



Flowing From His Side



Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George

Making the merciful love of Christ visible to the poor, sick, and needy of every condition.

Summer 2011

A Call Within A Call

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." Matthew 28:19

Our Foundress, Mother M. Anselma, knew from experience what it means to be "sent." On May 25, 1857, she and an older Sister were sent to a distant, and at that time, very poor village of Thuine in northern Germany. At the request of Father Gerhard Dall, Sister M. Anselma and Sister Marianne, Sisters of the Holy Cross of Strassburg, were sent to take care of the sick and the orphans. Father Dall's dream was to establish a hospital run by a religious community.

The Sisters worked tirelessly educating the children and caring for the poor and the sick in the area, even helping those with typhus.

Twelve years later, after much prayer and sacrifice, Sister M. Anselma, urged by the bishop and Father Gerhard Dall, began a new Community in Thuine. The bishop appointed Sister M. Anselma, who was 34 years old, as the first Superior General. She and three other Sisters made their Profession of Vows on November 25, 1869. They had lived simplicity and poverty. Their love for Jesus Christ crucified was their heritage

from the Sisters of the Holy Cross. They had lived the Franciscan spirituality and now embraced the Third Order Rule of St. Francis. In this way, our Congregation was established.

Today, in the spirit of true, faith-filled

obedience to the Church, we strive to respond to the signs of the times as Mother M. Anselma did, serving the Church by making the merciful love of Christ visible to the poor, sick and needy of every condition. Some of our Sisters have answered the "call within a call" to bring the Gospel to foreign lands.

From the small mission in Thuine, a world-wide Congregation

has developed. Our 1,200 Sisters serve in nine countries which include Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Indonesia, the United States, Brazil, Albania, Italy, and Cuba.

We pray that we may always be open to God's will and that He may use us to further His Kingdom and "make disciples of all nations."



"For my Lord, nothing is too hard." ~ Mother M. Anselma



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR MOTHER

Dear Families and Friends of our Sisters,

Pax et Bonum! In this summer edition of *Flowing from His Side*, we are featuring articles concerning our Sisters who witness to the new evangelization in Albania, Brazil, Cuba, and Japan. Each of these missionary Sisters, by living the mystery of self-emptying, has striven to “renounce (her)self and everything that up to this point (she) considered as (her) own, and to make (her)self everything to everyone”
(*Ad Gentes*, 24).

In 1990, Blessed John Paul II issued his eighth encyclical letter, entitled *Redemptoris Missio* (The Mission of the Redeemer) to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*. The purpose of *Redemptoris Missio* was to remind us of our participation in the missionary activity of the Church. In the conclusion of his letter, Blessed John Paul II wrote:

Today, as never before, the Church has the opportunity of bringing the Gospel, by witness and word, to all people and nations. I see the dawning of a new missionary age, which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians, and missionaries and young Churches in particular, respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time (92.1).

The Sisters and I thank God for each of you who so faithfully support our Congregation’s charism and apostolic work. By your prayers and holiness of life, you are participating in the missionary activity of the Church. God bless you, and may Mary, Star of the New Evangelization, guide you along your pilgrimage of faith.

In the joy of Jesus and Mary,

Mother M. Regina Pacis, FSGM

Mother M. Regina Pacis, FSGM
Provincial Superior



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OUR JAPANESE PROVINCE ST. MARY ~ FOUNDED 1920

Missioned for Evangelization

by Sister M. Hannah FSGM

In 1920, our Superior General, Mother M. Beda Stuckenbergh sent three German Sisters to begin a mission in Sapporo on the island of Hokkaido in Japan. Accompanied by Rev. Lucas Berning, their guide, they began the long journey to Sapporo on May 31st and arrived on August 18, 1920. In order to arrive at their destination, they traveled by wagon, ship, train, steamer and finally by rickshaw. Upon arrival, they were greeted by the Apostolic Prefect, Bishop Wenzeslaus Kinold (a German Franciscan who had asked the Sisters to come), two priests, and



Our Sisters with the children we serve in Japan

1925, the Sisters' first school, the Fuji Sapporo Women's High School, was completed.

Today, our Sisters number 156 in fifteen convents. Our apostolates include a women's university, three girls' high schools, several kindergartens, three day care centers, two children's homes, and elderly care services, such as nursing homes and adult day care programs.

The Church is very small in Japan, and there are many challenges for the Sisters. Most of the people with whom we work are not Christian. Thus, our Community focuses more on witnessing to Who Christ is, so that the people we meet may encounter Him. As they come to know more about Jesus, we have opportunities to explain His merciful love for each person.

I am an American Sister and I have been in Japan for nine years now. The Sisters in Japan had asked for American

Sisters to come and teach English in the schools, and most of all, to add to the number of young missionaries as the population in Japan ages, both in the Church and in society. I teach English as a second language at the Sapporo high school, which is now called Fuji Girls Junior and Senior High School. I love it! It is certainly very different from working in a Christian country, but it is also very rewarding.

I would like to conclude with the inspiring words of Bishop Kinold to the Sisters during his homily on August 19, 1920:

“Missionary life is not glamorous, but rather, a life whose first requirement is humility. A missionary spirit of Christ will be joyful – knowing that the sacrifices become a glorious crown in Eternity.”



A teacher and students from Fuji Girls Junior and Senior High School with Sister M. Hannah

Pope Benedict XVI's Missionary Intention for the month of July 2011

“That religious women in mission territories may be witnesses of the joy of the Gospel and living signs of the love of Christ.”

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SACRED HEART REGION IN BRAZIL ~ FOUNDED 1972



A German missionary in Brazil, Bishop Henrique R uth, invited our Sisters to come to his region in 1972. Mother M. Sixtina Reul, Superior of the American Vice Province sent Sister Maria Pacis and Sister M. Henrietta from Alton, Illinois to Cruzeiro do Sul on February 8, 1972. At the same time, Sister M. Hilda and Sister M. Manuela were sent from Germany.

This mission, which is part of the American Province, was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The mission grew to include eleven convents in eight cities in the States of Acre and Amazonas.

Our Sisters work in a variety of apostolic activities: catechesis and evangelization, education, health care, youth ministry and parish work among the people of northwestern Brazil. A novitiate for the Brazilian women was opened as early as 1975.

Sister M. Ursula Meyer serves as Regional Superior of the 38 Sisters in the Region. Presently, two American Sisters are part of this mission. Sister M. Josepha teaches middle school English in M ncio Lima, and Sister Maria is a nurse at a small hospital in Envira.

Consecrated persons have the task of making present even among non-Christians, Christ Who is chaste, poor, and obedient, prayerful, and missionary. While remaining ever faithful to their charism, they must know that they have a special share in the Church's missionary activity in virtue of their interior consecration made to God.

(Vita Consecrata, 77)



Locations of our Convents in the Sacred Heart Region of Brazil: Cruzeiro do Sul (Regional House and Novitiate); Eirunep , Ipixuna, Apui, Envira, M ncio Lima, Guajar , and Thaumaturgo

An aerial view of the jungle on the way to Envira, Brazil



A common mode of transportation in Brazil



Back row, left to right: Sister M. Francisca and Sister M. Eduarda
Front row, left to right: Sister M. Monica, Sister M. Veronica, Sister Theresia Maria, Sister M. Josepha, and Sister M. Francila



"Be always faithful to holy poverty and simplicity." ~ Mother M. Anselma

Our Apostolic Work in Envira, Brazil
by Sister Maria, FSGM

Presently, there are three of us here in Envira: Sister M. Francisca, Sister M. Tarcisia, and I. Sister M. Francisca takes care of the pastoral needs of the children, helps with over 60 groups, and promotes fund raising for the Church. Sister M. Tarcisia takes care of a prayer group and CCD at St. Clare Church and visits families. I work in a 21-bed hospital and take care of three groups of the Legion of Mary and the White Army children's rosary group. I also play the guitar at St. Clare Church for Sunday Mass.



Our Novitiate in our Regional House in Cruzeiro do Sul



Sister Maria with some of the LPNs at the local hospital in Envira



Left to right: Mother M. Regina Pacis, Sister M. Francisca, Sister Maria, Sister Theresa Maria, and Sister M. Kateri during Visitation in Brazil (2010)



Sister M. Francisca with the Indian children



A beautiful sunset in Brazil



OUR MISSION IN DELVINE, ALBANIA ~ FOUNDED 2001

This is Albania

by Sister M. Adrienne, FSGM

Albania is a beautiful land with mountains and plains, the Ionian and Adriatic Seas, castles and ancient sites, with people, old and young, whose lives have been shaped by 500 years of Turkish rule and 50 years of Communist dictatorship. In Delvine, Albania, my main work is with eleven girls who board in Qendra Shën Maria and who attend the local schools. Along with Sister M. Sophia and Sister M. Relindis, I oversee the day-to-day life of the girls, from a wake up call in the morning to teaching them how to play a recorder in the evening.



Left: Sister M. Adrienne plays the recorder before Holy Mass outside of a small house in Borsh. This is where Holy Mass and prayer services are celebrated. Father Giacomo, a Franciscan Capuchin, takes a boat over from Corfu for Holy Mass. The altar is made of tree trunks.



Our Small Chapel

I help Sister M. Relindis, who takes care of our parishes in Delvinë and in Borsh by the Ionian Sea, from which many of our girls come. In Borsh, there are Catholic families who have immigrated from the more Catholic North. In Delvinë the parish is comprised of converts from the Islamic faith or the Greek Orthodox Church. We do not always have a priest.

This is the tenth year that our Sisters have served the people of Albania and, although we do not have large numbers of converts to Catholicism, we are grateful for the call to witness to the joy of the Gospel and the love of Christ. Please pray for us.



OUR SISTERS IN HAVANA, CUBA ~ FOUNDED 2011

A New Mission

by Sister Eva-Maria, FSGM

After our mission-sending Mass in our Motherhouse in Germany, on the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, Sister M. Wiltraud, Sister M. Philippa, Sister M. Seraphica, and I – accompanied by Mother M. Regina Pacis – arrived in La Habana, Cuba, to begin our apostolic service at the newly dedicated Seminario San Carlos y San Ambrosio.

Cardinal Jaime Ortega Alamino wrote last summer to Mother Margaretha Maria, our Superior General, inviting her to send Sisters to supervise the seminary's domestic services. Through our service, prayers, and daily interaction with more than forty diocesan and religious seminarians, we have the joy and privilege of supporting the formation of the future priests of the Church in Cuba.

This year, our seven deacons will be ordained priests and begin their ministry in various parts of the country. Knowing the caliber of these young men, we have great hopes for the continued vitality of the Church on this beautiful island in the Caribbean.



This photo was taken in Santa Clara. The statue of Blessed John Paul II was dedicated in 2008 on the 10th anniversary of the visit of the late and great Holy Father to Cuba (1998). The statue was dedicated by the current Secretary of State, Cardinal Bertoni. The statue is a short distance from the site of the altar where the Holy Father offered his first Mass on Cuban soil.



Left to right: Sister M. Philippa, Mother M. Regina Pacis, Cardinal Jaime Ortega Alamino, Sister Eva-Maria, Sister M. Wiltraud, and Sister M. Seraphica



Our Sisters praying the Divine Office in the convent chapel





**SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF THE MARTYR ST. GEORGE
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Thank you and may God bless you!*

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Return Service Requested

Fall Gathering at St. Francis Convent

When: Saturday, September 24, 2011 11:00am - 5:00pm

Where: St. Francis Convent ~ Alton, IL

Cost: Free (donations accepted)

Come and join the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George for a day of prayer and spiritual enrichment. Learn about our Sisters, our Congregation, and the Sacred Heart. Enjoy lunch and desserts made by the Sisters.

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP by September 17, 2011, by e-mail: oma@altonfranciscans.org or call (618) 474-6193.

Our Congregation makes Christ's merciful love visible in nine countries throughout the world. Please pray for the Sisters of our Congregation as *we keep you in our prayers* at Holy Mass each day.

**1869 ~ Thuine, Germany 1875 ~ The Netherlands 1920 ~ Japan 1923 ~ United States of America
1932 ~ Indonesia 1972 ~ Brazil 2001 ~ Albania 2005 ~ Italy 2011 ~ Cuba**

Please pray for our Feastday Sisters on August 15, 2011, the Solemnity of the Assumption.



Profession of First Vows

Sister M. Bernadette (left) and Sister M. Isabella



Reception into the Novitiate

Left to right:

**Samantha Goodson (Sister Mary Francis),
Ashley Vola (Sister M. Caterina),
Erin Leis (Sister Teresa Maria), and
Miranda Edgar (Sister Mary Peter)**