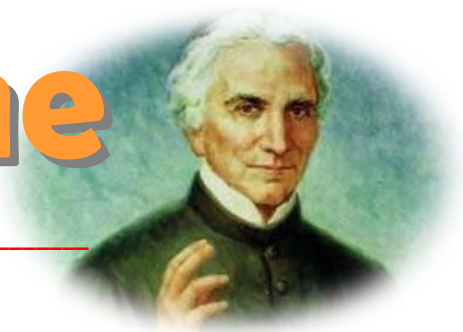


Vivere Insieme



Family of Providence

THE PRAYER - CATECHESIS OF POPE FRANCIS



Pope Francis, from June 2020 to October 2021, during the General audience of Wednesday, took around 38 catechesis on prayer to the faithful. Gathering all these points, it could become a source of profound and rich meditation.

In the embarrassment of choice, we would like to write out two brief passages:

- *Relationship between faith, life and prayer*
- *To feel accepted by Jesus in his dialogue with the Father*

“Everything in the human being is ‘binary’: our body is symmetrical, we have two arms, two eyes, two hands... And so, work and prayer are also complementary. Prayer - which is the “breath” of everything - remains as the vital backdrop of work, even in moments in which this is not explicit. It is inhuman to be so absorbed by work that you can no longer find the time for prayer.

At the same time, a prayer that alienates itself from life is not healthy.

A prayer that alienates us from the concreteness of life becomes spiritualism, or worse, ritualism. Let us remember that Jesus, after revealing his glory to the disciples on Mount Tabor, did not want to prolong that moment of ecstasy, but instead came down from the mountain with them and resumed the daily journey. Because that experience had to remain in their hearts as the light and strength of their faith; also a light and strength for the days that were soon to come: those of the Passion. In this way, the time dedicated to being with God revives faith, which helps us in the concreteness of living, and faith, in turn, nurtures prayer, without interruption. In this circularity between faith, life and prayer, one keeps alight that flame of Christian love that God expects of us.” *(Catechesis on 9th July 2021)*

And on his last series of catechesis on prayer he concludes:

“We have to remember the grace that not only do we pray, but that, so to speak, we have been “prayed”. We have already been welcomed into Jesus’ dialogue with the Father, in communion with the Holy Spirit. Jesus prays for me: each one of us can carry this in their heart. We must not forget this. Even in the worst moments. We are already welcomed into Jesus’ dialogue with the Father, in communion of the Holy Spirit. We were willed by Christ Jesus, and even in the hour of his passion, death and resurrection, everything was offered for us. And so, with prayer and with life, all that remains is only to have courage and hope, and, with this courage and hope, to deeply feel Jesus’ prayer and to keep on going: so that our life may be one of giving glory to God in the knowledge that he prays for me to the Father, that Jesus prays for me.” *(Catechesis on 16th June 2021)*

Fr. Luigi prayed like the way Saints did

From the testimony of Sr. Santina Gilmozzi

*Born at Ziano of Fiemme (TN) On 14th June 1854
Entered the Institute on 20th November 1880
Died at Cormons on 18th February 1939*

“The great devotion of our Fr. Luigi used to be particularly evident in the evenings, when all the sisters were by then in their own rooms to take night rest.

Fr. Luigi, leaving behind his works used to enter in the small church to spend one hour of prayer and the holy exercise of Via Crucis; he used to kiss the floor at every station even with great discomfort due to weak and sickly legs. Before his last days, he could kiss the floor only three times which commemorates the three fall of Jesus from the cross.

Besides Fr. Luigi used to recite the third part of the holy rosary and then he would read a small book on holy Sacrament written by St. Alphonsus Maria di Liguori which he always carried with him, or left on the first pew.

One of the postulants used to be assigned to spend an hour of adoration, so she could stay in the small church with Fr. Luigi. Seeing her drowsiness, he would ask her to pray the rosary with him and then go near to Jesus. At times he would send her to sleep but she would overcome her drowsiness while praying with him.

His devotion stands out particularly during the celebration of the Holy Mass. He would not take more than thirty minutes but in the central parts he would express angelic ardour, pronouncing the liturgical words of the consecration with emphasis and with angelic devotion.

During the time of Fr. Luigi, the church was open also to the outsiders. Many would come to see and witness the holy mass of this saint, as they called him so. Many girls and former students would come from far off places to attend the holy mass celebrated by him and they would go back edified, good and contented.

His piety is manifested not only during the time of spiritual exercises and holy mass. Even while

climbing up and down the stairs or in corridors, one could always see rosary in his hand. Soon after doing the account work and writing them, he always had the rosary in his hand, even if not able to recite the entire mysteries, he would say Hail Mary. In this way he gave good example of unceasing prayer to those whom he encountered, just as Jesus says: *pray without ceasing, pray tirelessly.*”



Well then, why would the image of the worn out shoes of Fr. Luigi illustrate his piety?

Those shoes, fully consumed that even the shoemaker was not willing to mend it, were the signs of his earthly pilgrimage on this earth. It is also the symbol of his interior journey of holiness and his inflamed love for God, visibly seen in his daily reaching out towards his brethren with infinite generosity.

Faith, prayer and life: here is the synthesis of love for God and his neighbour, as Pope Francis reminded us.

Let us then put our feet inside those worn out shoes of our saint, let us place our hearts in the heart of our dear Fr. Luigi and sense the commitment of walking in the way of the Gospel like he did, loving Jesus Christ, encountering Him in prayer so as to encounter Him in every brother and sister.

Supplication and Gratitude



Every time we, sisters of the Generalate House, enter the chapel for prayer, our gaze stops for a moment on the image of Saint Joseph and Saint Cajetan, one at the right and one at the left of the entrance door, who seem to greet us and assure us their help in our encounter with the Lord. In the recent months the two statues have been 'renovated' and now they have a fresh and new look.

They are fathers and protectors of the Congregation who always had a special place in the heart of every sister of Providence and we too have them in our hearts. How many prayers, how many supplications, how many thanksgivings have reached them over the years! How much relief, how much help, how much benevolence they have provided us!

Let's commence with Saint Joseph: we are quite familiar with

the practice of our mothers of hanging the bag around his neck to ask for the money which was absolutely necessary and the chronicles say that it never remained there for so long, because the prayer was answered soon.

We too did the same: a small bag was placed at the foot of the statue of St. Joseph to collect the small sheets of papers with our petitions. But soon the bag was found to be insufficient and it had to be replaced with a larger one.

Once a month, on every first Wednesday, we, prayerfully read the sheet of papers with the prayers addressed to our saint and, if they have been answered, we burn them, otherwise they still remain at his feet, as if to 'compel' him to intercede for the requested grace: a job for an unemployed family member / friend, good health for a loved one, overcoming a difficulty in relationship, financial help for one of our works, the advancement of a bureaucratic procedure, the success of the study, etc.

And St. Cajetan? We are aware that it is not enough just to ask, but that it is also our duty to thank for the grace received, and also a bag was placed at the foot of his statue as a gratitude to the Providence and for his gifts.

On the first Sunday of each month, after having remembered him in the Vespers, it was time for the bag to be opened and to read the thanks-

giving for the graces received: the restored health, the employment found, the reconciliation that has taken place, the gift of new vocations, a well-completed bureaucratic procedure, etc. ...

The sheet of papers were then delivered to the reporter, so that she can keep track of them in the chronicle of community.

Gratitude is the expression of a delicate and sensitive heart, capable of 'seeing' the great benefit that one receives, without expecting or taking it for granted. Our gratitude should not be solely for material things, which, with joy and enthusiasm, we used to call 'providence' when we receive them as a free gift.

However, we know well that the 'MORE', promised by the Gospel is not just food and drink, but it is every good that God the Father gives us.

Yet... who knows why it was not necessary to put a second bag at the feet of St. Cajetan?





CORMONS: a dual Sanctuary

In our spacious house in Cormons there are different places destined for prayer: the sanctuary of "Mystical Rose", the Eucharistic chapel at the heart of the infirmary, the choir of "Sacred Heart" for the community and chapel of "St. Joseph"...

These sacred places that have seen many sisters kneel in prayer and contemplation, on the worn out benches, since 1866.

4

How do you pray in Cormons?
Is the question that emerges in one's mind in various occasions, knowing that many people turn to *this dual sanctuary*, that of Mystical Rose and that of the anguish of the central Infirmary, seeking prayers and intercessions.

Here many sisters here, with their very life and tireless service, manifested how precious it is to spend oneself totally for the Kingdom in a religious family which is from its origin, characterized by an immeasurable self-giving.

Today, they pray incessantly for those who work in different missions and offer to God all their sacrifices for the Church and for the whole world.

For our Family, they are precious pearls that do not lose their brightness despite the advancing age: prayer and sacrifice make them pleasing in the eyes of the Lord.

With the courage to throw oneself into the mystery of God, seeking only the strength to

believe, to hope, to love and... to continue to pray.

With the Liturgy of the Hours and the Holy Eucharistic Celebration, **the community prays** and continually make rises to heaven, the song of gratitude and joy for God's fidelity all throughout their life.

They implore and plead for the needs of the Church and of the suffering and the lost humanity of our time.

They evangelize, recognizing that the essential mission in the present time is to welcome God's will with availability and joy, bearing witness to how beautiful it is to spend oneself to the end for the cause of the Kingdom.

Every single sister prays: with her eyes fixed on the Eucharist in contemplative prayer; with the gaze that knows the Word of God opened in her hands; with the rosary beads clapped in the hands interceding world.

Or they are there, at the feet of the Master in silent adoration, simply exposed to the rays of the divine Sun, with the whole body that expresses prayer and communion.

They pray in different stages of life: living old age as a long vigil in the temple, waiting for a God who saves and fills the emptiness of the night.

Prayer that welcomes life with joy even as the years go by and gives thanks to God for the gift of each new day.

Prayer which is the total offering of life, in the grateful memory of the past and in the acceptance of the present time. Prayer of the heart that makes room for the contemplation of the mysterious presence of God in the silence of all earthly realities.

In this way, loving care, humble services, constant dedication, tender compassion and patient listening which number of sisters bestow on those who are sick and in need, become their prayer.

Every little gesture of love, tenderness, mutual help is made as prayer; and everything that is lived and worked in everyday life becomes "incense" that rises to God, invoking salvation for all humanity.

The sister who are reduced to their bed of pain, at times for a long years in complete immobili-

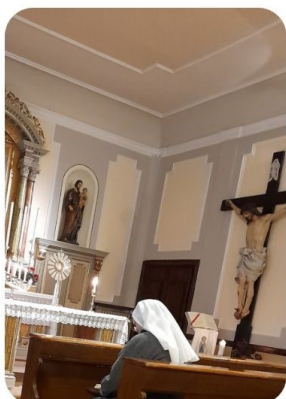
ty and in need every assistance are also prayer. They are like trees without leaves, with bare branches, which no longer have anything, stripped of everything: now these sisters are only silent prayer.

Why not? Complaints, expressions of pain, grievous questions that sometimes emerge in moments of acute suffering or lack of clarity of thought can also be transformed as an invocation to God: welcomed in the heart of those who assist, they are transformed into invocation and supplication to the mercy of God.

And then the great prayer when you are next to the one who is about to "meet the Bridegroom": the heartfelt prayer of the one who watches and accompanies this decisive moment and the prayer of the one who surrenders oneself to the Father with a supreme act of abandonment.

Then in the final farewell in the Sanctuary, prayer is sure hope, when the doors are wide opened to begin the journey towards the cemetery, which is being expressed with the song "*The angels lead you to heaven..*" which resonates "*I will go to see her some day, in heaven my homeland, I will go to see Mary...*" almost a cross-reference of the sister who left us.

Thus in Commons,
prayer is like a kaleidoscope:
it has a thousand shades,
it rises to God day and night and
invokes peace and blessings on every creature
and on the whole world.



The Pandemic and the Sisters of Providence

of St. Joseph province - JNDJA



As the daughters of a Valiant Father, we felt belittle to remain behind the closed doors. we mustered courage and in our good faith we resolved to reach out to the people around us.

All the communities, each according to its capacity, participated in alleviating, at least a little, the sufferings of our neighbours by distributing some essential commodity kit.

On 10th June, on the canonization day of our beloved founder, we went to the streets to meet the poor ones and to give them food.

In fact, there were many hungry mouths on the streets who had not eaten for days. The sisters also visited many poor families with food items. Attracted by this kind act of our sisters, many benefactors came forward with financial help so that we could reach out to many more poor people on the streets.

On the same day as though like a divine intervention, around 25 of

us got vaccinated with the first jab. From then, before every feast day celebration of our religious Family, we first reach out to the people on the streets then we bring their sorrows and poverty to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

We read in the book of Exodus (17,12-13) that as long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. Trusting in the providence of God, all the communities of St. Joseph province were on the knees in adoration daily to fight against the Covid 19 pandemic.

By the grace of God none of us or our mission stations were affected gravely like in the days of the second world war where our sisters were well protected. We believe completely that it was the Providence of God that kept us safe from this deadly virus.

As St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: *"We are hard pressed on all sides, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed"* (2 Cor,4;8).

The Covid 19 created in all of us fear and uncertainty but we believe that our God is a provident God. He protects us and provides our every need.

He blesses every work of our hands when it is done for the poorest of the poor.

Covid 19 pandemic! Even now we are not free from its great panic. Like several parts of the world, India also has been experiencing a massive surge of Covid 19 cases, with the peak of deaths in the month of April.

6 West Bengal, where many of our communities are situated, also was one of the worst affected states. For almost one month with the frequency of an hour a shocking news arrived us. Bengal known for its music and noisy streets slipped into pin drop silence. Only the frightening Cyrene of the ambulance was heard from the streets. Clamor for hospital beds and Oxygen was really heart-rending scenes always rolled on the TV screen.

Crematoriums and cemeteries became piles of dead bodies. The bodies were carried to crematorium where there were no people to cremate the bodies. At times the people even waited for two to three days to carry out the last rites and cremation of their deceased ones. Fear, fatigue, loss, poverty, trauma was the hallmark of the season.





LONGING FOR FREEDOM

It all started on 1st February 2021: the military arrested Aung San Suu Kyi, (councillor of state and one of the first founders of the National League for Democracy (LND), a party opposing the military dictatorship that has characterized Burmese history starting from 1962), President Win Myint and other leading figures of the National League for Democracy, in a morning raid, few hours before Myanmar's new parliament met for its first session.

On that very day we, united with all the sisters of Providence all over the world, celebrated the 184th birth anniversary of our Congregation, so we were full of joy. Unfortunately on that very special day, the military coup turned our happiness into great pain. It was an unforgettable event not only for us but also for all the citizens of Myanmar and since then we have never stopped praying for peace and for the release of all those who have been imprisoned, being convinced that prayer is powerful and can transform any bad situation into good.

Unfortunately, after a few days, the people of Myanmar found themselves in the midst of an incredible struggle against the military Tatmadaw (the army that should be responsible for the national security and defence of Burma) and this continues to this day.

We, novices, postulants and sisters, participated in the procession with the recitation of the Rosary led by the Catholic Community. A feeling of incredible sadness touched our hearts as we saw many people, especially young boys and girls, courageously coming to the streets to ask for freedom, even in the midst of the spread of the covid-19 pandemic.

Many times, at 8.00 in the evening and late at night, the atmosphere of Yangon, the largest city in Myanmar, was filled with the noises of beating the metal containers, pots, buckets, etc., in protest against the coup.



We too have joined in this plea for freedom and from our courtyard we have been beating the pots for two months.

Eight months from the commencement, the situation has not improved at all, on the contrary it is getting worse and worse. Many people have been arrested, some even killed, all guilty only because of asking for peace and freedom; many government employees have signed up to the “Civil Disobedience Movement” (CDM), which was born a few days after the military coup attack of 1st February.

Almost every night in the streets near our convent, there were shootings and explosions of bombs. We were all full of fear and terror, so we were always on alert, but we thank God that we are all safe and sound. Despite everything, we continue to hope and pray for a peaceful solution to this grave situation, because our Almighty God can transform darkness into light.

We humbly ask all of you to continue to pray fervently for our dear Myanmar. Thank you.

The novices of the Delegation, from Yangon



Ten years of Providence

It is always impossible to enumerate the graces of the Lord, but it is even more so for us, in memory of the 10 years of our presence in Thailand. If it were possible to narrate all the good, we received and remember the good people we met on our journey, a book would not be enough to write them ... It is also difficult to say thank you in a few words, when our heart is full of memories, of events, of people ...

First of all, we thank God for His Merciful Love and His Providence: He has always been close to us at all times, in every need and has never let us deprived of His Help. We thank all the people God has sent to support us and to help us in our mission; without them how many things would have been impossible!

We thank our Congregation for entrusting us with the responsibility of starting the new mission and for always following us with love and understanding.

A very special thanks to all the sisters and mothers who accompanied us with their prayers.

THANK YOU!

The sisters of the Chiang Saen community

“BAN LILIA”

Home that welcomes, that loves and that gives

An open, welcoming home, where girls of different age groups and ethnicities find a 'nest' of tenderness through many small gestures of true love and that breathes trust and hope for their future.

Home intended for tribal girls, usually from villages, with difficult family situations in various respects. What is the goal? First of all, offer education, training and personal growth: hygiene, cleanliness, care, nutrition, study, various activities... full life! And then get them a university degree, an indispensable condition for tribal or refugee girls to obtain an identity card and be recognized as Thai citizens and thus be able to escape the trap of drugs, prostitution and human trafficking.

In this great project, the protagonist has always been Providence that takes care of every creature. Our commitment, made up of untiring sacrifice, is to sow

messages of love, closeness, encouragement and support. But we are not alone: many benefactors collaborate with us in this work of charity and thus contribute to realizing the plan of salvation for each girl: they too are 'providence'.

In January 2020, the 'Providence Foundation' was approved by the Thai government: something impossible in human eyes has become a reality. Thanks to this recognition we were able, in a few months, to make the 'identity card' to many of our girls who did not yet have any documents and this gives them more strength and courage to move forward, looking to their future. Blessed be God!

In these 10 years we have welcomed more than 100 girls of different ethnicities and even Thais.

They came to be part of this big family, together we shared life and hope for a future of good life.





Here is the voice of some of them

For 6 years I lived in the Lilia House which for me was a second home and I feel very happy to be part of this family, where everyone takes care of each other and helps each other. We try to understand and forgive ourselves when we have something that can take away our joy. The sisters are always close to us and never let us feel lonely and this encouraged me to overcome many difficulties. I will always remember the time I lived at the Lilia House and I will never forget it, because it was the greatest experience of my life.

I am currently studying for my undergraduate degree at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University. I would like to thank all the sisters for giving me love and care in all senses: they made me grow and be strong both physically and mentally. I know I gave them some disappointments, but they never gave up on me and they always gave me a new chance. This made me feel that the sisters' love for us is so great that nothing can stop it..

Sukjai Saelee



I am Benedetta Abu Aja, I have been living in "Casa Lilia" for almost 6 years and this year will be my last year here. I feel very lucky to be here, to know the Sisters of Providence and to receive care from them. For me the nuns are not just nuns, but they are like real mothers who do everything for their children. When the baby needs something, the mother always tries to satisfy him / her dilei. They are like that; I am here and the nuns fight for me even when I am in trouble.

Even if I am a little naughty or stubborn at times, they always forgive me. I am very grateful to God to have them beside me.

Sometimes I think that if they weren't here for me and if I weren't here with them, I don't know what my life would be like now. I promise that I will always carry in my heart the good things that the sisters have instilled in me, to live well and to do my best for the maximum benefit. I will study hard for the future and to build a family and I want my mother and the sisters to be proud of me.

Benedetta Abu Aja

First of all, I thank God for giving me the opportunity to live at Lilia Home for 3 years. Thanks to all the sisters for taking care of me, giving me advice as good mothers, helping me to overcome difficulties and develop my potentiality for a bright future.

In these years spent with the sisters I have seen how many sacrifices they have made to build a safe home for us and I carry in my heart many memories of joy and suffering, laughter and even tears. I will never forget the flavours and colours of life that I have experienced; these experiences have made me what I am today.

I feel indeed fortunate when I think that most of the girls of my age who live in the villages cannot reach this position due to the many problems they have to overcome.

I am currently studying nursing at Mae Fah Luang University; I would like to thank the sisters for always giving me love, warmth, encouragement and support in the path I have chosen. Thank you.

Lucia Kasame

For the experience I lived in the Lilia house for 4 years, I feel happy to be part of this big family. What struck me most is that the sisters do not discriminate us but treats each of us with a motherly heart. All the sisters give love, warmth and care to us. There are many memories in Lilia's house that I will never forget: memories of happiness, but sometimes also of pain. There are times when we may not understand or misunderstand each other, because we are many different people living together, but in the end, we speak openly, growing in true love and beautiful relationships that bring everyone together.

I would like to thank all the sisters for giving me love and care.

Now I am continuing my degree at the Xavier Learning Community in English and heartfelt gratitude to all the encouragement and trust they have always given to me. Thanks!

Warunee Neremoa

*A fraternal hug...
from the heart of little Wang and Nam
to the heart of Fr Luigi!*



peculiar summer camp:

sowing the good seed...



ces, the three groups of young people, with their animators and priests, also took turns in Moncenisio. First of all, an online meeting was held with Thailand, giving our sisters the opportunity to narrate about their mission, their service in favor of girls/girls in need. Later they

Thirty-two young people wanted to experience an experiential summer camp, not in the green of the mountains, but immersed in the city of Rome, on 2nd, 3rd and 4th of August. They were accompanied by four animators and two priests from the Diocese of Trento.

They were divided into three groups and in the mornings of these three days, taking turns, they visited some beautiful places of the city, particularly churches and works of art connected to some saints from 1500/600. During the afternoons, on the other hand, they dedicated themselves to acquire experience of life in some realities of service to the poorest: at the Caritas canteen, at the S. Egidio community, and with us, in Via Moncenisio.

So: it was a particular and extraordinary summer camp, full of knowledge, incentives and emotions. In fact, encountering face to face with situations of suffering and abandonment is not a trivial matter for anyone, especially for a young person who still has a limited experience of life.

But, in Via Moncenisio, specifically, what did they experience? It is well known that Caritas and the Missionary Center of the Diocese of Trento have a special bond with our community in Thailand. In fact, they financed the purchase of the land in Chiang Saen to build a structure with a particular name: "Locanda della Felicità" (Guest house of happiness), an activity for learning catering, where girls can find work. It is a dream that is slowly being fulfilled.

Therefore, in the afternoons of these days of significant experien-

got connected with Togo, from where Sister Dores, with some sisters, presented their social commitment for poor people. In fact, the Missionary Center of Trento has an important relationship of collaboration and friendship also with our sisters in Togo.

Then came the opportune time of the direct knowledge of the activities of Via Moncenisio: "Care home", "Basket of Moses": all new for them and very exciting, but above all the joy of meeting children, of taking snacks with them in the outdoors, approach them, listen to them, play, smile.

Some of the young people were deeply touched by listening to the various stories of life and the providence of our little ones. Stories that have certainly impressed their minds and hearts, giving, once again, the opportunity to reflect and to realize the harsh reality of so many family situations and also a stimulation for the search for the good, of which the society of today is in extreme need.

And, at the end all together enjoyed the pizza which was inevitable.

Yes, we can say that youth ministry can still be done! We hope that the 'seed' sown will bear fruit!

The community of the care Home of Rome



The Angle of Providence



The Community Center of 'Father Luigi Scro-soppi' was formed in 1987 by the Sisters of Providence to serve the poor population of the Jardim Novo Mundo zone which is located in the outskirts of two industrial cities, Sorocaba and Votorantim, (São Paulo/Brazil). The area is almost forgotten by the public authorities and has become a place of crime, drug trafficking in which teenagers are also involved.

Our primary commitment is precisely to save the adolescents from these situations and together with good nutrition offer them hospitality, affection, lots of love and above all education.

With the coronavirus pandemic, many have lost their jobs and are starving for food thus, our mission has also increased. So far, we have served 95 families, 125 children and adolescents and 50 families that collect the recyclable materials, offering them grocery baskets.

In the course of 2021, however, driven by Father Luigi's zeal in serving the poor, whom he invites us to consider as our masters, together with our collaborators we began to reflect on this method of delivering food baskets to poor families and we asked ourselves: are we helping them to grow in autonomy and protagonism? Are we promoting them?

From awareness and reflection, a new proposal was born to improve the mode of service: instead of bringing to all the families a closed basket with the same products, the same and for all, which are often not even useful and necessary, we have created

ANGLE OF PROVIDENCE

a place where we collect everything that comes from benefactors (and it is really a lot, coming from different parts) and where families can come and get what they really need and are useful. In this way we achieve the goal of promoting autonomy, conscious

consumption of goods and avoid wasting. Distribution takes place through a scoring system: each family receives a certain number of points that they can use as they wish, choosing from the various products, thus giving autonomy to conscious consumption as well as the opportunity to exercise citizenship.

So far, we have experienced that the families never lacked anything that they were in need of and everyone was assured of the fundamental dish of rice and beans. They have become even more involved; in fact, they collaborate in the project of recycling the used oil to make soap and learning how to produce it themselves. Providence is really always wider and it is up to us to thank it and bless it.

Every day the team of lay people and nuns engaged in this service, live with joy and generosity the Gospel passage:

"Every time you did this to one of the least, you did it to Me" (Mt 25,40).

*Sister Aparecida Joana Moreira
and the group of 'Project joy'*



The memory box

a path of psycho-affective accompaniment

The child can use it whenever he/she needs it to get up after a crisis and move on. These activities are carried out on several levels:

- **With infected children/adolescents.** These babies were infected at birth because their mothers did not know they were HIV positive. They are often sick; they come to the Center, they take the drugs, but they don't know why. After constant psychological support, we inform them of their serological status; they are therefore confused and ask themselves many questions when they realize their situation. Why did my father, my mother, my parents die? Why did they have AIDS? Why do I have AIDS?
- **With children at risk** (they are not infected, but their parents are sick, alive or dead). Most of these children find themselves having to be head of household very early, fighting for their own survival and that of their parents. Sometimes they drop out of school to stay with their parents until they die. Once death has occurred, they share the family



12 I am Sister Florence Nayo and for 5 years I have been working in Kouvé (Togo), at the **San Luigi Scrosoppi Center**, whose mission is to take care and support people infected or affected by AIDS and their families. This centre was created in October 2003, after the canonization of our Founder. The name it bears reflects the spirit that animates it: to love these patients, promote their fragile life, help them to integrate positively into society and, in turn, become agents in the fight against the spread of this disease.

I would like to share the positive and moving experience of a path we are making of psycho-emotional support for children/adolescents and their families, applying the "memory box" methodology.

Through various activities and meetings, we help the child/adolescent to learn about his or her history and that of his family, to become aware of his/her illness, but also to discover his/her potential di lei, striving to succeed in his / her future di lei, despite his situation.

At the beginning of this 'journey', they are invited to decorate a "box" as they wish in which they will jealously keep everything related to their personal and family history, giving it the name of "**memory box**".

among the grandparents, uncles, aunts and/or friends of the parents; this sharing systematically leads the child to a change of environment and to the loss of his/her home di lei that has seen him/her born and/or grow up. Some had to move houses several times following the death of their grandparents or other family problems:

Apart from the children, we also organize meetings for parents/guardians and other adults: here they can sit with their children to heal or strengthen the family relationship, establish a dialogue and be able to talk and share their experiences mutually.

These various therapeutic fields arouse in children/adolescents and their parents a change of vision in relation to the disease and give hope for a more peaceful future.

The benefit of this accompanying path can be seen by reading the letters that children during 'camp' are invited to write to their parents to express their feelings.

Here's what B., a 13-year-old girl, writes to her dead mom:

"My dearest mother, I am sad that you left this world very soon. I would have loved to have known you, but I couldn't! I would also like to tell you that since you left and left me alone, I am always sick but my grandmother and my aunt have not abandoned me. They always accompany me to the nuns' hospital to keep me in good health. I ask you to bless them for me.

Thank you, mom, your daughter B."

E., a 15-year-old girl, writes to her dad:

"Thank you for everything you do for me, taking me regularly to the hospital for check-up. You are always there to comfort me when I go through difficult times and when I am sad. I promise to fight for my health and to do everything to honor you someday. So I ask you to always be by my side, because you know that Mom is gone. Be blessed for all your efforts.

Your beloved daughter E."

I would like to conclude with the testimony of a mother:



"My daughter often got angry with me and lei refused any work she was asked to do at home and lei also didn't want to take medicine. But since she returned from the camp, many things have changed. She is gladly accepting her treatment and is studying well at school. A nice dialogue is developing between her and me. I myself participated in the parents' camp and learned many things there, especially how to manage anger and sadness and this gives me more strength to work."

As we can understand, the care of AIDS patients is not limited to the medical field. If we want these people to stand up, lead a dignified life, be able to reintegrate into the family and social sphere and in turn become active actors in the fight against the transmission of the virus, it is necessary to employ many forces for them.

So, thank you to all those who in one way or another support our efforts.

GUSCIO DI NOCE / NUTSHELL ONLUS

2021/2022 programming on the path of St. Luigi



Guscio di Noce/Nutshell is a fairly recent reality of the Congregation; we have been active for about 7 years; our commitment is in favour of boys and girls with psych sensory disabilities and autism from 18 to 35 years.

The goal of our work is to promote social inclusion paths for these young people, to place them in ordinary life contexts (bars, offices, commercial activities, parishes, sports centers, ...) to carry out small and useful tasks in line with their fragility and desires.

In recent years, 12 children with disabilities animate our day centre every day and, always accompanied by both religious and lay professionals, they carry out ad hoc equipped workshops, interact with other associations in the area, grow in autonomy and skills, cultivate passions and interests, in order to identify the most appropriate inclusive context and start the process of social inclusion.

A work that is always new, motivating in itself, which is carried out with care and attention, with adequate preparation and in the light of the pedagogical guidelines indicated by St. Luigi himself.

This is the reason why our programming takes place every year taking into consideration the methodological lines promoted by St. Luigi, and this is always the reason why this year, after the effort of the last 2 years due to Covid, we have decided as association, to make a gift to our educators and to take them to Orzano and Udine to meet St. Luigi in his first houses and, starting from these places, to plan together the educational journey of our children with disabilities and of the Association for the year 2021/2022.

The preparation of this trip began in June, with many meetings of the interdisciplinary team of shell to define the program of the days.

What are the difficulties and changes that Guscio di Noce/Nutshell will have to undergo?

What are the educational projects of the resident children?

What is the work in the area?

These are the issues to be addressed by following the example and indications of St. Luigi.

On 2nd September we arrived in Orzano. We were 9; 2 of us were from the interdisciplinary team (as well as members of the Board of Directors) and 7 educational figures.

There were many expectations, we

were sure that they will be days full of motivations, but we do not yet know where St. Luigi would want to take us.

Pointless to say, what we received was beyond our expectations.

The community of the sisters of Orzano welcomed us as brothers and sisters in a spirit of sharing that impressed and warmed us up so much. How many times have we spoke to our educators about the importance of a joyful and loving welcome, for our children of course, but also within their work team. How nice to live it and see it realized. Of course, were not deprived of explanations, stories and information on the house in Orzano, on why St. Luigi wanted it and for those who considered it adequate.

In Udine we experienced St. Luigi, at the beginning of his work, with the first women, then sisters, who followed him, in the uncertainty of the future, the ever-increasing needs, the call to be and to give everything for the neediest.



An ever-vigilant St. Luigi, with the ability to have a broad, luminous gaze towards the future.

This and much more... Unforgettable days.

The planning work was enriched by a new impetus, the desire to take root even more in the depth of the Mission. It is as if she had discovered its specific place within the works of the Congregation and consequently felt at home at last.

Every aspect of the planning was addressed and the reference to the Charism of St. Luigi guided it and determined its choices.

We have been in Rome for a few weeks and what we started in Orzano continues its journey in each of us personally and, consequently, in the work we carry out.

On 5th October we were all, educators and children, in the generalate house to celebrate and greet St. Luigi, a loving and ever living father, demanding in attention and dedication to the most fragile and, at the same time, close and understanding of everyone's needs.

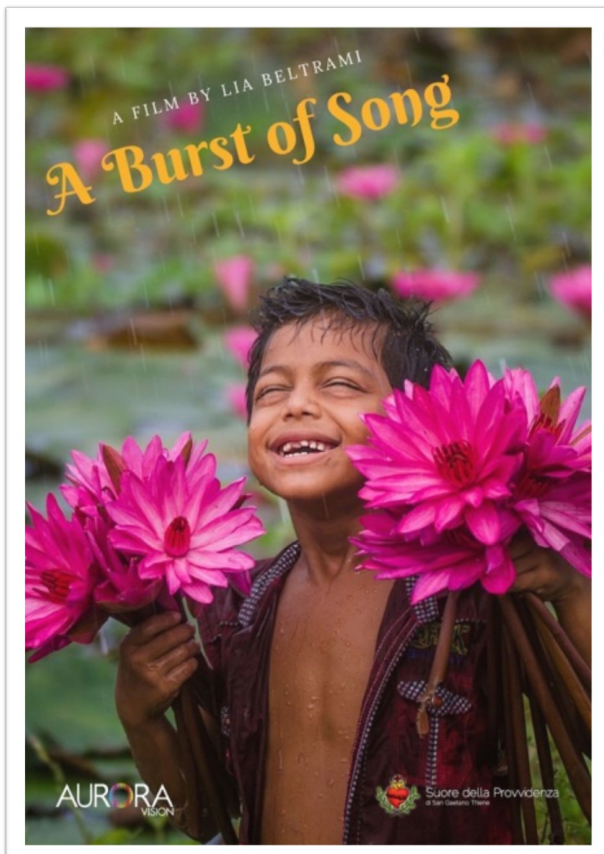
A heartfelt thanks to the community of Orzano and to those in Udine who managed to pass on the humanity of St. Luigi, his courage and his faith to us.

We will certainly continue the journey we have begun and we will not miss each year some more meetings with other works of the Congregation: sharing and witness are necessary elements for a lively and fertile Charism, a point of arrival and at the same time a starting point for our work.

Guscio di Noce



15



A BURST OF SONG

*“If the heart is hard and withered,
flood me with a shower of mercy.*

*If grace is lost,
come with the burst of a song.
Come to me, God of silence,
with your peace and your rest.”*

(R. Tagore)

Kolkata is like this: it vibrates on the verses of Tagore, walks in Gandhi's footsteps, breathes the love of Mother Teresa.

This is where *Bharati*, *Rahima* and *Sumita* were born: under a bridge, along the railway, in the 'red light' district. Their stories intertwine in the shelter of the Sisters of Providence, where dreams come true.

Rahima became an air hostess.

Sumita left her abusive husband.

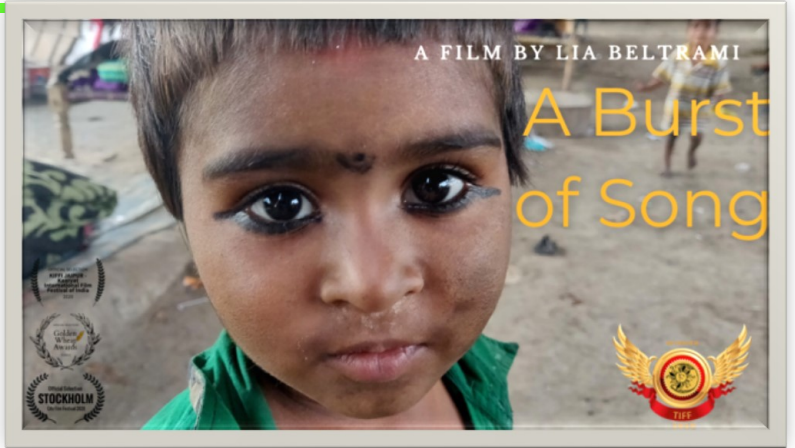
Unfortunately *Bharati* left us before the editing of the film was finished, leaving behind a son.

We arrived with a large crew at the house of the Sisters of Providence near Kolkata. There was me, miraculously entering India from Bangladesh, Ferran Paredes Rubio the director of photography, Andrea Morghen of Aurora Vision and two beautiful Americans, Nina Davuluri Miss America and Deanna Walker her manager di lei.

We did the shooting for a major documentary, COMPLEXion, about self-acceptance and skin colour. It seemed that in Bengal the problem of lightening creams did not exist. As soon as I started asking questions among the girls welcomed in the various centres of Providence, a cataract opened: all the girls, all of them, "stole" creams from grandmothers, aunts or at the markets, to try to clear their skin...

Out of gratitude to my Providence family, I decided to make a small documentary about girls who have left the shelters, to make the world understand such an innovative and brilliant educational approach. Thanks to the patience of the Sisters of Providence in West Bengal, we were able to put together enough film materials.

As soon as we got home, the Covid mayhem broke out. I sat there, to understand what message it would serve the world. And so, the "A Burst of Song" was the answer.



My husband Alberto Beltrami got carried away and made some really touching music. We edited the film, praying constantly, so as not to misrepresent the message of the girls and to tell a little bit of truth.

And from there, it all started: the film went around the world, selected in 85 festivals. The film won 37 awards, from India to Argentina, from Italy to France, from Bali (Indonesia) to Canada. I still cannot believe it.

The hardest part, however, was accepting Bharati's death. Bharati was the first girl welcomed by the nuns in Calcutta: born in the street, in the 'red light' area, tossed here and there, terrified by the sound of men's footsteps. Bharati was saved by the nuns, but then given in marriage to a man who later turned out to be violent husband. Left alone, she got back in the game and settled down. Unfortunately, she fell ill with cancer and died the day we finished editing the film ...

I was heartbroken and Sister Sandra told me: *"Just think, if I hadn't shot her interview -which is the backbone of the film-her life would have ended up in oblivion."*

Now it is a message of hope for the whole world. Her testimony belongs to everyone. "

Lia Beltrami

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