

**Reflection by Sr Hermin Bu'ulölö**

East Timor is a part of our congregation under the responsibility of the general board. We were pleased and excited to have visited all the communities in East Timor as well as talking with the sisters about developments in life of prayer, community life and in their work. However, they realize that life in the versatile community is not always as quiet and peaceful as it looks. Occasionally, conflicts arise because each member has her own shortcomings. Unity in the community teaches us how interaction and conflict deals with spiritually. This is of all time and all of us experienced similar problems. On these moments you can use some mentoring from people who have the best intentions. From someone who understands you and your situation .

To be united is a natural process which means we feel God in the midst of our grief. But if there is no one around at that time, does that mean we that we are really powerless? It is our belief that God is with us, that God will help us, that God will deliver us. We read in the Gospel that there is a period of suffering and times of happiness. Jesus drew strength through his relationship with his father. Perhaps in a week - this week - we can reflect on this. Jesus told us that we will never be alone. The Holy Spirit himself prays for us to God with the complaints that are unspoken (ROM. 8,26) but will we open ourselves up to it? Changes require courage and silence. Often, the injustice of life forces us to change and grow.



## Working visit to the Philippines



Twice a year a delegation from the general council visits the Philippines. In February Sr Dorine and Sr Josephine left for Manila. After they were picked up from the airport, they started on the working visit. The two general council members spoke with all sisters in the Philippines. In addition to individual conversations, there were also group meetings to discuss issues that concern all the sisters of this part of the Congregation.

The future of the centre for the handicapped and the school in Camia Street were highlighted more in particular. An increasing number of people attend the centre for the handicapped. They make products, which are sold. The sisters are getting ever more creative in finding sales outlets, which means that more can be sold. That is not only good for the income this produces, but also for the people who are making the products, as they are being appreciated for the work they do.

The school in Camia Street is also doing better all the time. Parents have noticed that the quality of education there is good and more often select the school of the sisters.

These are two wonderful achievements for this young part of the congregation.



## Working visit throughout the province of the Netherlands

The general council used the first entire working week of the month of March to visit the communities in the Dutch province. It had been intended as a visit to introduce the new general council, but Sr Hermin was absent due to circumstances. However, they enjoyed very special days.

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On Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 March the general council visited Tilburg, on Wednesday they travelled to Insula Dei in Arnhem and on 8 March they concluded the working visit in Raalte. Members of the provincial council were also present during the visits.

The general council received a warm and cordial welcome wherever they visited. Sr Dorine introduced both Sr Elisângela and Sr Josephine. The two new general council members explained what they had been doing before they were elected in the general council. They also spoke about projects in the new parts. Sr Elisângela and Sr Josephine have not been in the Netherlands long enough to be able to discuss their experiences. They did share cherished memories with the several sisters who had lived for a certain period in Brazil or the Philippines.

There was also an opportunity to discuss the report of the general chapter. Many sisters were interested in the new associated members in Brazil last November. Questions were also asked about the future of the small parts: Brazil, the Philippines and Timor Leste. In fact, during the general chapter an interesting concept was discussed to merge these three parts into one. The general council was asked to examine this idea and to develop it further.

The most important conclusion drawn by the sisters who met the general council was that the charism of the congregation continues. An encouraging thought for a hopeful future.



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### **Working visit to Timor Leste**

Sr Hermin and Sr Elisângela met up at Bali airport. From there they flew together to Timor Leste. This was Sr Elisângela's first visit to this part of the congregation. She thought it was a beautiful island with stunning scenery and friendly people. However, she also noted the great poverty amongst the inhabitants. The sisters carry out a lot of good work, but combining the setting up of a new part of the congregation with the work the sisters are involved in is quite a challenge.

The new formation house in Dili has been in use for some time, but the last few problems still need to be sorted out. They expect that it will all soon be completed now.

The task of the general council is to encourage the various parts, to support them and if needed also to take practical action. Therefore Sr Elisângela will spend 4 weeks in Timor Leste to assist them in organisational matters. She speaks the language of the country and several sisters there also speak Portuguese, so that they can work well together.



### **New house style of the Briefing**

You may have noticed that the Briefing has a new look. The heading has a light format and more photographs have been added than was the case in the past. It was one of the suggestions at the general chapter to make the Briefing more attractive with less text but some more photographs. We hope that we have succeeded in doing so. If you have any suggestions to improve the Briefing, then we would like to hear from you. You may pass on your ideas to the secretariat of the general council.

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### Sisters who have died

Since 15th February (the last briefing) the following sisters have died:

Sr Godefrida Servaes (the Netherlands) died on 5 March in Tilburg.

Sr Lydia Ndruru (Indonesia) died on Friday 23 March in Gunung Sitoli.

Sr Thérèse Mary Barnett died on Saturday 31 March in Pantasaph (Great Britain).

Sr Theresia Berends (Nederland) died on 12 April in Tilburg.

### Agenda for the coming months

- On 4 April a meeting was planned with the general council of the CMM Brothers.
- On 10 April the members of the general council have visited the sisters in the Belgian province.
- Sr Dorine attended the funeral of Sr Thérèse Mary Barnett on behalf of the general council. Sr Mariëtte Kinker represented the province of the Netherlands. Sr Thérèse Mary was general superior from 1969 to 1981. She was the leader of the Congregation during turbulent times. The Second Vatican Council has just been concluded and enormous changes were ahead. It was also the period that a group of American sisters split off from the Congregation. Sr Thérèse Mary ensured that all these changes were managed successfully. Moreover, she also managed to bring out the talents of individual sisters. She served as an example to many people.
- The Belgian province has held its provincial chapter from the 16th up to and including the 19th April. Sr Hermin and Sr Dorine attended the chapter.
- At the end of April Sr Dorine and Sr Josephine will go to Pantasaph for a meeting of the English and Irish sisters.
- After that there will be a brief quiet period. At the end of May the five sisters from Indonesia who are preparing their final vows will arrive in The Netherlands. They will participate in the Vincentian pilgrimage, which will be held from 28th May up to and including the 19th of June. Sr Elisângela will accompany them on their voyage.

### Latest news

The province Belgium has a new board:

Sr Marie-Louise Aerts, Sr Annie Timmers and Sr Marie-Jeanne Teuwen.

