



WE COMMUNICATE

PROVINCE OF INDIA
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Provincial's Message



Sr Deepa Moonjely OP

Ours is a living history that was begun in 1696 when, inspired by Providence, Marie Poussepin left Dourdan to go and live in the village of Sainville, and that has been continued down through the last 325 years; it is a history that has witnessed ardent love, deep faith and uncompromising commitment. How can we not recall many of our sisters who with their strong faith, vision, benevolent love and simple way of life have left unforgettable marks, not only in the history of our congregation but also in the life of the church and the world at large. Let's retrace their footprints through the subsequent pages of this issue of 'we communicate.' I congratulate all the sisters, especially Sr. Daisy Rose Peenikaparamban and SMC team for all your efforts to bring out this issue of 'We Communicate.'

The articles in the succeeding pages written with love and sentiments from the bottom of our hearts are our acknowledgements and tributes to all our Mother Generals who have given their lives to the congregation and the world and enabled us to 'Know and Love God.'

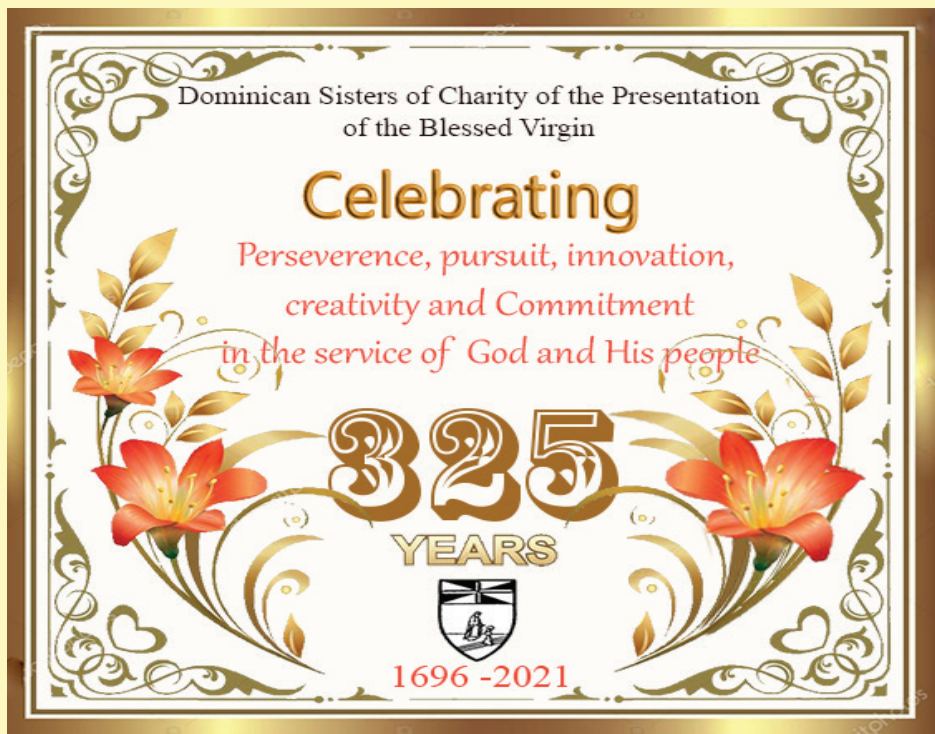
The passion and commitment with which they lived their lives, the determination and courage with which they led our sisters and the love for God and neighbour that motivated their mission, are both inspiring and challenging for all of us. They made a difference in the life of the people around them by their tireless and selfless service filled with tenderness and compassion and their spirit of innovation and tenacity to make resolutions facing all the difficult situations and demonstrating good reflection and prudence, especially with regard to contemplation and prayer.

From their lives, we receive a greater impetus not only to serve the society through quality education, health care and pastoral and social ministries but also to make that society God-oriented. The lives of our sisters tell us that we have a universal vocation which is characterised by its depth-the exact opposite of the kind of superficiality that some aspects of our modern culture promote.

Today their lives challenge us to lead a life of prayer, of continuous learning from experience and of listening to the heart, which will help us to live a humble and free life totally and generously given to service, being moved by those who suffer in the world. At the same time,

they invite us to be persons from whom overflows the true hope drawn from our faith in the risen Lord.

“Sweetest Lord, make me appreciative of the dignity of my high vocation, and its many responsibilities. Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness, or impatience. Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love. I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things. We are each part of the body of Christ and gifted in different areas. Act on the gifts that God has given you and start today “–Saint Mother Theresa.



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our Superior Generals

The Congregation along its more than 300 years of history has had 19 Superior Generals including Marie Poussepin, our Foundress:

THE COMUNITY OF SAINVILLE BEFORE THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

- 1744-1762: Mère Agnès Revers († 1765 in Sainville)
- 1762-1793: Mère La Croix (stay in Sainville)

AFTER THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: RECONSTITUTION OF THE COMMUNITY OF JANVILLE (1803), ESTABLISHMENT IN TOURS (1813) AND EXPANSION OF THE CONGREGATION IN FRANCE

- 1793-1801: Mère La Croix (stay in Janville) († 1801 in Janville)
- 1803-1809: Mère Augustin († 1809 in Janville)
- 1809-1816: Mère Potentielle († 1817 in Tours)
- 1816-1821: Mère Adélaïde († 1822 in Châtillon sur Loing)
- 1821-1824: Mère Suzanne († 1838 in Tours)
- 1824-1843: Mère Assomption († 1849 in Meung sur Loire)

GENERALATE OF MÈRE ST. PIERRE

- 1843-1858: Mère Saint Pierre († 1878 in Villeneuve sur Lot)

EXPANSION OF THE CONGREGATION IN THE WORLD

- 1858-1887: Mère Du Calvaire († 1887 in Tours)
- 1888-1921: Mère Josépha († 1921 in Tours)
- 1921-1939: Mère León Joseph († 1943 in Tours)
- 1939-1959: Mère Thérèse Augusta († 1966 in Tours)

AFTER VATICAN COUNCIL II

- 1959-1971: Mère Thérèse des Anges († 1992 in Tours)
- 1971-1979: Mère Marie Sainte Thérèse († 1998 in Tours)
- 1979-1994: Sr. Inés Mercedes Mejía Toro († 2011 in Tours)

CONTEMPORARY TIMES

- 1994-2004: Sr. María Fabiola Velásquez Maya
- 2004-2014: Sr. Monique Colrat
- 2014-: Sr. Maria Escayola Coris

Editorial



It is in 1696 that Marie Poussepin, “a woman inspired by Providence” leaves Dourdan, a small prosperous town where she was born, to go and live in the humble village of Sainville, in the heart of Beauce, periodically ravaged by war, famine and epidemics, and where “ignorance was widespread, to say the least” (Original Vision). Three Hundred and twenty-five years are gone by, since our Mother Foundress Blessed Marie Poussepin began her journey from Dourdan to Sainville. She built a house where our first sisters were able to live the Gospel with her. She trod a path and many walked in her foot-steps.

With the tenacity of the prophet, she remained faithful to the deep conviction: Charity must be lived in the heart of the world with all the richness and strength of a life in community. Marie Poussepin wanted to belong to the Dominican Order, she wanted a new type of community, faithful to the traditions of the Order but also open to new needs. (Ratio p.12). The command given by Jesus to his apostles to go to all the world to preach the Gospel, has always given to the Church, apostles capable of going beyond their own frontiers. (Ratio p. 42)

Like the Foundress and the First Superior, we had the privilege of being led by many Superior Generals with the tenacity of prophets, kept alive the charism of Marie Poussepin heeding the Will of God and ventured into opening new communities and entered into many new countries proclaiming the Good News reading the signs of the time and responding to it creatively during the past 325 years! Let me borrow the words of Mother Josepha, to an elderly sister: “You do not want a Superior General as a “figurehead” and you want her to have Zeal, dedication, generous heart toward the congregation of which you, former superiors, give such great examples? She is only following you. perhaps from too far. Therefore, pray for her with fervor and ask the Holy Spirit for the light of His flame so that she may act according to His guidance and inspiration”. Let us pray for the Superior Generals especially that of the souls who have gone before us.

We commemorate the death anniversary of Blessed Marie Poussepin on 24th January. It is a beautiful moment to remember and thank our mother generals who guided us and stood tall in the storms during the past 325 years of its existence. We give tribute to all our Mother Generals in this issue of “We Communicate” January 2021. All the communities along with Sr. Deepa Moonjely our Provincial and Sr. Reetha Mechery came forward generously in studying, reflecting and expressing what each one of the Mother Generals mean to us specially to bring up the congregation and how our congregation has grown through the centuries. I appreciate the efforts sisters have taken to study together and present it creatively through pictures, quiz, poems, interviews and articles etc. May this issue help you to journey through the 325 years of our proclamation. Wish you all a pleasant reading.

Happy Feast Day to all....

Sr. Daisy Rose Peenikaparamban OP

Marie Poussepin and her Inheritors



The Christmas cribs, lights, stars, trees and decorations are still there, reminding us that we are in the Christmas season continuing our celebration of the great Mystery of the Incarnation—the coming of Jesus, the Light of the world to dispel our darkness. He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him. But those who accepted Him received from His fullness, grace for grace, light for light. Blessed Marie Poussepin stands out among the countless holy men and women who received Jesus, the Light and let His light shine in some dark corners of the world, dispelling the darkness around them. As we celebrate the 325th anniversary of our Congregation and as we pay homage to Marie Poussepin and all those who followed her in the Congregation and especially those who led the Congregation as Superior Generals, I can't help but picture each one of them taking the lighted torch from the one who preceded her and passing it on to the one who followed her. Yes, each one of the Sisters and Superior Generals have tried to let the light of Christ shine brightly and dispel the darkness of sin, ignorance, disease, hatred, enmity, suffering and sorrow. How I wish to light a lamp for each one of them or, at least for each one of the Superior Generals to thank and honor them and also to express our commitment today to continue to let the light of Christ burn brightly in our darkened or cloudy world today.

As we flash through the history of our Congregation, we can't help but admire the uniqueness of each one and her unique contribution and her unique self-gift which enabled us to be who we are today. After Marie Poussepin, all our Superior Generals have placed their own bricks to build, rebuild and maintain the house of Marie Poussepin. To some was given the gift of consolidation and stabilization, to some the gift of new foundations, new missionary expressions and missionary expansion in France and abroad, to some the gift of closing the establishments and in particular the closing of schools faced with the demands of secularization, to some the gift of standing tall through the storms of Revolutions, world wars, civil wars, loss of Sainville and dispersion of the Congregation, financial crisis, occupation of the Mother House by the soldiers, exile of the postulancy community, novitiate, older sisters and General Government, bombardments and all kinds of natural calamities, to some the gift of reconstitution and rebirth of the Congregation, to some the gift of healing presence in the midst of victims of cholera epidemics, victims of Covid19 pandemic, wounded soldiers and ambulances, to some the gift of facing internal problems, offering mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation and restoring harmony and peace, to some the gift of 'return to Sainville', 'return to the sources,' reconstitution of the places of our origin and fidelity to the Charism of Marie Poussepin, to some the gift of transferring the Mother House and the remains of Marie Poussepin and Mother St. Pierre, to some the gift of setting up and transferring the generalate, to some the gift of decentralization by creating provinces, vice=provinces and other structures, to some the gift of formation – spiritual, religious, biblical, theological, technical and professional, to some the gift of rapprochement or reunion with the Dominican Order, filiation with the Order and Aggregation to the Order, to some the gift of introducing the cause of Marie Poussepin, to some the gift of seeing its completion and the celebration of the Beatitude, to some the gift of publishing volumes on Marie Poussepin, to some the gift of reprinting the Rule of Sainville, getting the approval for new Constitutions, and making Manual for the Sisters and directory for the Superiors, to some the gift of continuing the practice of making promises as Dominican Tertiaries, to some the gift of introducing the profession of religious vows, to some the gift of living with the diocesan rights, to some the gift of receiving the Pontifical rights for the Congregation, to some the gift of aggiornamento after Vat. II, to some the gift of facing strong movements of secularism in the post conciliar period, to some the gift of setting up center of documentation and history, Information service of the Congregation and Center of study of Marie Poussepin, to some the gift of re-organization of general administration, general secretariat, general treasurer's office and creation of Common Fund, to some the gift of maintaining unity in diversity and spirituality of communion, to some the gift of inculturation, multi-culturalism, interculturality and inter-religious dialogue, to some the gift of solidarity, to some the gift of Justice, peace and integrity of creation, to some the gift of restructuring, to some the gift of living rooted among the people and going to the peripheries... We can go on enumerating the many gifts that our Superior Generals and Sisters received from the Spirit and which they shared generously with everyone as they praised, blessed and preached.

As we celebrate the 325th anniversary of our Congregation, let us remain open to wonder and marvel at all that our God has accomplished in each one of us and in the Congregation as a whole in the past and continues to accomplish today and will accomplish tomorrow. Our faithful love and gratitude to our God who has carried us on His eagle's wings, sometimes through us, sometimes in spite of us and sometimes through the stormy past! Our faithful love and gratitude to Marie Poussepin, to all our Superior Generals and to each Sister living and dead, who generously gave herself to build and rebuild the House of Marie Poussepin! May we ever remain open and humble to be inspired, challenged and enlightened by their constant, steady flame of burning Charity. May our faithful God grant us the grace to be committed, on our turn, to build and rebuild the House of Marie Poussepin, as we 'live and die for the service of the Church in the exercise of charity!'

Sr. Reetha Mechery o.p



BLESSED MARIE POUSSEPIN AS AN ANIMATOR



Mother Agnes Revers

Mother Agnes Revers had firsthand experience of Marie Poussepin, who knew her only as the first member of the community but also as her cousin. Agnes was a cousin of Marie Poussepin, born in Linas (Essonne) on November 13, 1682. She was about 13 years old when she followed our Foundress to Sainville and she was one of the first boarders of the newly born community. During 50 years, she lived by the side of Marie Poussepin, which undoubtedly, greatly influenced her formation.

Her signature appeared for the first time in 1711. Subsequently one finds it often as delegate of Marie Poussepin to certify the death of the sisters at Sainville. With the growth of the community and the added responsibilities attached to government, it seems that Marie Poussepin reserved for herself the animation and spiritual duties of the Community, while Agnès Revers would assist her in the material tasks and administration. In 1731 she is called “sub-prioress”.

On Feb. 2, 1744, eight days after the death of Marie Poussepin, Msgr. de Méroville, Bishop of Chartres, proposed Mère Agnès Revers as the superior of the Daughters of Charity of Sainville. She was an energetic woman, who knew how to preserve and complete the work of Marie Poussepin. She completed building the interior of the Convent. She had cisterns dug in the garden of the Community and had a source built in cast iron. In 1759, she expanded the house north to south. Outside of Sainville, she consolidated the existing establishments and added to the number of foundations by founding: Chatou (1746), Rozay en Brie (1749), Mauregard (1753), Faremoutiers en Brie (1754), Chaussy y Richebourg (1760) Courtry (1762) and Courpalay.

She gave up her responsibility in 1762 and died on December 11, 1765 at Sainville where she was buried at the side of our Mother Foundress. Mother Agnes Revers led the congregation in the Spirit of our mother foundress Bl. Marie Poussepin. She knew the vision of Marie Poussepin as she learned everything from her. As we have completed 325 years of the establishment of our congregation may she inspire us to go closer to Marie Poussepin to learn from her the way to holiness and respond to the signs of the time according to her spirituality.



Dourdan Community - Bangalore, India.

Mother La Croix, Superior General

during the most somber period; 1762-1792

Introduction

Mother La Croix, in spite of the devastation that the French Revolution brought to her own personal life and the life of the Congregation, hoped against hope trusting in the Providence of God. This humble woman kept the vision of Blessed Marie Poussepin alive in season and out of season and relying on Marie Poussepin's intercession, made all the plans for the Rebuilding of the House of Marie Poussepin-for the Reconstitution of the Congregation. She inspires us to trust in God's Providence and in Marie Poussepin's intercession to face the problems, difficulties and challenges that we face day to day in our personal life, community life and mission and to go forward with hope. Let us journey with Mother la Croix specially, during this crucial time of the Revolution and find strength and courage to face the challenges of our life

1. Jeanne Boue entered the novitiate in Sainville in 1738

We can presume that Jeanne Boue who later took the name of Sr. La Croix, was welcomed by Marie Poussepin herself into her house and that she learned from Marie Poussepin and our early sisters to live the Gospel in the original way.



2. Called by Mother Agnes Revers to Sainville in 1760

Sister la croix had a good preparation for two years. The Chapter of November 21, 1762 elected her as Superior General.



3. The Convent of Sainville during the Revolution

During the Revolution Mother La Croix prepared the sisters and Community for the dispersion if needed, by providing them the necessary certificates in order to obtain the pension allowed from the nation as compensation to the religious whose houses were taken away... Then, on one winter night, the sisters were warned by a friend, the ex-gardener, of the coming, that very night, of a gang of fanatics and were urged to flee.

4. The flight of the sisters through the back gate opening to the fields

“They might have taken the house of stone away from the sisters, but they could never take from their hearts the spirit which assembled them and gave them life. On the road of trials, solitude and distress, Marie Poussepin never abandoned them.” We too can trust in Marie Poussepin’s companionship on our roads of trials, solitude, anxieties and agonies.



5. Mother La Croix takes refuge at Meung-Sur-Loire

“Tradition tells us that frightened and petrified, she had hidden in a hay loft or a bake house for several days. At the end of April 1793, she arrived at the “Hospice d’Humanite” of Meung-Sur-Loire,” where Mother La Croix received room and board among her sisters.



6. Mother La Croix at Janville - meets with Monsieur Granger

In the fall of 1794, Mother La Croix was already at the Hospice of Janville. So proven by the despoiling of the Convent of Sainville and the dispersion of the Sisters, She had a heavy heart, though she was boarding among her daughters. In spite of her age, she kept her eyes turned toward the future. She talked with the good pastor, Father Granger to plan for the reconstitution. She inspires us to hope against hope courageously, when we meet with difficulties and trials in our own lives.



7. Gazing at Marie Poussepin

Mother La croix trusted in the Divine Providence and also prayed earnestly to Marie Poussepin to help her to “rebuild” her house. Do we believe in Marie Poussepin’s intercession?

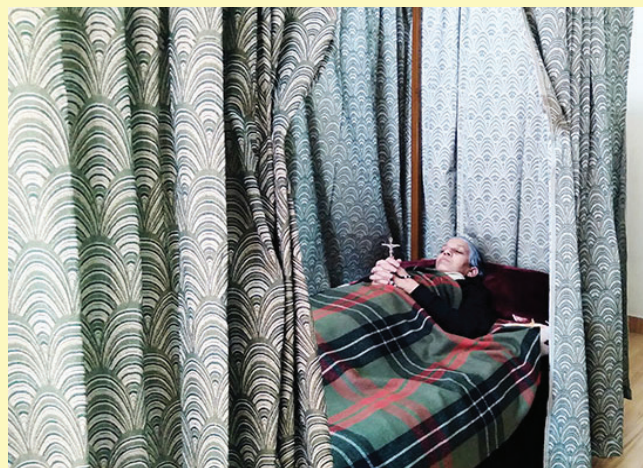


8. Mother La Croix brought Sr. Augustin to Janville

To rebuild the house of Marie Poussepin, Mother La Croix called to her side Sr. Augustin on whom she could count.

9. Unexpected death of Mother La Croix

Alas, in the afternoon of 16 May, 1801, without apparently being physically worse, without any warning, Mother La Croix, suddenly heard the Lord's call for the Great Meeting. For her funeral, everything simply went on, as for the poor and a modest tombstone in the cemetery of Janville marked that the Mother General died at the age of 79.



Conclusion

Mother La Croix left behind a legacy of Trust in the Providence of God, surrender to the will of God manifested through obedience and faithfulness to the Charism of Marie Poussepin. She lived the most somber period in the history of our Congregation but she did not give up; she kept alive the vision, the hope for the reconstitution of the Congregation. Let us light our tiny lamps in homage to this great woman-Mother La Croix and take courage to go forward in faith, hope and love.

Provincial House Community

**PROVINCIAL HOUSE
COMMUNITY**



Mere Augustin (1803 – 1809)

Reverend Mother Augustin (Genevive Chaintreau) was born in Puiseaux; Loiret on August 30, 1735. She was 67 years old at the time of her election. She was a true daughter of the Presentation. As a child, she knew the Presentation through the foundress of the little school in her native village. The sisters were her teachers and followed her through to her novitiate. At the beginning of her religious life, Mother Augustin had spent twelve fruitful years at the Hotel- Dieu of Saint Florentin (1765 – 1777). Before taking an assignment in administration in Sainville until the Revolution. During these difficult years, she had spent some time in Puiseaux until Mother La Croix called her to work with her in Janville, at the end of the century.

The day after the Assembly of November 21, 1803, which in our history was rightly called “ Chapter of the Reconstitution. ‘On November 21, 1803 Mere Augustin was elected as 4th Superior General of the Congregation. After the first triennium, she was re – elected on June 3, 1807. During that year, helped by Father Granger and in spite of internal difficulties, she obtained interest from the mother of the Emperor, to bring about the rebirth of the Community. It was necessary, in reality, to enter into a process of renewal of the Congregation. After the euphoria and joy of coming back together in this splendid autumn. It was necessary to renew contact with the hard daily realities. They were days of gloom and austerity in a deprived Congregation, without a comfortable house at the time of the projected new departure; without resources, without assurance, at least immediately, to face the prospects of integrating new candidates into this family which the political, social and religious situation had shattered for the past ten years.

To assure succession and continuity, it was necessary that each sister reunited there, be transformed and return to the sources of the foundress Charism. It was also primordial to be able to transmit to those who were to follow, the content of the Charism, based on the thinking of Marie Poussepin in the tradition of the Gospel and the Church without deviating to the past, and in a society which had developed so hastily and sometimes uncontrollably. Mere Augustin needed to manifest much firmness during this difficult time of reconstitution since last ten years of dispersion had altered discipline and religious spirit. She achieves the acceptance of deprivations inherent in a serious poverty proper to the circumstances of the time, and she re-established ties with former places of mission. Gradually, new vocation to the Community emerges. Nevertheless, Mother Augustin’s generalate was gladdened by twenty – five women who took the habit in six years.

Although advanced in age, Mere Augustin continued her work, receiving and forming novices. She re-established previous establishment such as Richebourg et Chilly. In 1809, she opens new ones at Villers – Cottets, Clairvaux and Blerancourt. She inaugurated a new type of foundation; houses for the destitute. Four months after the death of Father Granger who succumbed at his work on April 20, 1809. Mother Augustin also dies suddenly at the age of 73 years, in 1809. In a meaningful coincidence, that same day of her funeral, on August 12, 1809, Msgr. De Barral, Archbishop of Tours, arrived at Janville. He came to ask for sisters for the General Hospital in his city of Tours.

Mere Augustin “rebuilt the Congregation through humility and Faith”. She worked hard in 1802 for reorganization of the Congregation under the direction of ABBE Granger in Janville. She Showed great firmness in a difficult time of renewal. She helped the sisters to reclaim the reality and spirit of poverty. She recovers and renews old ministries and begins new ones. She gradually receives and forms new vocations in Janville. Mere Augustin was one of the courageous Mother General. She trusted in the Providence of God and took the Congregation ahead to carry out the Charism of Blessed Marie Poussepin.



BASTI COMMUNITY

Mother Potentienne - The Divine Melody



The suspense of that day is still fresh in the memory of the congregation; the day members were eagerly waiting to know whom the Lord had chosen to lead the congregation after the sudden demise of Mother Augustine. It was with immense joy the members welcomed the news of the election of Mother Potentienne as the fourth/fifth Superior general.

It all happened in the background of the Revolution which scattered all of us. And it was only 6 years the members were pulling themselves together. All knew it would be a herculean task to meet the challenges that lay ahead. The congregation intuitively knew that Mother Potentienne with her trust in the Divine Providence and the fortitude of the Holy Spirit will be able to garner the strength to sail the congregation through the troubled waters. And it was 20th September 1809 and she was young at 66. Though she hesitated to accept her election on the ground of age Bishop of Versailles prevailed over her and the vibrancy of her term proved her hesitation baseless. And her acceptance sentence, "Divine Providence will come to our aid" was proved to be correct. The decree of the Statutes of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin of Janville signed by Emperor Napoleon on January 19, 1811, approving the existence of the congregation was the tangible approval of the same Divine Providence. The words of Isaiah 40: 30-31 of how the Lord protects those who wait on him, irrespective of their age or health have been proven right in her.

Once taken charge, she went ahead with the expansion of mission and stressed a lot on formation. Many young women were attracted by this bunch of about 78 sisters and the number swelled in a short span. In about four years 72 new recruits found their way to the congregation. Mother Potentienne formed them on solid virtues, on humility, fraternal spirit and the communion of souls. She radiated above all her unshakeable trust in Providence." God be blessed in all things" used to be her refrain in all happy or unhappy events. Her confidence in the Divine Providence was so incorrigible that it was attested many times by the Lord. Once the treasurer reported that there was not a grain of wheat or any money to buy provisions for the meal. On hearing this she spent a few moments of silence to beseech to the Divine Providence and then the treasurer was asked to re check the bin of wheat. Lo and behold the bin has sufficient wheat. The Lord did not allow any of her words fall to the ground. (1Sam: 3;19).

Though she chose Janville as headquarters of the congregation, the place chosen by Mother Augustin, the embers of dissent were simmering among some of the discontented members who opposed having the head quarters at Janville. These simmering embers found its expression many a times in the strong opposition, by some of the members.

Human spirit is always at war with the divine and we need constant effort to check on the human wisdom. Her tranquility and calmness with which she carried out her responsibility became proverbial. She never ignored or turned a deaf ear to those who were dissenting, but always gave important place and positions in the congregation, thus making herself worthy to be called the true disciple of Jesus. She could look at the members and see what they are capable of irrespective of their liking or dis-



RANCHI COMMUNITY

liking for her or vice versa. No wonder the person who suffered grievously was greatly rewarded by the Lord by keeping her body seeing no corruption.

She was a very devout, efficient and lovable person at Lorris, where people could feel love and compassion flowing out of her as she took care of the sick and the suffering. She was the most sought after person when the plague was ravaging the country. She was blessed with the gift of healing that the Lord bestowed upon her. She always wanted to remain a simple sister doing the best she could for the people and the Lord. But the Lord wanted her to adore the top most person of the congregation so as to make her a model for all. Her story is not one of its kind but we see history being repeated at times with vengeance. Let her be our model in resolving conflicts and tensions in the communities and having that incorrigible confidence in the Divine Providence.

Ranchi Community

A Woman Of Faith – Mother Adelaide

Mother Adelaide was born in 1752.
She was a child of intelligence and wisdom.
Belonged to a wealthy and Christian family.
At the age of 22 entered the Novitiate at Sainville.

A sister of faith and prayer,
Worked in the hospital of Toury,
Then in Chatillon-sur-Loing.
Then became the director of the school,
Which was annexed to the hospice.

During the revolution,
Under went so many kinds of hardships.
She was a hospital sister in Rich Bourg.
Then she returned to Chatillon definitively .

Remained there forty years.
All appreciated her professional qualification,
Her intelligence, her way of being,
Her politeness, graciousness, and dedication,
Her religious virtues were authentic.

Everybody judged her indispensable.
She was a "rare pearl", a hard worker in the parish.
A person captivating and working for peace,
during the time of revolution.

1816, she was elected as a superior general .
She tried to fulfill the will of God always.
She performed perfect order and wise economy,
in the house with deep faith and trust.

It was a period of apostolic honors,
was dedicated to the congregation and sisters.
She always initiated a process, discussion,
visited the families to know them,
to improve their situation.

She always responded the needs of the sisters and people.
Surely, she was a daughter of wisdom.
During the long and cold nights, her travels were very
difficult, to communicate to the sisters.

She went through struggles and difficulties.
She always prepared her tasks and functions.
The Mayor of that time appreciated her works of
charity and spirit of good work.

As she grew old she accomplished a beautiful career with perfect order. Her poor health forced her to resign after five years of generalate in 1821. She always supported and advised her sisters with faith and discernment.

She offered general rules to each sister, not as a law but to follow Christ. She always reminded the sisters the demands of work, to conserve the community in its original spirit. She believed that it was necessary to be closer to Christ the Lord, who is the end of all commitment. So much importance is given to the rule of Marie Poussepin. She lifted the congregation a little more, as a follower of Blessed Marie Poussepin . We remember her doings at this time, with gratitude.

SOGANUR COMMUNITY



Mother Suzanne 1821-1824

Mother Suzanne was born on August 9th, 1766. She made profession before the Revolution. She was one of the generations of the sisters of Sainville. She has participated in the chapter of Nov.21st, 1803 at Janville. She did not approve of the choice of Janville as the site for the Reconstitution of the Congregation. This has brought tension and suffering but she redeemed herself. Thanks to her great dedication. She was in charge of the novitiate from 1810 – 13. She had shown interest in the growth of the congregation and promoted vocations. At the time of the transfer of the Mother house in 1813, she was sent to Rozy en Brie and it was there when she was elected Superior General at the Chapter of 1821.

Mother Suzanne was given the responsibility of the animation of the congregation at the chapter on Oct.15, 1821 when mother Adelaid resigned due to health reasons. She was 55 years and was very intelligent and innovative. She had strong personality but was a dedicated person. She strengthened the foundations of the previous government and economic needs of the community. Her deep faith helped her to face the difficulties. With the ardor and tenacity of her enterprising character, she got into work and realized new foundations. She knew how to maintain in the congregation its missionary orientation of Charity and Mercy. Her administration was one of the most successful. She arranged intelligently the various facilities at the mother house. Mother Suzanne brought property next to it so as to develop and perfect the Health Center which rendered a great service to the neighborhood while allowing for the training of nursing for the novices. Her generalate was a dynamic period. The community of Hospital Sisters of Chinon merged with the congregation. She did not want to accept re-election and gave the resignation at the chapter in 1824. She went back to continue her work of charity in Rosy en Brie.

Mother Suzanne leaves behind the remembrance of an outstanding personality, capable of making mistakes and even more of being redeemed and atoning for her faults. May this be a lesson for us to live today the Charity, the soul of the community, which Marie Poussepin left for her daughters to uphold. We bow our heads in gratitude for the valuable services of Mother Suzanne for the congregation.

KAREHALLY COMMUNITY



Mother Assumption 1824-1843

Passion and Compassion was the hallmark
A women wedded to the Lord eternally
Life worthy of emulation and admiration
Divine Providence was her life Mantra.

Not a surprise, young flocked to her
Her life revived many doomed spirits
Armed with kindness, smile, serenity and openness
Won many novices to nobleness and holiness.

Superior general: not a place she wished be
But steered the ship to safety in turbulent waters
Mission in mind all the time; took poor in home
New Schools, Hospitals and Homes for elderly
Intuition told her treasure poor more than gold.

Responded to challenges innovatively and with audacity
Embraced the epidemic victims with heroic charity
Permeated the Dominican traits of observances
Stood for the charism and God's plan unfurled in her.



DULIAJHAN COMMUNITY



Quiz on Mother Saint Pierre

Mother Saint Pierre was a missionary and visionary of her time. She was the second foundress of the Congregation, who was concerned about the expansion of the Dominican charism of Bl. Marie Poussepin and made many foundations for the service of charity. She is a great model for the sisters to carry the cross of misunderstanding and humiliation without being discouraged. Her ever creative and innovative spirit is the need of the hour to see the face of Christ in the sick, orphans and the new poor. As we pay tribute to her, may she help us to grow in goodness, mercy, wisdom and prudence to revitalize our presentation spirit and Dominican charism.

1) When and where was Mère Saint Pierre born?

a) 10 April 1800 at Tours b) 19 April 1803 at Villeneuve-sur-Yonne c) 11 April 1801 at Montaben-sur-Yonne d) 12 August 1803 at Toulouse

2) Who were her parents?

a) Pierre Merlin and Anne Accault b) Merlin Pierre and Anne Besant c) Pierre and Accault d) Pierret Accault and Anne Merlin

3) What was her original name?

a) Madaliene Jean b) Francoise Apolline Merline c) Apolline Francoise d) Jean Apolline Merline

4) When did she become orphan?

a) 10 yrs old b) 3yrs old c) 11 yrs old d) 22 yrs old



5) Who was her god-father?

a) Pierre Merlin b) Accault Pierre c) Le Curé Pierret d) Priest

6) What was she called in her god-father's rectory?

a) Merline b) Appolline c) Pierrine d) Pauline

7) Who welcomed Mère Saint Pierre into the Congregation?

a) Mère Adélaïde b) Mère du Calvaire c) Mère Leon Joseph d) Mère Assomption

8) When did she receive the habit?

a) June 22, 1816 b) July 21, 1816 c) July 16, 1817 d) July 22, 1817

9) What was her new religious name?

a) Soeur Pauline b) Soeur St. Pierre c) Soeur St. Appoline d) Sister St. Pierre

10) Where did she start her religious life?

a) In the old age home b) In the hospital of Amboise c) In the Mother House d) La Riche

11) What qualities are evident when she worked in Amboise?

a) Creativity and initiative b) understanding and love c) respect and care d) kindness and goodness

12) Which are the missions that she renewed and brought greater vitality?

a) Tours and Toulouse b) Montauben and Richelieu c) Villeneuve and Yonne d) None of the above

13) What was her mission in the Mother House before 1831?

a) Mistress of Postulants b) Superior c) Mistress of Novices d) Nurse

14) When did the Montaben community begin?

a) September 1830 b) August 1832 c) August 1834 d) September 1835

15) In her mission whom did she give preference?

a) For the orphan girls and abandoned children b) for the elderly and sick c) for young girls d) for sisters and novices

16) What is the significance of October 9, 1843 in the life of Mère Saint Pierre ?

a) She became the Mistress of novices b) She was elected Superior General c) She was awarded by the government d) She met with an accident

17) How old was she when she was elected Superior General?

a) 35 yrs old b) 55 yrs old c) 45 yrs old d) 40 yrs old

18) What were the religious observances during the time of Mother St. Pierre?

a) Praying the Little office of Bl. Virgin Mary b) renewal of vows ever year c) abstaining from meat three days and fasting on Fridays d) all the above

19) When did she purchase the land of La Grande Breteche and when was it inaugurated?

a) December 17, 1845 and March 25, 1848 b) December 8, 1846 and March 22, 1848 c) August 8, 1845 and August 8, 1848 d) None of the above

20) Who consecrated the Chapel at the Mother House?

a) Archbishop Peter Machado b) Archbishop Paul Lakra c) Cardinal Oswald Garcias d) Archbishop Morlot

21) Who gifted the large garden "enclos" lying back of the Mother House?

a) Mr. Morlot b) Mr. Genty c) Mr. Centy d) Msgr Gervais

22) What was the new mission that Mother St. Pierre opened after the sisters settled in Breteche?

a) Orphanage b) Hospital c) Boarding school in one of the wing d) Old age home in one of the wing

23) How many new houses did she establish during 15 yrs of her term?

a) 70 houses b) 75 houses c) 80 houses d) 100 houses

24) What are her greatest achievements?

- a) To return to the origins of our Congregation in Sainville b) transfer of the Mother House to Tours c) discovered the body of Bl. Marie Poussepin and brought the remains to Tours d) all the above
- 25) Who helped Mother St. Pierre to return to the sources and discover the remains of Bl. Marie Poussepin?
a) Mother Assomption b) Her god-father c) Mr. Gervais d) Her assistant
- 26) Who served as secretary and archivist during the time of Mother St. Pierre?
a) Sr. Dominique du Christ b) Sr. Rosario del Catillo c) Sr. Adelaide d) Sr. Séraphie
- 27) Who forbid Mother St. Pierre to attend the chapter of 1858?
a) Archbishop Malmouche b) Bishop Guibert c) Archbishop Guibert d) Msgr Gervais
- 28) When she was forbidden both active and passive voice at the Chapter, what was her expression?
a) Sisters did not understand me b) Let me be sacrificed, but let the Congregation be saved c) Let me remain in peace d) Let the congregation know my worth
- 29) When did Mère Saint Pierre die and how old was she?
a) October 30, 1878 at 75 yrs old b) October 9, 1877, 74 yrs old c) August 8, 1878 at 75 yrs old d) none of the above
- 30) When was her body exhumed and where is she laid to rest?
a) After 45 yrs her body was exhumed and was found intact. The body reposes in the chapel of the Mother House since July13, 1923 b) After 5 yrs and the body reposes in sainville c) After 20 yrs and the body reposes in Villeneuve-dur-lot d) None of the above

P.N.
Dear Sisters, try your luck in answering these questions and score your marks. The answers are given in the last page. Interesting results are found.

28-30 – You are an Excellent Historian of the Congregation

20-27 – You are a passionate lover of the Congregation

11-19 – You are a novice in the Congregation

1-10 – You are an aspirant in the Congregation.

Formation Community



FORMATION COMMUNITY

Mother Du Calvaire

The bells of the Church rang in Cambrai announcing the birth of Marie Angelique DRANCOURT on June 3rd 1819 in the village of Saint Aubert near Cambrai. Her parents rejoiced at her birth and she grew in wisdom and knowledge. Unfortunately when she was 10 years old she lost her beloved parents. After the death of her parents, she was taken cared by the sisters of Cambrani. She received first Holy Communion in 1831. After her confirmation she took the name Charlott. Her hobby was reading and she was gifted with an excellent memory. So later on she herself said "it is reading that has taught me the little I know." She spent her time for self study and ongoing formation. Her wisdom and knowledge enabled her to teach a class for young children in an institution at Cambrai at the age of 16. There she became ill and the doctor who treated, introduced to her the Sisters of the Presentation. She was attracted by the Charism of Marie Poussepin. When she was 18 years old she entered the Novitiate Lariche in October 1837.



On February 1st 1838 she was admitted to take habit which took place on March 5th and she took the name sister Du Calvaire. She was sent to the hospital at Saint Florentin where a school was annexed. She replaced Sr. Saint Maurice, who was very competent and experienced sister. In 1840 she was admitted for first profession. In 1841 she left the teaching because of her ill health. After the few months of rest she was sent to Zen where she was in charge of Pharmacy. The time of Saint Pierre she was sent to Vileneuve sur lot, to found and direct the center of public assistance where she increased many charitable activities such as hospitality to orphans, workshops, help to the needy especially during the famine of in 1852. It was said of her; "All within her was attractive, revealing a cultivated spirit at the service of a great heart".

In 1853, Mere Saint Pierre entrusted to her the responsibility of the General Hospital in Tours, an important role which required good coordination with those responsible for administration. There she lived the epidemic of cholera in 1854, and the almost total flooding of the city in 1856. She risked her own life by participating in and overseeing the rescue efforts while being close to the patients. Leading the community of 32 sisters, at a hospital of 1000 beds, Mere du Calvaire did not neglect the work of the congregation. In 1857 she became councilor at the Chapter. She informed of the difficulties which disturbed the community since 1857. Mere du Calvaire lived then, painful hours which must have wounded her deeply. At the time that she was elected to the Chapter of 1858, she began a long Generalate of 30 years. At the end of 1858, Mere du Calvaire undertook to complete the vast project of enlarging the Breteche, as envisaged by Mere Saint Pierre.

In simplicity and strength assumes the government of the Congregation during a critical time in the community. By faith, she opens new horizons for the Presentation; Spain, Colombia and Iraq are witnesses of her limitless audacity. Her faith in the sisters, her missionary spirit and vision for the future leads to the establishment of the first province of the congregation; the province of Bogotta. She was fraternal and cared for each other. Her advice, her letters enabled her to be present in each community and in their entrusted mission. She does not rest until she received the recognition of an institute of Pontifical Right for the Congregation. In 1868, Mere du Calvaire had the joy and the honor to receive at the Breteche Jandel, Maste General of the Order. She was encouraged by Msg. Meignan, continued the work on the Constitutions started by Fr. M. Gervais, to obtain the recognition of Pontifical right of the community. On April 22nd, 1887, the Constitutions were approved and on the 30 of May the decree of Pontifical recognition was signed. In spite of the weakening state of Mere du Calvaire's health, the General Chapter of 1887 went on with her re-election. A month later her state of health was aggravated and she was bedridden. Even in her suffering she kept her lucidity and great peace. She died on the feast of St. Charles, on November 1887. Before giving up her soul to the Lord, she had expressed her desire "to be buried as the poor" and she prayed that "we would keep in the community, the spirit of simplicity and of poverty". According to her wishes, she was buried in the cemetery of Saint Symphorien. Her tomb stone says; that "she had been of great virtue and adorned with prudence; the souls she led received the solidity of her wisdom and of her holy words".

Today we are invited to retrace the footprints left by Mother Du Calvaire and her life was filled by God's love and she has taught us how to keep the congregation alive by fulfilling our mission. Let us learn from her many qualities such as, spirit of poverty and simplicity, perseverance in commitment, her wisdom by habit of reading, her missionary spirit and vision for the congregation, hospitality, taking risk and challenges and be empathetic. Let us thank God for the gift of Mere Du Calvaire to the congregation.

Her sacrifice and the courage to take risk to keep alive the Chrism of Blessed Marie Poussepin. Her enthusiasm and hard work gives us the inspiration to work for the Kingdom values to be actualized through our missionary presence, where ever we are. We are grateful to Mere Du Calvaire who continued the great mission according to the signs of the time. Lord help us to continue and give life to the mission of the Church.

PARUTHIYOOR COMMUNITY



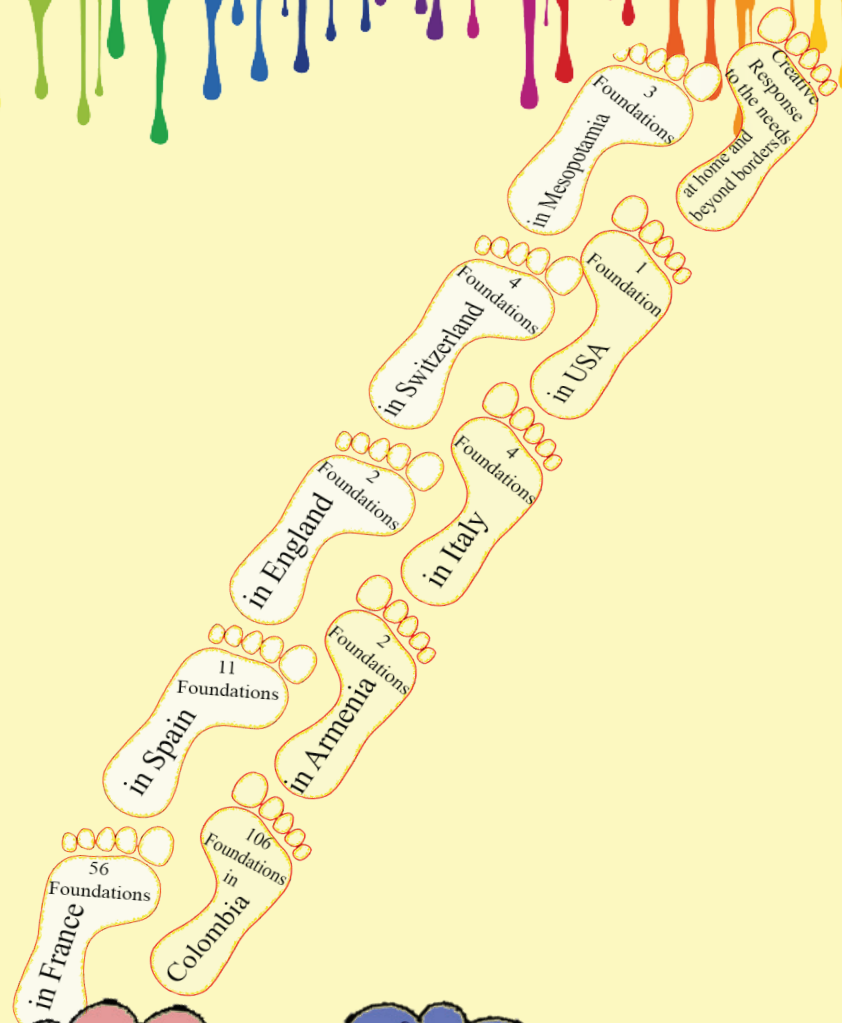
Mother Josepha (1888-1921)

“Her horror of mediocrity, her self-forgetfulness and her zeal for the congregation and the church, carried the mark of a magnanimous heart”.



Mother Josepha (1888-1921)

Creative Response to the Needs of the Hour



Expanded Congregation throughout France and beyond borders to seven countries

Improved the Quality of Education in our Schools

Stimulated religious fervour through Eucharistic and Marian Devotions

Life of Marie Poussepin is written by Mr. Pouan in 1894

1921 Recommendation to the sisters "a burning love for our Lord, a faithful love for the congregation with a continuous union of hearts"

World War I 1914-1918
Collaboration with Red Cross



Mother Josepha

1897 with the Approval added "Dominican" to our Name

1888-1921

1900 confrontation between Church and State: Closure of Schools

1897 Began cause for the beatification of Marie Poussepin

Mother Josepha lived for God and made persons live for Him. Her intelligence open to great ideas, the wisdom of her decisions, her prudence in conducting affairs of the congregation, her generosity and delicate way of giving to the poor... (from the homily of Bp. Negre) are commentable. Mother Josepha gave herself entirely to all that she undertook. Her uprightness and her loyalty directed all her actions. she left us what was most precious: the example of her life, the souvenir of her advice, and the hope of someday being with her in the blessed eternity.

JEEVADHARA COMMUNITY



Zealous and Dynamic Leader - Mother Leon Joseph

Mere Leon Joseph was the 12th leading star of the congregation who stood firmly with her leadership quality and outstands for her missionary expansion with great zealous and dynamism to lead the congregation with renewed vitality towards its growth process during the war I. We owe our gratitude and admiration to her as we celebrate the 325th anniversary of the foundation of our congregation, for her tireless contribution for its growth.



Alexandrin Eleonore Perrin was born as the 5th child of a family of doctors on November 2nd 1864



Her mother over saw her studies and passed on to her a great religious devotion



Alexandrine Eleonore Perrin was inspired by the sisters of Grande Breteche



She meets Fr. Lefay O.P. chaplain of Grande Breteche and from that day onwards she received spiritual direction from him



She enters the novitiate of La Breteche, on March 29, 1893.



Mere Josépha sees that this novice is very pious, obedient and attached to her vocation.

Receives the habit on March 4th 1894, with the name Sr. Leon Joseph

Teaches in parish, catechism to the orphan girls, visits parents and other activities



Made profession on 10th September, 1896



Takes up work at rue de Clichy till 1899

Superior at Montauban in 1899



She organizes meetings for young girls of society: the Association Sainte Germaine, residence for students and workers.

In December 1908, she is called to the Bretèche as General Secretary



In 1914, she is elected assistant and she maintains a close collaboration of 14 years with Mere Josépha



12th Superior General on May 24, 1921



Governed the Congregation for 18 years and leaves her mark through a strong religious presence, growing vitality, and dynamic missionary expansion

Out standing qualities

- Spiritual way of seeking the will of God
- Walks towards original path
- Faithful to the spirit of Marie Poussepin
- Firm judgement, ability to adapt
- Faces problems with serenity, without ever giving the impression of precipitation or discouragement.

Achievements

- Far off travels in difficult circumstances
- Foreign foundations
- Times in Rome to work for the cause of Marie Poussepin
- In 1938 the long and laborious historical and archival research by Father Théry, O.P. at her request
- Publication of two big volumes: "Collection of the Acts of the Venerable Marie Poussepin".



Missionary Expansion

- visits Colombia for six months in 1923
- visit to the mission in Mesopotamia in 1928
- Encouraged the sisters to serve the Muslims and appreciated service of sisters over the Iraqi women
- Created health services
- Saved many prisoners
- In 1939, joy of re-opening the houses and educational institutions in Spain
- In 1930, the new Latin American Province of Medellin



Daring Leadership During Trials

- French Revolution of 1793 breaks out
- Sisters are forced to leave the country
- Novitiate finds refuge in Switzerland



Surrenders to the Lord

- 18 years of continuous work
- Travels and visits to houses had depleted her health
- Resigns from responsibilities at the Chapter on May 24, 1939
- Back to mother house
- Reaches the abode of the Lord on February 15, 1943 at the age of 79.
- Completed 49th year of her religious life.



The biography of Mere Leon Joseph motivates us to seek the will of God in that we undertake. Her ways of leading the congregation is very much relevant and inspiring as the congregation works for the beatification of Bl. Marie Poussepin, tries go back to the original vision of our foundress and finds ways and means to expand the mission through the charismatic plan. May she be a model to stand firm in the Lord amidst of the challenges of the present time.



MYSORE COMMUNITY

Mother Therese Augusta (1939-1959)

July 3rd 1884, observed a seed sprouting in Amboise, France,
A third shoot of that seed, Marie Paule Germaine, born to fly high
But soon the death of her mother in 1889 pierced her heart deeply.
God sent her grant mother and aunts as angels to care and nature,

Marie Paule and her little sister were educated
and cared well by the presentation sisters.
Her brilliance, love for work, giftedness were noticed by her teachers.
She courageously took elementary school level examination,
and proved her capacity for teaching.


God called her for something higher, to be engaged with Him.
Attracted by the life style of the Dominican Sisters,
She enters the novitiate in 1905 on November 11th
An atmosphere of silence and prayer, molded her according to His plan.

1906 Nov 21st was another milestone in her life.
She went through a second Baptism by taking religious promises,
And received a new name, Sr. Therese Augusta.
She was energized by the utterance of the father,
“You are my beloved daughter in whom I am well pleased.

A new obedience awaited her,
She was asked to carry on with her professional vocation, teaching.
Rozay-en-Brie was privileged to get the gift of Therese Augusta’s presence.
Her energetic, organized and exceptional way of teaching,
Invited for a higher level of education.

In 1909 another big responsibility demanded her attention,
She was name as assistant novice mistress.
Her purposefully lived in the novitiate brought great spiritual impression
on the novices.
God’s rewards always waits for those who work with Him.





1925 Easter fell heavy on Sr. Therese Augusta.
She was named as Mistress of Novices,
A big responsibility of molding young hearts.

After seven long years of service,
she was called to replace a general councilor.
She was selected as a companion to Mere Leon Joseph,
She accompanied her to Rome, Algiers, Morocco, and Spain,

In 1936 she visited American province in Fall River,
And then she took a long trip to Latin America.
Long trips and hard work made her body ill and weak,
But her spiritual energy never went dry.

She was elected as the mother general in the Chapter of 1939.
A worst time of history for the whole world.
The second World war breaks out in 1939,
And our mother house was opened as a Hospital,
Our old sisters and postulants find a shelter elsewhere under her care
Novices are gently taken to Lourds.

Tough time ahead of her; deprivation and absence of communication
In 1940 a Torpedo crashes in the garden of Bretech.
A lance pierced her heart,
when bombardments killed two of her sisters.
The general council was forced to leave Lourds to Montauban.

A fresh gentle spirit swept across the heart of the political authorities,
In 1942, they approved the sisters to go back to schools to teach.
Opened 35 small schools and started the formation of young hearts.
Vibrant Mere Therese Augusta initiated a drastic steps to modify our Statues,
Sisters were sent for professional formation in teaching.

In 1953, She bowed before the Lord and sisters in obedience,
When she was re-elected her a third time as mother general
though it needed a special permission from Rome.
She carried it joyfully until 1959
1943, 1954 and 1957 obliged Mere Therese Augusta to take important decisions

The fusion of two congregations; soeurs de sainte Anne de Feugarolle,
and Our lady of Manosque.
Erection of two provinces in Colombia and a Vice-Province in Asia.
She shouldered the modification of our constitution
A new energy entered and pierced through her mind,

The new ventures in the year 1959;
She opened a new school of nursing in Marseille Prado,
Decentralized by erecting new provinces in Spain, N and S of France.
Aggregation of the Congregation to the Dominican order.

Mere Therese Augusta receives a Legion of Honor award,
For her role in the cultural influence,
And the for expansion of our congregation in France and Abroad.



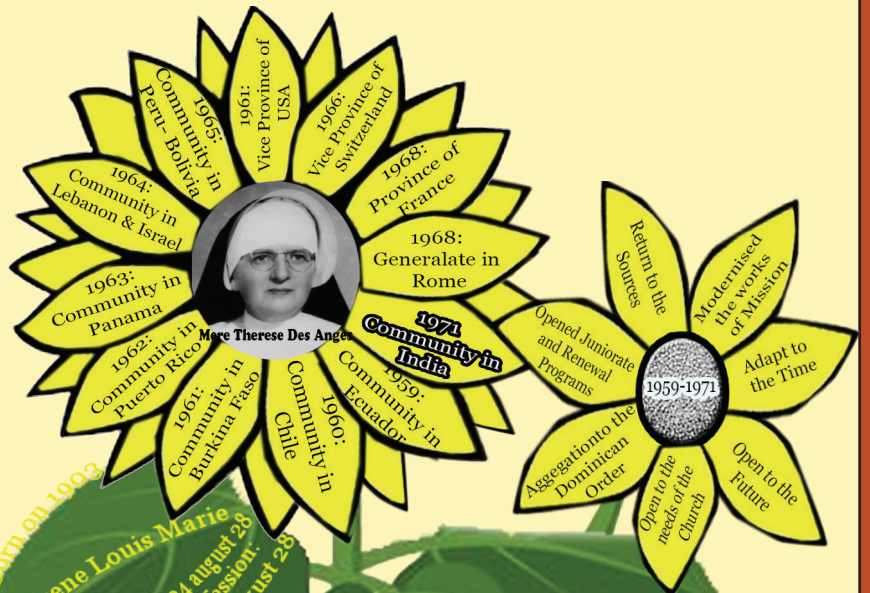
Yes, Mere Therese Augusta, as you bid goodbye to us in 1966 July 25, Your followers bow before you, Before your wisdom, prudence and balanced life. Your rock like interior life, love for rules are all a challenge for us.

You are a woman, who stood tall in difficult times, Your serenity, self possession and interior peace that come from your trust in the providence of God is all an asset for our Congregation.



Varadium community

MOTHER THERESE DES AGNES 1903 - 1992



Conclusion

Mother Theresse Des Agnes was a vibrant, dynamic and noble woman. She has faced the challenges and prepared the sisters to face the modern world. Studying about her life was an inspiration and challenge for us in our community and mission. We are proud of her missionary zeal who planted the seed in India. As she has gone through the snares and perils, the pioneers of Dhulkot mission too have faced a lot of challenges having no communication, transportation and poor living condition. Now we are proud and grateful to God for all the wonders He has done in the mission of Dhulkot. Enjoying the greenery, communication, roads and better living style we continue the mission entrusted to us.

DHULKOT COMMUNITY

Mother Marie St. Therese - In the Spirit of the Gospel



In Faith Marie Saint Therese,
A faithful daughter,
who lived in the spirit of the Gospel.
She lived and she said ,our life must
Adapt to the present world, without losing
Anything of its force, in the spirit of the Gospel.
She said Co-responsibility in the context of authori-
ty in obedience, In the spirit of the Gospel.

Lived the Dominican identity and making
A formative community in the spirit of the Gospel.

Her aim was to evangelize the world ,
in the spirit of the Gospel.

When the sisters got salaried positions-rooted
In the heart of the cities, she reminded in faithfulness
to live the life in the spirit of the Gospel.

She erected the foundation in united states,
El Salvador and Mexico ,in the spirit of the Gospel.

A women attentive to the fidelity, to the Charism of Blessed Marie Poussepin
Launched the experience of CEMP, in the spirit of the Gospel.
gavw service as Mother General for 9 years,
In the spirit of the Gospel,

She passed the torch to next and left to
Switzerland as a local superior,
to live in the spirit of the Gospel.

Marie Saint Therese, simple, humble and poor
Underneath the appearance of coldness, distance ,
She has a sense and delicately attending to each one in respect
And freedom, everything in the spirit of the Gospel.



Lessons were learnt without words,
her life was enough to see that,
She lived and died in the Spirit of the Gospel.
She committed her entire life for the growth of
The Congregation in the spirit of the Gospel.
She inspires us to live , simple and committed life
In the spirit of the Gospel.

BUCHEON COMMUNITY

An interview with Sr. Ines Mercedes Mejia Toro



Q. Sr. Ines, it is almost 10 years since you left us for your eternal reward. We are assured that you are enjoying the company of the angels and saints in the 'Father's House', of course with Jesus and his beloved mother and our Mother, Mary.

Sr. Ines: Yes, as I lived all my life as a continuous search for the Will of God, I knew 'He will come to take me whenever He wants. I was ready for the final meeting. I just prayed that He will accompany me to my last breath in faith, hope and serenity.' (Info.#2 2011)

Q. Will you please share with the readers of "We Communicate" something about yourselves, about your experiences and dreams for the congregation.

Sr. Ines: - Certainly; I am only happy to share with you especially about my dreams and hopes for the congregation. It will be a happy reminiscence for me.

Q. Let us start then from your family. Please tell us a little about your family.

Sr. Ines:- I was born on January 21, 1932 as the second child of Antonio Mejia and Mercedes Toro de Mejia in Sonson, Antioquia, Colombia S.A. Victor was the eldest and only brother. After me, there were three other girls, Marina (Sr. Marina, Vice Province of USA) Laura Maria, (Sr. Laura Maria Province of Medellin. She is here with me in the ' Father's

House'). Maria Victoria, the youngest, got married and lives with the family. We grew up in a very happy, catholic and religious atmosphere.

Q. Your vocation story?

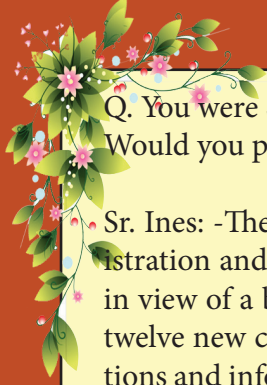
Sr. Ines: - Nothing dramatic! It was very simple. Presentation Sisters were a group of religious who were very visible in our hometown. I spent my school years with them and around them. The desire to become a religious grew in me like a small seed which was broken and sprouted in the soil the most suitable for its growth. When I expressed my desire to my parents to join the Presentation, they agreed without any problem. I was about 18 or so at that time. I made my First Profession on February 3, 1954.

Q. It is interesting that two of your younger sisters, Marina and Laura Maria followed you to the Presentation. It is almost like "a family that overtook Presentation"!

Sr. Ines- Ah, yes! They too were attracted by the Charism of Marie Poussepin.

Q. Will you please trace for us the itinerary of your religious life?

Sr. Ines: -After several services in the field of education and formation, I was sent to France for religious studies. When I returned from France in 1969, I was named mistress of Novices for the Province of Manizales until when I was elected Provincial superior in 1974. I had already finished one term as the Provincial of the Province of Manizales and was reelected at the Provincial chapter of 1978. It was when we were at the General chapter of 1979 in Rome that I was elected Superior General. (Web page)



Q. You were Superior general for 15 years at a time when the congregation had great geographical expansion. Would you please give us a glimpse to those years?

Sr. Ines: -The Service of charity and commitment towards the poor demanded of us a revision of the administration and structure of the Congregation. Some Provinces and Vice-Provinces were created or subdivided in view of a better spiritual life and quality of apostolic commitments. The missionary field was expanded to twelve new countries and 129 new foundations. With a real concern for communion, a network of connections and information were created among the sisters. In order to deepen the Charism of Marie Poussepin, the Center of Studies of Marie Poussepin was started. (Web Page)

Q What were some of your convictions which gave force to your decisions and actions?

Sr. Ines: - I believed that as a Congregation, we exist in view of the Mission. To succeed in this goal, we need to give emphasis for formation which structures the person in community and guarantees the quality of our life in the Church. The Universal dimension of our mission is lived only in a total acceptance of Internationality, in the visible expression of a faith without limitations. Mission is universal first within each one of us; borders are set up or demolished first in the heart. These are some of my convictions which guided some of our decisions during our mandate as general government. (Circular letter No.33, November 26, 1982)

Q Here in India, Sisters of the Province remember your several visits with much love, gratitude and appreciation. All were impressed by your simplicity, readiness to adjust to all situations, individual attention for the sisters and above all your life of prayer and discipline. Would you like to share something about those visits?

Sr. Ines:- Those visits had allowed me to know the sisters and the Region better. When Sr. Dorothy had to leave the Region, when she was elected Provincial of USA Province, I was able to assure you with joy that I had faith in you, that I had felt in your communities and in your lives the clear inspiration of Marie Poussepin, that I experienced with you the joy of being united in a common project: "to know and reveal Jesus Christ". In you and through you, the Presentation was growing and taking roots in India. It was to become whatever you were to make of it: a firm and generous response as "service of charity in the Church". It was a moment of trust in you, and joy to place into your hands this part of the congregation. We assured you our spiritual presence to continue to be with you in your joys and hopes, efforts and progress. (Letter to the Region, February 1984)

It was a great joy for me to come to the Vice Province as part of the Team of CEMP extension course. I was overjoyed that Sr. Marina also was there at that time with Sr. Josephine as part of the team. I could see the growth of the Vice Province, as I had hoped at that time when I entrusted that part of the congregation into your hands. Thank you for the trust you placed in us. Your continued support was the pillar we leaned on. Yes, for Sr. Marina also it was a great joy, as she had prepared for and hoped to be here for your first visit in 1981. As she had to return to USA suddenly, she was unable to be here when you came.

Q. There are many more questions which are in our mind, as those 15 years of your mandate were made up of innumerable and very important steps taken to bring the congregation to what it is today. But if you can name a few unforgettable experiences what would they be?

Sr. Ines: -I would like to mention a couple of events that marked the life of the congregation and were etched in the heart of every sister of the Presentation. First one is receiving the Constitutions, transmission of life. To receive our Constitutions from the Church, to transmit them to the Congregation and to hand them over to each sister was a joyful task, but at the same time a delicate duty and correlative act of faith, experienced year after year by the generations who will live them.(Circular letter, 29, May 8,1982)The second experience was the beatification of our beloved Mother Foundress, Marie Poussepin. At the end of all the years of prayer and effort of so many people we witnessed the completion of the Cause of Beatification of Marie Poussepin. I was truly blessed to see these efforts being crowned by the celebration on November 20, 1994, presided by His Holiness John Paul II, at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. (Web Page)

Dear Sr. Ines, Thank you for all that you have shared today. We are truly grateful to you for your missionary audacity, evangelical boldness, firm decision, and opportune wisdom with which you guided the Congregation during the eventful 15 years of your generalate. You began processes, followed up decisions and in a meaningful way, opened more doors to the International mission of the Congregation in many countries. You believed in the capacities of the sisters to live the service of charity and the risks of the mission. You encouraged in difficulty, loved truth always, shared the joys with the simplicity of the one inhabited by the Spirit of God. Some of us are blessed to have known you personally and are grateful for all that you have been for us. We count on your intercession for the congregation, which you loved and served all your life, as it is on its pilgrimage of restructuration and revitalization for life and mission.

“I loved the congregation and I gave myself to its mission, I did nothing else.”

Marie Poussepin's Home Community









Next issue of *We Communicate* will be in the month of April, 2021. Kindly send your reflections and sharings creatively by 10th of March, 2021

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