



Congregation News

Noticias. Nachrichten. 소식지

Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing

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"I will be with you always ..." Matt. 28:20

Afire with love and gratitude!



The International Weeks of Encounter in Rome (IWE) this time had 28 participants. Their time with us in Casa Community passed by very quickly.

Five of them are silver Jubilarians: Sr. Catharina Roh, Sr. Isaiah Kim, Sr. Mario Kim, from Daegu Priory, Sr. M. Amos Hwang and Sr. Timothea Park, from Seoul Priory.

I enjoyed every minute of it. They were a lovely group and it was very easy to love each one of them. Listening to them and experiencing the prayer and pilgrimages we had together, left me very grateful for these Sisters and for all that God can do in and through the lives of those who trust in Him. We missed them here when they left us on June 1st to go to Tutzing, though we were happy for them to go and experience the roots of our congregation in Germany too.



My Teaching Experience in the Philippines

By: Sr. Mary Clemens Hamukoto, OSB

On my last Semester at St. Scholastica's College Manila, I had the privilege of having an exposure to an underprivileged area with poor teaching condition at Oscar Elementary School (OES) Calauan-Laguna in the Philippines.



OES has levels from Pre-school or Kindergarten to Grade 6. Reflecting on the experience at Calauan, I feel it was an eye-opener for me on how the students, though many, are being instructed by just a few teachers. I found the strategy of having two shifts a day very helpful although the playing time for the student is not fully met, because the first shift starts classes at 6 in the morning and ends at past 11.00 so that they will give chance to the second shift which starts classes at 12 until past 5.00 in the afternoon. The whole time is spent in class and no chance for the students to play. I have experienced that the teaching learning conditions in “underprivileged” communities is very demanding. Thus, I pray and hope that the teachers who are involved in the situation there will be given sabbatical period from time to time.

It was also a great help for me to have gone to Calauan and see for myself with my own eyes, rather than hear or just read about such conditions. It has now strengthened my desire to become a teacher. This is because, seeing a great number of children who are in need of being educated gives me hope that the seed

being sown in the hearts of those children will surely not fall on dry soils; although not all of them are likely to be successful. I believe there will be a change that will transform our world some day.

The experience also taught me or has inspired me to have a desire to reach out to all children especially the least of God's children in a way that I hope to be assigned in a school which has less fortunate ones. But I am also ready if this chance will not be granted me, so that it will not hinder me from bringing these concerns with me to my prayers. I am also praying that one day I may serve the least of God's children who have less opportunity for a better learning condition. It is my prayer that the thought of giving my service to the poor may not vanish from within, in that way I hope God will act in the future if not at present.

When I was giving lessons to the students at Oscar Elementary school, I was able to practice class management and use some techniques to achieve my goal. I constantly used reminders after I have given the class rules to the students. I kept reminding them about the rules I have set up for them. For example, I told the class that whoever wishes to say something should raise his/her hand and wait to be called on before s/he speaks. Again and again, I saw some students talking aloud without raising their hands and I reminded them.



This helped me keep order in the class. I also set time limit for the activities which made the students focus on their work rather than spend time in chatting with others. But I realized that these strategies

cannot be achieved fully in just one single day. It needs practice for some days in order for the students to be used to the rules and be able to keep them. This made me personally realize the depth and breadth of the vocation I have chosen as an educator. I realize that teaching is not an easy task, because dealing with humans it is not an easy thing to do, for each person has his/her own unique differences. Therefore, to have a common goal for all requires that each and everyone needs practice and a willing heart.



As a future teacher, I realize now that my educational philosophy will likely be inspired by the students I will be handling in the future. At the moment, I believe that each student is unique and holds special aptitudes and interests that need to be recognized, respected, and molded by the instructor. I am also keeping in mind that *“We all know it when we are there”*; which means I will be sure of how much I have acquired from my studies when I will be in the real classroom. As of now my mission-vision is that I will embody the Benedictine values of humility, obedience, good zeal, compassion, service and community in the hearts of students through collaboration with fellow teachers and the administrators in the institute I will be serving in the future so *“That in all things God may be glorified”*.

My profound appreciation goes to all my Professors at St. Scholastica’s College Manila who were so very generous with their time, their knowledge and sharpness of minds that taught me to do no less. I will always remember their loving service

to us students. May God reward them a hundredfold!

Surprises: My American Experience

By: Sr. Angela Park, OSB

Transcribed by: Sr. Maria Jose Esperanza, OSB

It was a time in my life when I had to be with my ailing mother in Korea. I left Bulgaria on 16 April 2010. There was a stop-over in Moscow, Russia and I saw many Asians particularly Koreans in the airport. It was nice to hear again my own native tongue. It was natural for me to smile at all the Asian-looking people in the crowd as I toured around in the airport. Also, I heard Japanese language to my surprise. When I reached Incheon International Airport in South Korea I was happy to be met by my own Benedictine Sisters from the Seoul Priory.

The following day I went straight to see my parents. They were delighted to see me again and I really spent quality time with them for two and a half months. During this time I really took care of my mother. After this period, I returned to the priory house about thirteen days to work on my visa to travel to America. I did not tell my mother about my going to Norfolk to study. I kept it a secret. All my loved ones were surprised when I told them after I got my visa and when I was sure to leave.

It took me only one week to apply for my visa to the US. This was unbelievable at first but I came to realize that this is the result of high-technology. When I went to the American Embassy in Seoul I was asked to use the computer and to apply through the internet. Then I was the one who scheduled the date for my interview. Of course, this technology is not new to me but the fast machine service is different from human service. So I clicked and chose the following day as the date of my

interview for my visa for an 8-month visit. And, finally I paid for the processing fee bank to bank as instructed.

So the following day, I went to the embassy for the interview. The interviewer asked why I had to go for a visit to their country. I explained that I am going to Norfolk for a special program as part of the congregational study program to know and to experience more the monastic life in a different setting and country. I explained to the interviewer that I have to be back to Bulgaria after ten months. This time it was a fast human service. I was asked to fingerprint on a machine and that ended the interview. They gave me a slip informing me when to come back during the week to claim my visa. After three days I got my 10-year American visa to the surprise of Mother Abraham Kang and the other Sisters.

On July 21, 2010 I left Seoul for Norfolk. When I reached Minneapolis, the immigration office people called for me after seeing that I have a 10-year visa. One policeman interviewed me. I answered him in English telling him that I will be in Norfolk for an eight-month visit and that I am a missionary from Bulgaria. My stay in the convent is part of a special program of the Congregation of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters. The policeman did not ask more questions but stamped my passport March 21, 2011. This date is significant being the feast of St. Benedict. He really interceded for me. I was told that I was so lucky to be given an allowance since I have to be in Bulgaria on March 13.

I arrived in Norfolk Priory House on July 21 and after a month my mother at the age of 76 left us to return to her Creator. I opened my e-mail the night before my first day of school and read the news from my niece telling me that that morning my mother died peacefully. I had no feelings... I went to school the next day to be present for the orientation with my

classmates. I did not tell them anything. The following day, I told my teacher and to cheer me up she gave me home-made cookies with a card.

I informed the Sisters about the death of my mother and a Holy Mass was celebrated for her. Good memories of my mother and the reality that she is gone make me cry... I weep while washing my face... and most of the time I found myself crying while I walk alone and during my relaxed moments. I was telling myself that maybe after my Bulgaria mission I will really mourn for my mother. Most of the time I controlled myself because I was going to school and I suppressed the feeling to mourn. But it was painful for me to ignore the feelings because I remember how she cried when I said goodbye to her. I saw her tears and until now this parting affects me.

I am now back in Bulgaria. I arrived at Sofia airport on March 13, 2011. As I recalled my beautiful experience when I was out of Bulgaria I felt grateful for all the surprises I had. I appreciate the opportunity given to me to study English. At first, I thought I would have an intensive course but it was a two-hour lesson three times a week and most of these lessons were one-on-one because my classmates sometimes did not attend the classes. Then, another thought made me worry how to pay all my expenses for my English course. To my surprise, I learned that my teacher, Caroline Walker, is a volunteer to teach in Community College where two-year courses are offered for Hispanic people in the neighborhood. Therefore, I did not pay for my lessons.



Sr. Angela with her classmates

From Mrs. Walker I only did not learn English but I learned compassion since I had this wrong judgment about Americans. They are not what I thought them to be.

In the Norfolk Priory House, the Sisters were very understanding and patient with me. The Sisters talked to me and asked me about Bulgaria.



Sr. Angela with Sr. Hilda Choi, OSB

Our conversations improved my grammar and they learned about our Bulgaria mission. I was also given a special tutor to help me learn more English vocabulary and grammar.



Sr. Angela.2 - with Sr. Philomena, OSB

The hospitality I experienced in Norfolk priory made me reflect that I am a *Benedictine*. And the motto *Ora et Labora* has an impact on me. I can say that there was a balance in my prayer and work while I was living with all the Sisters. I had the time for study and for prayer. Though I experienced different ritual and traditions, these helped me to value more my

vocation. I witnessed how the elderly Sisters worked without complaining. Their readiness to help and to work was very encouraging. I often heard them saying: *Thank you* and *Excuse Me*. These words are now part of me. I was touched also by their being mobile, independent and optimistic despite their age especially Sister Marita, Sister Alberta, Sister Josefina, and Sister Margaret. The prayer times I had with the Sisters made me more prayerful and I had the impulse to have more personal prayer in their unique chapel with the logo of our congregation on the ceiling.



Sr. Angela with Sr. Bernadine, Sr. Agnes, and Mother Pia, OSB

I hope that all these good experiences I had in Norfolk priory will continue to be my inspiration as I live my *Ora et Labora* in Bulgaria trusting in God's help and mercy. I conclude this article with a big **Thank you!**

Jinja, Uganda: Expansion of St. Benedict's Health Centre

Sr. John Paul Marunga, OSB

"The Lord has done great things for us." This is the best phrase to describe the marvels at St. Benedict's Health Centre. The dispensary is located about ten kilometers from Jinja town which was nicknamed "ghost town" due to low population and slow economic development despite its strategic location. The people living in the neighborhood of the dispensary are relatively poor and the majority is Moslem.

Despite the above background we get many patients on the daily basis from Monday to Saturday and on most public holidays we work half day. The patients come from as far as Iganga, Tororo, Mbale, Kampala and some from Kenya and Rwanda. People come with all sorts of sicknesses to our dispensary because many of our patients as well as health workers from other health units recommend our dispensary to people with complicated ailments but to our surprise most of them get healed. Our Sr. Benedicta, who is in-charge, says, " It's Our Lord" at work in the dispensary.

With this in mind, the original facility could not accommodate the high turn up of patients especially the waiting area because the queue is usually very long and sometimes they queued up till the afternoon. This long waiting of patients in the hot tropical sun weakens them all the more. This was the driving force to expand the unit, especially the waiting area.



New building and the Ambulance

A two-storey building has been constructed in the front of the old building. The ground floor is the waiting area which is 100M x 70M. This is a relatively large area to accommodate all the patients as they come. The waiting area is multi-purpose; it is used as a classroom for the St. Benedict Women's Group and the Sunday School Children when our usual place at school is being used for other purposes. It is also our Church on big feasts when the

village people join us for Holy Mass; for instance on Palm Sunday this year, that is where we celebrated Mass. The other floor of the extension is office as well as the conference hall. With the moving out from the old building, rooms have been created for more consultation rooms and a theatre for minor operations which is great news for our patients.

We conclude with a big thank you to our long-term and faithful benefactors: Mr. Josef Wiederkehr and his friend Mr. Oscar who have supported us with financial assistance. May God reward them for their continuous generosity to our dispensary and the poor in our neighborhood. Hearty thanks to our sisters working in the dispensary who conceived the need for expansion and started saving for the last ten years. Your savings, thoughtfulness and implementation of the project are highly appreciated. May God bless you for the work well done!

Last but not least, we also congratulate the dispensary for the purchase of its Ambulance. It is in good working condition and at the moment it is very helpful especially to women in labor with complications who are referred to Jinja Hospital. We thank our benefactor, none other than our sisters of Daegu Priory, Korea, who has made this dream come true.

First Profession

Ndanda: 26 April 2011

Sr. Tekla Nyaki, OSB

Peramiho: 3 May 2011

Sr. Kalista Matinya, OSB

Sr. Martha Mvula, OSB

Sr. Agatha Kazimoto, OSB

Manila: 15 May 2011

Sr. Judith Diaz, OSB

Congratulations dear Sisters!

Final Profession

Peramiho: 18 June 2011

Sr. Daniela Ngonyani OSB

Sr. Michaela Chibesa, OSB

Sr. Agape Mgaya, OSB

Sr. Agnes-Maria Ngailo

Congratulations dear Sisters!

Inter-Priory Sharing and Transfers

28 April 2011

Sr. Candida Hillebrand

From Ndanda to GD/

Haus St. Benedikt

28 April 2011

Sr. Agnes Mary Mulala

From Windhoek to Olinda

30 April 2011

Sr. Odilia Kipanga

From GD/Jinja back to Peramiho

7 June 2011

Sr. Anna Maria Cheong

From Tutzing back to Daegu

10 June 2011

Sr. Maria Jose Esperanza

From GD/Bulgaria back to Manila

**God bless you and your mission
dear Sisters!**

Ndanda: Sacred Heart Community Kabuhima

By Sr. Raphaela Handler, OSB

What better experience for the working of the Holy Spirit could I have than to be one of the team of Sisters going to Kabuhima, Kahama Diocese to evaluate the impact of our presence. 18 months had elapsed since Bishop Minde installed us officially

December 19, 2009. With me were Sr. Francisca Kaesa and Sr. Clare Ngonyani. The safari went very well.

The high point of our visit was the holy mass Sunday, June 5, 2011. As it was the fourth time for me to be in the parish I could only wonder and praise God seeing the crowds of people streaming to the parish ground. The altar is now always brought outside; all people are on benches, chairs or on the ground outside because the church would not even take a quarter of all the people coming. So many young people, male and female, but as well old ones and children. We were six sisters and the parish priest Fr. Salvatore to distribute Holy Communion – and even so it took a long time.



Holy Mass on Sunday, 5 June 2011

Easter saw 250 baptisms, again a huge number will be added on Pentecost. The Bishop said clearly that it is because of the Sisters that the Church is growing so much. And the participation of the people in singing, praying, receiving the Holy Eucharist and bringing their gifts for the construction of the new Church for 1500 people was very moving. Of course the three of us received gifts as well: rice, maize, beans, later honey was added.

The Sisters are loved so much. And every one had only positive words to say though the number is small and they would like to see more Sisters.

Another big joy was meeting young women who desire to enter our Congregation. Unfortunately they are all attending government schools which are

doing so poorly in academic performance. We try to help with tuition. Please, pray that God in his mercy will continue to guide us according to His will in this mission *ad gentes*.

Sr. Stella finished six months of apostolic work in Kabuhima. Her main apostolate was with the children in the kindergarten, but she was much involved as well with preparation for first communion (facing a group of 120 children!), Small Christian communities, sacristy and alike. She is happy and said “I learned a lot”.



Sr. Stella in the Kindergarten

Now Sr. Stella was accepted for the full training as a Montessori Teacher at a Montessori School belonging to Mwanza Archdiocese, and managed by Sr. Denise, a Swiss Baldegg Sister. The course will be for two years, beginning on August 8, 2011.



Adoration in the Parish Church followed by Vespers with participation of Christians

International Junior Sisters’ Program of Exposure in Rome

We have a new program in the Congregation: The International Juniors’ Program in Rome (IJPR) lasting from June 2011 to 28 May 2012. The Generalate would like to give some of our younger sisters a unique international exposure and experience at the heart of the Church and the heart of the Congregation as part of their Juniorate formation.

Casa Santo Spirito is a centre or focal point of our Congregation. The young Sisters will be exposed to the international community of Casa, as well as to the many Sisters from all over the congregation who pass through it in the course of the year. The program is grounded in the basic structure of our life, with the Junior Sisters integrated into the rhythm of life of the Casa Community.

Rome is an important root of our Catholic Christian faith. Pilgrimages and reflections on specific saints like St Peter and Paul as well as on St Benedict and St Scholastica will be part of the Junior Sisters’ program while in Rome. They will have time for personal study and classes for some hours on ordinary days of the week.



From left to right in the above photo:

Sr. Marie Jeanne Park from Seoul Priory; Sr. Carolyne Ibelia Isiaho from Nairobi Priory; Sr. Mary John Sakeus from Windhoek; Sr. Rose Amoita Papa from

Jinja, Uganda; Sr. Cristina Alejandra Suárez from Argentina, Sr. Karla Mirella dos Santos Nascimento from Olinda Priory.

The photo is taken in the Church of Campo Santo at the altar where our first four Pioneer Missionary Benedictine Sisters made their first profession before departure for mission in East Africa. We hope that touching the roots of our faith and of our Congregation will help our young sisters to grow as broad minded and zealous Missionary Benedictine Sisters.

These have returned to the Lord

Sr. Reginberta Klopfer, OSB
20 May 2011 in Tutzing

Sr. Sigrid Dempfle, OSB
18 June 2011 in Tutzing

Sr. Lia Schwarzmüller, OSB
28 June 2011 in Ndanda

May they rest in peace!

Generalate Schedule

July 8-28, 2011 Norfolk Visitation
Sr. Adelaida & Sr Terese

August 10 – 18, 2011 ITM Prepro

Sept. 2-16, 2011 CIB Meeting
M. Angela

**Sept. 20, 2011 Announcement of
General Chapter 2012**

Generalate Meetings

**Sept. 30 – Oct. 14, 2011 Iberian
Visitation - M. Angela & Sr. Salette**

Nov. 11-13 Tutzing Election Chapter
M. Angela & Sr Terese

Nov. 10-13, 2011 AIM Meeting
Sr. Adelaida

Nov. 25-30, 2011 ITM in Rome

**Dec. 3-11, 2011 Annual Retreat
Generalate Meetings**

Mid Dec. 2011 India Visit
M. Angela & Sr. Maoro

We express our sincerest gratitude to all who have contributed to this *Congregation News*. Special thanks are given to Sr. Ruth Schönenberger for the German translation, Sr. Walburga M. Volkhausen for the Portuguese translation, Sr. Marie Paul Sung for the Korean translation, and to the proof-readers.

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