless



people, the elderly who are isolated in their homes, the disabled, and also those who collect waste from bin, according to the guidelines issued by the Brazilian Ministry of Health. At the same time, we were able to keep the doors open, welcoming all those who came to us looking for help.

Throughout this period, we, sisters and teachers, had a beautiful concrete experience of God's Providence. Father Luigi's words have always resounded in our hearts: "Trust in God, Providence arrives!" and Providence has truly come to our rescue and has never left us alone. He continued to reach us through many collaborators who donated not only food, but also personal hygiene kits, cleaning materials and protective masks, to distribute to children and to their families.

During the distribution of gifts, people's eyes reflected the concern and suffering, but also the joy of our presence; we were, in fact, able to make ourselves present by welcoming and by listening to each one, along with his/her sufferings. In the family there have been some losses, both due to violence and illness, which brought us a sense of desolation, for they were people we knew well because they were coming daily to get food.

Another fact that brought us hope was the gratitude of so many people as they reported that, if they had not received the help from the Center, they would not have been able to overcome many difficulties.

Regarding children, we try to continue our service through various online activities, by using digital tools. In addition, each teacher has prepared an educational



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activity kit which the responsible person comes to collect; through this medium it is possible to maintain weekly contacts with everyone.

Here are two simple phrases of our children in this period of isolation: they express their nostalgia and the desire to return soon to the Community Centre:

*"In this pandemic period, we are going through difficult times, but we continue with this incredible project to give a break to sadness and to give value to joy". (Isabelly)*

*"Thanks to the goodness of St. Luigi, I had the opportunity to know this blessed project where I met good people around me, I experienced special moments during sad and happy days". (Miguel)*

We conclude, quoting a phrase from Pope Francis: *"To get out of this crisis, we must do it together, together, not alone. Alone, you can't do it. Either it is done together or it is not done. We must do it together, all of us, in solidarity. I would like to emphasize this word: solidarity".*

We too can affirm that in this pandemic, solidarity has been visible and palpable. We realized that in people's hearts there is so much generosity, altruism and love for others, especially towards the poorest. Individualism in which we often live, solidarity has become a strong point of reference in our daily life.

We thank God, the Provident Father, who assisted us and continues to take care of us!

Suor Cleusa Aparecida de Oliveira



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Listening to the news every day, announcing a high mortality rate in Brazil and in the world seems to have become a habit for many of us ... But we also have known the names that are well-known around the world for their heroic deeds when they felt challenged by the reality that surrounded them, offering their lives in defence of life, especially of the most vulnerable.

We can say that even here in the **Home for the elderly, 'San Vincenzo de' Pauli in Tatui (State of San Paulo/Brazil)**, there have been and still there are heroes who found joy in hidden service. They have given and continue to give their lives to these elderly brothers of ours, of little value in the eyes of society, but loved by God and beloved of the daughters of Father Luigi Scrosoppi.

During the persistence of this COVID-19 pandemic, we have done the experience of Providence that has guided and continues to guide our mission in this work.



When the first cases of the virus began to spread in Brazil, there was a sign of anxiety, because our beneficiaries are among the people at risk, without great life expectations in the face of a lethal virus that daily destroys many lives around the world.

Precise preventive measures were adopted and implemented immediately by the Board of Administration of the house home, even before the local health inspection bodies made any declaration. Unfortunately, all the measures taken were not enough to stop the virus that silently reached in our

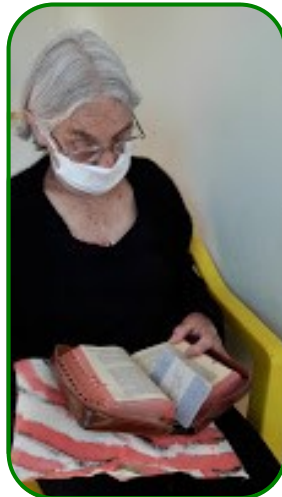
building too. We have thus lived a few months of tension so that it does not spread among the elderly. Visits from their family members were suspended, but we have maintained contact through video calls. Activities open to the local community, including Eucharistic celebrations and the presence of volunteers in various sectors, were also temporarily interrupted. Everything was done without sparing any effort and we were able to stand by these brothers and sisters of ours. We kept some moments of celebration in the chapel and outdoors which were attended with great intensity by all the participants, since the Eucharist is the fundamental thing for us and for them.



this is a sign of Providence for the sustainability of this house in all its aspects: financial, food, health and human.

In all this our religious Family is giving a clear testimony of defence of life, even in the face of fear and insecurity which have taken over some collaborators; we remembered our Congregation in times of war and epidemics, in the course of history and of how the sisters gave themselves to the good of those affected. Even today many of our sisters and young ones in formation have put themselves into service without fear of being contaminated, and are thus a sign of hope for the elderly, even when they are positive.

Despite all these restrictions, the sounds of instruments and singing voices often spread throughout the house, creating a more peaceful and serene atmosphere and blocking the negative news given by the media.



The physiotherapist, who relieves the physical pain of the elderly is of great help in this critical moment of social distance.

Besides, a team of health workers who work to ensure the quality of care, drastically reducing the appearance of common flu syndromes in winter, increased compared to previous years or worsened by pre-existing diseases.

With great surprise we realized that solidarity spreads in the hearts of many people like a virus and that its expansion on the territory cannot be measured;



This joyful and fair offering within the walls of our home for the elderly did not go unnoticed, instead it was recognized and praised by the council of the Institute which affirmed: "These are sisters who take seriously the life of the defenceless".

We thank the Lord for the great wonders he has done for us, because none of our elderly brothers who were infected inside the House lost their lives due to virus. We too, today, can truly make these words our own: "Enumerate, enumerate all the graces that the Lord has given you ...".

*Community of Tatuí/SP*

## The community of Belvedere in quarantine

ARTICLE WRITTEN

AT THE BEGINNING OF DECEMBER

Writing the experience of the community (30 sisters) in these days of "quarantine" is not easy: Many, too many are the things that could be shared.

The first thought that came to me was to do a personal interview with all the sisters, but it would have been too long, even if it was very significant; each one, in fact, would have had something particular to say, even if only to thank the Providence while being positive with corona virus that made us experience the great charity used by the "Community", the benevolence of Providence; yes, we got infected and sick, but not in a serious way, perhaps just to make us understand our fragilities and the poverty without God's help.

Anyway, here we are: from one day to the next we found ourselves all positive with corona virus and therefore in isolation. Some were shifted from their room and taken to the first floor to make the service more functional.

The feelings of each one in these days are the most diverse: from

comic-dramatic, to worry, to endurance, to serene acceptance.

What seems true for us to affirm, with all sincerity and despite some inevitable but benevolent grumbling, is the grateful attitude to the Lord, to the Community, to the Staff, who provide us with everything: always hot meals, to special and personalized attention, coffee, juice, clothes that is always clean, washed and ironed every day and, last but not least, the care of nurses and pharmacological assistance.

What to say more? Isn't this also part of that 'hundredfold' promised to those who choose to follow the Lord?

Our sacrifice is to respect the rules: to stay in one's own room (which has become a real prison for some) and wait patiently for a negative result without leaving too much damage on us.

Thanks to God until today we have not had any serious cases that provoked anxiety: really, even in the collective infection, we say "thank you".

The liturgical season of Advent that we live and that we can follow through various broadcasts on the radio, helps us to reflect on a new way of waiting for the Lord, without substitutes, but in commitment and offering for those who, much worse than us, lives in situa-

tions of isolation, discomfort, fear, hunger and cold.

Yes, this makes our hearts to invoke the Lord for all these brothers/sisters in need, so that there will always be someone who provides for them, knowing well that it is not obvious.

Therefore, we express our praise and our deepest gratitude to Him, the Provident Father, and to our religious Family.

And with serene confidence waiting for the next test which will tell us the new truth!

A heartfelt thanks from the whole community of Belvedere, to the sisters who have come to our aid, to all the communities that in various ways have made themselves present and continue to offer prayers and expressions of fraternal/sisterly affection for us.

Everything is now very pleasing and is good for us, it makes us enjoy the joy of being a big family, it gives us courage and hope that everything will pass soon.

A fraternal and affectionate wish for a good Advent journey with the guidance of Mary, the Immaculate Virgin. And a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

*Sisters*

*of the community of Belvedere*



**THE DAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2020  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC,  
SERGIO MATTARELLA,  
TURNS ON THE LAMP FOR PEACE  
IN THE SANCTUARY OF THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.**

*Let your blessing come down to Italy, Father  
and on all the Countries of the five Continents,  
the awareness of being one big family grows,  
in harmony and justice*

## Rejoice! Since a *child* was born to us..

With this thought of Isaiah, I will tell a little story that happened recently. It brings us a great joy to be able to share our life and mission, especially with those who help us and support us in many ways.

About 3 months ago, we met a Thai man who came to our center to bring us some vegetables. It was the first time he has come and he told us a little about his life. He sells vegetables to live. He goes to neighboring cities to buy at nighttime and at dawn, and he sells at the street fairs.

Before COVID 19, he used to sell to those in the border country of Laos. Now the border is closed and so, often, he is unable to sell and donate to the places he knows where they need his help. By chance, he ended up finding our center. He has a girl who is not yet 3 years old.

His wife abandoned them when the child was 9 months old and he has taken care of her alone, carrying her everywhere he goes, in the market and in the countryside. His daughter usually rejects people around her, but with us, she was very calm.

He said he could not explain her change in behavior and asked if he could bring her back sometimes to play with our girls. In the following days, *Samai*, the daughter, began to come with more and more frequency to visit us together with her father. Immediately she felt at home.

Her father was happy and relieved, asking us if we could take her into our center. We told him that we do not have girls so small in our center, but she can come and be with us on the weekends when the girls are not at school. Then she can play and interact with other children. Having been only with her father inside the vegetable and fruit truck, she still does not speak and interacting with the other girls may help her learn to communicate.

On November 7th, 2020, the small girl, *Samai* came as usual and her father left her at the gate. She played all day long and was happy, but that day her father did not come to pick her up. After a few days we had news of him. In fact, he was asking for help for his little daughter. He told us that he could not continue leaving his daughter trapped in the car every day and night. His thoughts were always tormented by the thought that he would find her dead or she would be robbed. After he met us, he had no doubt that we would be the best people to take care of his daughter.

He said: *"I go to the temple and pray, I feel peace when I pray, but it is not the same peace that I feel when I come here, I am sure that here I find the peace that make me feel secure and relieved from my worries."*

*Samai* is only 3 years old right now and we ended up welcoming her into our group. She feels at home and it seems as if she has always lived here. In the short time she has been here she is already talking and interacting with the 43 other girls, calling them older sisters.

Like *Samai* and many of our girls, each one tells us: *"Jesus is incarnating once again and how we can welcome Him into our Home?"*

May the baby Jesus help us to welcome Him in the little ones and to those who need us...



# BETTER TO LIGHT A CANDLE THAN CURSE THE DARKNESS

- proverb -

On 24 October 2020, we, the Sisters of Providence celebrated the Eucharist in thanksgiving for the 40 years of our presence in Bolivia.

We wanted to express our gratitude and joy for the strength of the charism of Father Luigi, which is now very much alive in the Bolivian land through his daughters.

How can we not turn our gaze to that 24th October 1980, when the immense grace of God gave us the faith, strength and the courage to implant the Charism of Charity here?

*Sr. Rosa Zugliani, Sr. Clara Zurlo, Sr. Catalina Zanit* from Uruguay and then, *Sr. Generosa Degaudenz*, arrived from Italy to the beautiful Bolivian land.

Animated by the Spirit of God, we began our journey and arrived in the city of San Carlos; the house was simple, prepared only with the

necessary things and thus we immediately experienced poverty and the joy of having just what little we needed... and moreover we didn't know a word in Spanish.

We spent the first period to organize ourselves and to know the new reality we had arrived in: *that's why we decided to light a candle, instead of cursing the darkness!*

In the following years, from San Carlos we moved to the valleys of Cochabamba, then we crossed the plateau of the City of La Paz, by sowing the light of Charity, radiating the goodness of God through many works dedicated to human promotion and education, but above all to evangelization because it is by evangelizing that one educates and it is by educating that one evangelizes. Now we are present in four communities with six apostolic activities, which began and going ahead well, thanks to God's work of providence.

Working and evangelizing in this Bolivian land, with so many challenges but also with much joy, has taught us to perceive that we are surrounded by good people, who are happy with good and appreciate the value of life, who love intensely even when they suffer, who struggle daily to get what is necessary, who know how to work hard and sacrifice themselves to earn their daily bread and who show great faith in God the Father.



We can say that we have lit a little light and people have helped us to continue to radiate love with great simplicity and joy; joy and optimism, sign of a heart that loves the Lord and that walks without giving up. We see the fruits expressed in the smiles of children, in the grateful gaze of the elderly, in the courage of the young. For all this we want to say, with the book of Wisdom: "It is your Providence, O Father, that guides it ..." (Wis 14,3): we trust in You, because we are the work of your hands.

An "agimus" rises in the Church of Bolivia, which has opened the door to us to sow the light of Christ; thanks to Mons. Tito Solari who invited us and responded to our Congregation and initiated this adventure of Provident God; thanks to all those who have contributed so that through us, charity can be realized in this land, blessed and loved by God.

We entrust our future to Him.



## The Sisters of Providence in Setto, Benin

"Mi Kwabo", "Mi fon Ganji a?"

these phrases mean that "Welcome" "Did you wake up well?" These are the first words that anyone you meet on the streets of Setto say to you, "SE TO NO" which means "be careful", is a village of over 13,000 inhabitants that welcomed the first community of the Sisters on 26 October, 2017, after several years of visits and reflections by the provincial council.

Without a house of their own, this small community has chosen to begin its mission in a rented house, located in a courtyard where other families also live.

Unfortunately, the experience of the great joy of the initial stage fade away due to the departure of Sister Piagiovanna for the eternal reward (only one month after the opening), the oldest and most expert of the newborn community.

However, in the certainty that Sr. Pia is watching over this new mission that she herself desired with all her heart, despite her fragile health and all the hardships of the beginning stage, the small community, composed of only two members, continued the journey, especially in pastoral level, by visiting the village chapels and, by meeting with all the groups and movements present in the parish.

Despite its 80 years of evangelization, the parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Setto has few Christians and the groups and movements lack supervision and organization. This is why the parish priest, Father Emmanuel Kanhou, asks for the presence of the Sisters of Providence for the catechesis, to help the youth, children, lectors, women,

etc.

After 6 months of community life, the small community is strengthened by the presence of Sr. Félicité.

Welcome to her as the mission is vast.

In the great field of mission, the dream that always live in the hearts of the sisters is to establish the work of the Founder, with special attention for the most disadvantaged in the village. To achieve this goal, the community relied on volunteers who periodically provided us with assistance (translation, visits, meetings, purchases). Thus, a group called, "Friends of Father Luigi of Setto" was formed in January 2019. The group prays with the community on the 3rd Sunday of the month and comes together for formation on the 1st Tuesday of each month. This group carries out concrete activities in the village and its surroundings, during great feasts of the liturgical year (Christmas and Lent) and is attentive to the needs of the people, in particular the elderly, orphans, disabled or other cases of difficulty of various kinds.

The education of young people is one of the main aspects in our mission. In fact, Setto is the only village in the district (which includes 9 townships) to have a high school from the 6th grade to the end of the school cycle. However, the difficult conditions of living and studying of students who come from other villages cause failures, dropouts and even early pregnancies of girls.

A large number of these young people find themselves in vocational training centre (sewing, hairstyle, weaving, carpentry, mechanics ...) with the aim of learning a trade and becoming autonomous. Unfortunately, the disengagement of the parents and the lack of financial

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How can a community live without water, an essential element for daily life? And it was precisely this scarcity that made us experience hospitality, attention and solidarity which is proper to African culture. So, as soon as we arrived, a group of women was formed to bring water to the community and this continues to this day.

With this great enthusiasm of most of the inhabitants in welcoming us, the small community began to get to know its new mission place by visiting various parts of the village.



means of these apprentices exposes them to the exploitation of their owners and so very few succeed in their apprenticeship. Setto has about fifty vocational training centres with more than

300 apprentices. With the aim of helping leaders humanize their service and provide our support in the human formation of apprentices, we have held several meetings throughout the year 2020.

In our activities, let's not forget that early childhood is the apple of our Founder's eye. Setto's children love us dearly; they are the first to welcome us, even before the adults and even when they are still on their mother's shoulders! Sometimes it's so moving! So, we also have some hope for a kindergarten in the village, which lacks a lot of materials, and the Catholic school of the parish



that the group of "FRIENDS OF UDINE" helped to complete up to 6th classes.

At the end of these three years of mission, we can say that Providence is making its way here in Setto. Despite the difficult conditions of the community, the Lord has always surrounded us with people who help us on right time. We thank our superiors for their trust and support.

With the financial support of our bishop, Msgr. Eugene Cyrille Houndekon, from the family of Sister Pia and from her hometown and from our religious Family, the construction of the house for the community is now going ahead and it is an immense grace for us.

*We send a fraternal greeting, from the pages of VIVERE INSIEME, to all the sisters of the Congregation and to all those who will read the magazine.*

## An Extra Mile...

### Towards Healthcare and Skill Development for Dropout Youth

#### The Garo Tribes of Meghalaya

Our community is situated in a village called Rimrangpara where we are working in close collaboration with a parish under Tura diocese. It is located in West Garo Hills. In the state of Meghalaya there are three main tribes namely; Garo, Khasi and Jantia. Garo is the name both of the tribe and the local language. Unlike the well known patriarchal society, Garos are a matrilineal society though not matriarchal. Hence, in the Garo society the children inherit the title of the mother and all the property belongs to her. However, it is always the man/husband who manages the property of the woman/wife. After marriage, the young man leaves his parents and goes to live with his wife's family.

Almost 80% of the population lives in the villages where it is often not reachable and lacking support from the government. Two main difficulties, which can be observed in these remote villages are the lack of good formal education and lack of healthcare. From the many patients who frequent our dispensary, we can analyze that 50% of them have skin related diseases due to unhygienic living conditions and malaria. There are also quite a few women dying at childbirth.

Regarding the economic aspect, the central and local government helps the people towards economic growth in various ways. They receive many schemes and grants for the construction of concrete buildings, toilets, village roads, etc. The government and the NGOs promote the cultivation of cash crops such as Rubber, Cashew Nut, Areca Nut and Black Pepper. However, many school dropouts are untouched by these opportunities and are in their homes doing nothing useful which will secure their future.



## The Dream

From this brief presentation of socio-cultural, health and economic panorama of the context, we come to the main motivation why we want to take a step ahead concerning the health care and help to the dropout youth. Our dream of serving better the people will become a reality, thanks to the support and encouragement of the religious Family. We are also thankful to Solidarmondo and a few individual donors from Italy who are willing to support us in this new venture. We are sincerely grateful to the Hilton Fund for Sisters (HFS) for having approved the project to sustain our upcoming Handloom and Tailoring center.

## Maternity Ward and Laboratory

The main scope of opening a Maternity Ward is to reach out to the pregnant mothers of the area so that they can give birth in a clean and hygienic environment and to care for their health in a better way. By starting the Maternity Ward, we want to reduce the Infant Mortality Rate which is high every year in this area. Besides, the nearby government-run Public Health Center (PHC) is not functioning as it should. People always complain about lack of proper care and management of the health center.

With the opening of our Maternity Ward, we want to team up with the Rimrangpara Health Center for doing Antenatal and Postnatal checkup.

We can conduct awareness session for the mothers on neonatal care, nutrition and health of pregnant mothers and children. Periodic sessions and workshops will be conducted on parenthood, hygiene, sanitation and safe drinking water.

There will be a Laboratory also for the diagnosis of general sickness such as malaria, typhoid, blood test, TB test, pregnancy test, etc.

## Handloom and Tailoring center

From the census taken in the villages during the past months, we observed that there are many dropout youth mostly boys and a few girls who are simply idle at home. We thought of how we could help them and give them some professional training apart from faith formation. Hence, this Handloom and Tailoring center is one of the possibility we are opening for them. God willing, we plan to open the centre in January 2021. There are already some who have expressed their desire to come and learn. It is one way of promoting their culture and at the same time an opportunity for a better future.

The Weaving learners will get one year course from an expert weaver from Monday to Friday, at the end of which they can start weaving by themselves. Meanwhile we will link up with the government handloom office to get subsidies for them and for the center. At the end of the course we will help them get a handloom machine to start weaving by themselves and earn their living.

The tailoring trainees will have six months course from an expert tailor. They will learn how to stitch common clothing of the people and according to the trend. Our aim is to make them skillful in stitching uniforms so that we can take up the stitching of the school uniforms here. It will be an important means of income both for them and for the center.

*In this new year declared as the Year of St. Joseph, we entrust to him all our dreams and plans so that he may guide us and help us to be fruitful in our small initiatives of love, for the good and development of the people.*



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# Economy of Francesco

## When the future meets everyone's YES



A meeting called “The Economy of Francesco” took place from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of November where the Pope invited all young economists to build up a new economy able to help the man in its whole development.

The event had to take place in Assisi in March 2020 but the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic forced the organisational committee to reorganise its form. Actually the virus seemed to be a great opportunity - to create new and courageous processes - rather than an obstacle, as the economist Mr Luigini Bruni, event manager, said.

Since March a new path along 12 thematic villages has begun. From the very beginning we understood that this event was something special because our aim was working and growing together and not only focusing on the final event.

In my group - “Imprese in Transizione” (*Companies in Transition*) - more than two hundred young men and women from all over the world put their time, passion, knowledge and energy at stake to create something new. It really moved me.

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We organised several meetings divided according to four different topics: company’s mission and position; sustainable businesses’ models; technologies for a common good and the relationship between institutions and companies’ ecosystems.

Our group work consisted in discussing new creative solutions and finally we brought Pope Francis fifteen practical proposals such as a platform connecting affine companies interested in the “Laudatio Si” and new educational-technological projects in Zambia.

This three-day meeting in Assisi was a great experience. Our programme was really full: we had several plenary meetings with great managers and economists and some others in which young economists presented and discussed some of their proposals.

Also “meeting” Saint Francis was a moving experience: joining his time, his life and visiting his places allowed us to feel really close to him along our new path.

Everyone, with a strong sense of responsibility, contributed to this great work sharing the joy of participating in a new marathon for a different world.

Many topics were discussed: health, peace, companies, social equality, etc...

I was really impressed with the meeting with Professor Jeffrey Sachs in which we discussed the concept of Happiness. It could seem a wide, abstract topic for many of us but, as Pope Francis said in his final speech, this is actually the aim of the economy: the happiness of mankind. We are all sharing the same interest and desire and - thanks to the “Economy of Francis” - it seems clear that we all need to move toward Happiness.

In the Gospel according to Saint Mark we read: “For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?”. This is a crucial question when we are talking about the relationship between profit

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and social and environmental goals, which are often seen in opposition. So with Professor Sachs we didn't argue about an abstract idea of happiness, it was rather a concrete discussion on how our daily world should change to enable mankind in its whole development.

Subsidiarity of territories and communities as a way to reach a real sustainable world is something we could experience in many realities which were presented during the meeting.

The "Economy of Francis" gave me hope as everyone of us could see that a change is possible and something new has already been put into effect: despite our world's motto "time is money" 1500 young people from 115 countries are working together for a better place where to live.



Working together with colleagues from Guatemala, Argentina, Uganda, Spain, Philippines, gave me the chance to understand that the future is not far away from us and it could be fed by everyone's daily YES.

The Pope's video as a conclusion of our three-day meeting provided me food for thoughts and a great gratitude for the company of the Church along this path.

He also told us: "have a positive impact in your towns and at universities, at work and in the unions, in companies and in movements, in private and public offices with intelligence, loyalty and belief to reach the nucleus and the hearth where topics and themes are set and developed". Moreover, he also threw down a challenge: *"You cannot stay aside from the present or even from the future. Either you are involved or the story will pass over you"*.

This was a great boost since we could understand what our call is: saying our "yes" in our daily life. For me, as a researcher, this means saying "yes" to my daily matters with the aim of bringing the world a little contribution of mine and start *"processes, mark new paths, enlarge the horizons, creating a sense of belonging"*.

Being part of the large family of the Church is precisely a gift for me which I found in friends and colleagues during the Economy of Francis. We are not alone and we have realised it in the new path we have been walking along. But what changes our way of behaving and lets us move towards creative and concrete solutions for a true happiness of mankind in its whole is becoming aware of this sense of belonging, starting with me.

Step by step we will keep on working on these topics, but the meeting in Assisi was a breath of fresh air along this fascinating path.

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