

**December 2021, N 4**Final Editing: Karien Janssen-Schwiebbe  
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## Reflection by Sr Hermin Bu'ulölo

### The birth of Jesus

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be counted. And all went to the place whence they had come. Joseph went from Nazareth to Bethlehem, together with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child. And while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the inn.

We all know this story. We also relate it to each other again during the Christmas period.

Why do we do this? What appeals to us so much in this story?

It is a universal tale with many layers. I am writing this while it is cold, dark and wet outside. Inadvertently, I am happy that I have a roof over my head, and a

blazing stove. Jesus came into this world under quite different circumstances. He was kept warm by the ox and the donkey. After his birth, a large star appeared in the heavens over the stable. Many people followed the star and visited the new-born child. There was room for everyone! The simple shepherds found a spot as well as the rich kings. That stable there, where everyone was welcome, became a meeting place.



We could compare that stable with our inner being. Each year again, in the run-up to Christmas we turn to our inner self. We try to discover how God lives within us after he was born in our soul. We search for rest, contemplate our lives and wonder if we have included everyone in our stable. We put things into perspective and make good intentions for a new period, so that we will give a place to the things we have neglected. God is reborn within us.

### **Celebrating the 189<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Congregation**

On Tuesday 23 November, we commemorated that it was 189 years ago that our Congregation was founded. In various locations in our Congregation, it was commemorated. In the generalate we held a brief prayer celebration and had special treats with our coffee.

Sr Josephine said a prayer in which she expressed her gratitude to the founder Msgr Zwijsen and the first superior, Mother Michael Leysen. Both were inspired by Mary, Mother of Mercy and by St Vincent de Paul.

“Since 1832 we as Sisters of Charity have practised our works of charity and we are still doing this until the present day.

Many women have preceded us. Women with a strong faith, forward-looking and courageous in their activities.”

Sr Josephine called upon all the members of our living community, including the Friends, associates and staff members to continue to embrace the mission of Christ and to carry on. The celebration was concluded with singing the Salve Regina.



The sisters in the Philippines have added lustre to the jubilee in a joint celebration of the Eucharist.



The Indonesian sisters also paid special attention to the 189<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Congregation. In Waipadi, on the island of Sumba, the sisters invited the orphans and the children from the neighbourhood for this festive occasion. More than 100 children enjoyed a nourishing meal. The following day was the real highlight of the festivities when the celebration of the Eucharist took place, during which they asked for blessings for the society in Waipadi.



### Joys and sorrows

Two sisters recently celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

#### Sr Teresa Gray ...

On 22 November Sr Teresa Gray had her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Sr Teresa lives in Pantasaph and that is where her birthday was celebrated. The general council congratulated Sr Teresa via Zoom and this turned out to be a very special and surprising meeting both for the council and Sr Theresa.



#### ... and Sr Marianne Hoefnagels

There is another sister in our Congregation who has turned 100. On 11 December, Sr Marianne Hoefnagels reached the venerable age of 100 years. Her birthday was a festive event when we all shared coffee, followed by the celebration of the Eucharist.





## Vows for life of Sr Lusinete

In Brazil the sisters also had a reason to celebrate. On Sunday 12 December Sr Lusinete took her vows for life. It was a meeting with an atmospheric



ambience. In spite of the restrictions that were required because of the corona virus, it was a party for Sr Lusinete, the sisters and the associates, family and guests.

*From left to right: Sr Graça, Sr Kardene, Sr Elisângela, Sr Lusinete, Sr Paula, Sr Dalva and Sr Joérica*

## Four sisters have passed away:

18-11-2021	Sr Roberta Simarmata	Sarudik, Indonesia
24-11-2021	Sr Grada Passier	Tilburg, the Netherlands
03-12-2021	Sr Lidewijde van Doorn	Tilburg, the Netherlands
07-12-2021	Sr Alphonsa Spieker	Tilburg, the Netherlands

**The  
silence  
of Christmas  
makes us truly  
thankful for the past year.  
The unknown of the New Year  
gives hope with God amongst us.  
A happy Christmas and a healthy 2022  
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