

# BRIEFING

GENERALATE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY MOTHER OF MERCY

MAY 2017 No.3

Final editing: Karien Janssen-Schwiebbe

## Reflection by Sr Rosa Olaerts

This is still the season of Easter and anyone who calls himself a Christian knows that Easter is the most important feast in the liturgical year. However, when people are asked what we celebrate that day, some are somewhat reticent in answering. After all, it is not easy to clearly explain the exact meaning of the resurrection of the Lord. The easy answer is to say that it remains a mystery. Yet Easter also means the celebration of the new life. In the European countries where our sisters live that new life can also really be seen in nature. It is astounding how – after the winter when everything appears dead – suddenly new leaves appear on the trees and blossoms and flowers are appearing everywhere. However, new life also means being able to start afresh, abandoning anger, resentment, lethargy, folly, revenge and so on. In fact, we can renew ourselves at any time and our actual new beginning is not even our own achievement. It is granted to us, it is grace. Our congregation will soon also be granted a special opportunity to make a new beginning, when we have the general chapter. There we also have to take matters to heart, but we must also trust the power of the Spirit. It is not possible for us to plan and determine everything, to wish to provide for and control everything, for if we were to do that, than we thwart God's Spirit. Therefore, it is also very important to be open to the Spirit moving upon the wind and that awareness can only occur when we also dare to be tranquil, to wake and to pray.

## The tour of the Netherlands



During March the members of the general council paid a visit to the sisters in the Dutch province. We have regular contacts with the provincial council. We also meet individual sisters during meetings. However, once every two years

we try to meet all the sisters in the Netherlands in virtue of our role as general council. The first three meetings took place in Tilburg. In two days we visited the communities in Tilburg where the sisters live. On the third day we had invited all the sisters who don't live in the Home Mater Misericordiae.

Shortly before we started our tour, the report about the past term of office had been sent to everyone. Therefore we also talked a lot about our term of office. In response to the report questions were also asked about developments in the other parts of the congregation. For instance, the Dutch sisters considered that the sisters in in Timor Leste were very brave to start independently as a community under the responsibility of the general council. The situation in Indonesia was a cause for concern. At the same time they were proud of





the Indonesian sisters who following the example of the Dutch sisters are running schools and working in care services. Brazil also appeals to the imagination, as the Brazilian sisters managed with a few sisters and a great deal of enthusiasm to organise and guide a large Movement of Mercy. They also asked about the sisters in the Philippines. What was the state of the mission? Are there any young women interested to join the congregation?

The older parts are nearing completion and find themselves in a recognisable similar situation. The Dutch sisters by showing their interest proved their connectedness with all parts of the congregation. That was not only the case in Tilburg; the visits to Arnhem and Raalte also exuded the same atmosphere of connectedness. Everywhere, we felt truly welcome!

In Tilburg one of more members/advisors of the provincial council accompanied us. During the visits to Arnhem and Raalte the three sisters from the provincial council were present.



## General chapter



Over the past weeks we received reactions to our report about the past six years from all over the world. There were expressions of praise, encouragement and sometimes criticism, but it is all very valuable in view of our preparations for the coming chapter. Together with your chapter members you have studied the questions that we would like to see answered. Those replies have been received and read with great attention. You may wonder what we will do with this information. Let us tell you. Based on all the reactions we have received we will try to formulate the right questions in order to come up with answers during the chapter. These will be the questions

you have asked in view of the future and development of the congregation. We hope that this will allow us to involve all sisters in the general chapter and therefore also in the future of our congregation.

We would also like to encourage your involvement in the general chapter by means of moments of meditation. Therefore we will reflect this time on psalm 103



***Praise the Lord, oh my soul  
and forget not all His benefits ...  
(Psalm 103)***

We will use this short passage from psalm 103 as a sub-theme for the chapter. We consider this an important sentence to clarify that gratitude should be an important attitude in our lives. A chapter first of all needs to look back at the past in order— as Pope Francis wrote to all religious on the occasion of the Jubilee Year of the Consecrated Life - ‘to look to the past with gratitude, live the present with passion, and embrace the future with hope.’

*When you read psalm 103, for which reasons do you give thanks to God? And for which reasons are you grateful to our congregation?  
Everyone can reply to these questions for herself. If you discuss them with others in your community, then this should be done in a contemplative manner, by listening to the other, without discussion but in order to understand.*

### **Website**

We have a new website!!! You can find us on [www.sistersofcharity.nl](http://www.sistersofcharity.nl). Please note that this is a new address.

A lot of work has been done over the past weeks to create the new website. A number of people have already asked why the old website was no longer accessible. It seemed not worthwhile to amend the old website, as we had made so much progress with the new one.

We managed to be ready just ahead of the chapter. On this site you may already read information about the chapter and in June you will be able to follow the chapter events. We hope that you will visit and use the website in great numbers.



## Register of 2017

We discovered some errors in the Register which we would like to inform you about via this Briefing.

### Members throughout the World

	<i>Professed members</i>	<i>Members in temp. vows</i>	<i>Novices</i>	<i>Postulants</i>
General Council.....	5	-	-	-
Belgium.....	24	-	-	-
Brazil.....	5	4	1	-
United Kingdom and Ireland.....	10	-	-	-
Indonesia.....	164	50	35	18
The Netherlands.....	196	-	-	-
USA.....	7	-	-	-
The Philippines.....	12	2	-	-
Timor Leste.....	4	12	8	3
	427	68	44	21

#### Brazil

Sr Kardene Matias Luiz has become a junior sister on 31 January 2016 and she lives in the community in Cabrobó. Her email address is [denea.matias@hotmail.com](mailto:denea.matias@hotmail.com).  
Sr Maria das Graças Martiniano has become a second year novice on 24 September 2016.

#### Indonesia

Sr Euphrasia Aa has a new email address: [ekonomindoscmm@gmail.com](mailto:ekonomindoscmm@gmail.com).

#### The Netherlands

The area code for the sisters in Raalte is 0572 (in contrary to the area code of Huize Angeli Custodes and Mrs. M. Wolters).

Sr Celine Welten has a new address: Kloosterstraat 10, app. 098, 5038 VP TILBURG, Phone: 013-5492326, E-mail: [c.welten@scmm-tilburg.nl](mailto:c.welten@scmm-tilburg.nl)

The mobile phone number of W. Brok is 06 – 83 25 81 52

Mrs. M. Luijten no longer works in the Encounter Centre

#### Timor Leste

The foundation date of Timor Leste is: 2 February 2016

International telephone code of Timor Leste: 67

One second-year novice has been forgotten:

Soares, M. Mariana, Born 10-05-1995 in Lauala, year of clothing 2015

Zr. Laura Do Carmo has a new email address: [laura117@yahoo.com](mailto:laura117@yahoo.com)

The correct name of Sr Rosita de Deus is Sr Rosita Fátima de Deus.