



Dear Sisters,

Every year, the Mystery of Christmas fills us with joy and makes us feel the great love that God has for us.

I wish that this joy be in you so abundantly that nothing and no one is impeded from rejoicing in the certainty that God loves us.

A star awakened in the Magi of the Orient a force that enabled them to destabilize themselves and to seek the unknown.

In the life of our Priory, this year called for us to destabilize ourselves: a change in the Prioress – isn't that a change for whom takes on the service and for all the Sisters? Also Sr. Gratia changed residence: from Madrid to Luanda-Kikolo, where she is the new Superior. In the community of St. Benedict, in Luanda, Sr. Lugarda was confirmed as Superior; in early December Sr. Teresa Vissupe was installed as Superior of Menongue and so, too, Sr. Cecília Tchimuma in Kuito.

A star shone, too, for our Sr. Rosa Maria when she was called as a missionary for Bulgaria. At present she is in Brazil for a family visit and medical treatment. We pray that these weeks, in her home country, be for her a time of rest which will enable her to follow the new path.

In June, Sr. Plácida came to Torres Novas as Sub-prioress. At present, she and Sr. Socorro are making great efforts to penetrate into the secrets of accounting and administration which Sr. Rosa Maria explained to them – but when the "teacher" is missing the accounting which seemed so simple, becomes complicated

The elderly of our two Old People's Homes feel the cold and the darker days just as they felt the strong heat and the prolonged summer. We have accompanied several of them to the door of eternity.

We shall feel the economical crisis in Portugal come January when the government cuts tax benefits, also for social institutions.

Twice I visited our communities in Angola. In the first visit, the high point was the Profession of three novices. In the second visit, the Sisters came together for a regional assembly. Together we reflected on the various questions of the communities and of formation. Each community has a group of girls who are interested in the religious life, but still need more schooling. What strikes our attention is that the girls now come from different regions of Angola. We expect for the coming year the entrance of two candidates to the pre-postulancy; they are from a region from which we never had candidates.

After these small notes, we look once again for the star. She invites us to enter the New Year with all our senses open to discover the new roads that we should trail. Portugal will celebrate, in 2011, the Golden Jubilee of our presence in "terras lusitanas" – Portuguese territory. Angola will celebrate 80 years full of experiences, many combats and suffering, but also much dedication which we hope will bring abundant fruit.

Let us follow the star and seek the Lord.

Ir. Timótea OSB