

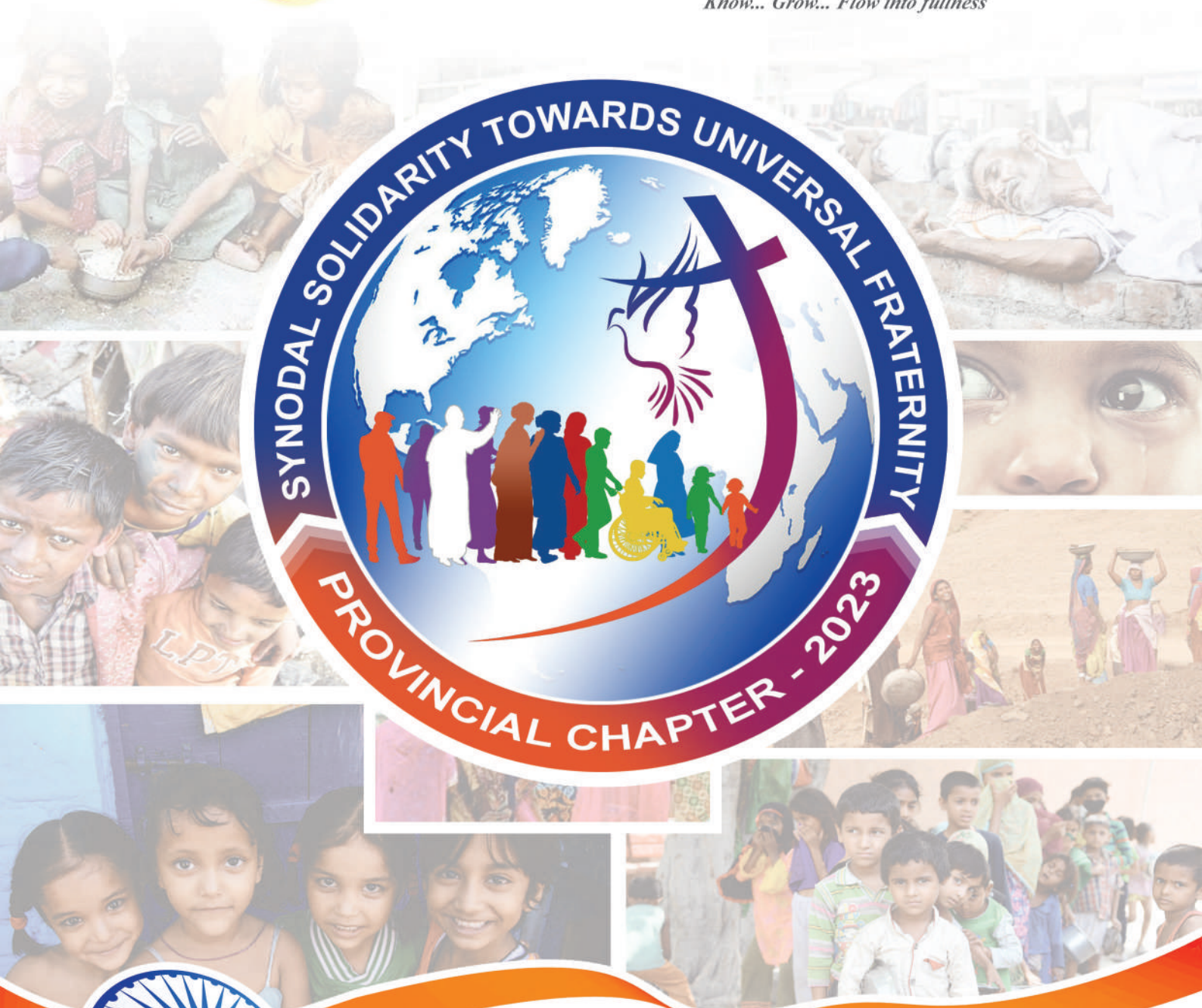


The

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ENCOUNTER

Know... Grow... Flow into fullness





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In a nutshell, Synodality is “journeying together” as the People of God - of living out our faith that calls for speaking and listening to one another and the Holy Spirit in order to find a path forward in addressing the issues facing the Church in our day as we work to carry out our mission of proclaiming the Good News of salvation in Jesus. The theme of the ensuing Provincial, Regional and Congregational Chapters: “Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity” indicates a new form of universal solidarity that is grounded in fraternal love, compassion and mutual understanding, one that values people over profit, one that seeks new ways of JMJ presence in the world.

Pope Francis’ call for us to focus on synodality, is a call to restore and deepen our roots as the People of God journeying together in a common mission as followers of the Way, Jesus Christ.

How is this “journeying together” happening today in our Congregation and the Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “journeying together”?

Dedicated to God and dedicated to the poor in a spirit of solidarity and justice our sisters followed their vocation for two centuries. From the Netherlands they went out all over the world. Let us be profoundly grateful that the Lord has guided us till today. This is a moment to walk together, to listen and discern our mission priorities in tune with Chapter theme. The time to act, and to act together, is now!

*This issue of *The Encounter*, afresh brings out the spirit of JMJ in every article you read. Our Congregational leaders shared their points of view on the theme of the CHAPTER, which resonate the calls of the Spirit to walk together, to listen and to discern. We are certain that the Spirit will guide us and give us the grace to move forward together, to listen to one another and to undertake a discernment of the times we are living in, in solidarity with the struggles and aspirations of all humanity.*

*Father Wolff’s vision continues to radiate and inspire as you read the articles on JMJ spirituality, core values, and consecrated life. The whispers of wisdom and myriads of missions offer you insightful stories about the life and mission of the sisters. The articles on JPIC-Laudato Si Initiatives in the Congregation give an insight into what the sisters where ever they are, responding to the seven goals of *Laudato Si*’.*

*The ninth issue of ‘*The Encounter*’ is due in December 2023. We look forward for your articles by email: cjmjencounter@gmail.com before 15th November 2023. With gratitude we acknowledge the contributions of our sisters that give flavour to this issue. Special thanks to Sr. Christina for editing the manuscript and Mr. Gopi for delightfully designing it.*

- Vijaya M. Udumala JMJ



CONGREGATION OF JESUS MARY JOSEPH

Chapter Logo and the Theme:

'Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity'

The Chapter theme echoes the foundational Spirituality and Charism of the Founder in tune with the spirit of the Universal Church. Guided by the Spirit, in Synodal Solidarity every JMJ sister transforms herself through spiritual conversion and renewed commitment. On this sacred journey together, we become agents of change through Communion, Participation and Mission in the Church and World.¹

Logo in Circle form: Signifies God as the circle and centre, leading humanity in the path of Christ, towards wholeness and holiness, vitality and wellspring of the Spirit. Fostering Synodal Solidarity, we confer infinite dignity upon all humanity, contributing to the renaissance of Universal Fraternity.²

Globe: Symbolizes the world. *"In the beginning God created the heaven and earth, and saw all that he had created was very good."*³ The Synodal life of the Church in Scripture and Tradition show that the heart of God's plan of salvation for the world is fulfilled in Jesus Christ and continues through the ministry of the Church in which we collaborate.⁴

The Cross: The symbol of our salvation and immense love of God for humanity. The power of the Cross of Christ enables us to reconcile the wounded humanity with our heavenly Father.⁵

The Holy Spirit: Holy Spirit guides our synodal journey. In this dynamic journey, we move forward interpreting and enriching our Charism, listening to

God and discerning together new pathways to which God calls us – to a deeper communion, fuller participation, and greater openness in fulfilling our mission in the world. Holy Spirit empowers us on this journey to a deeper metanoia.

People Walking Together: *"We are part of the one flock of Christ that walks together"* (Pope Francis).

As people of God we are not static, we are on the move, "walking together". The Spirit of God breathes into us, and sets us into a culture of listening and discerning for a common mission. The group sums up our entire humanity in its diversity and the multiplicity of colours indicate signs of joy.

Synodal Solidarity: Synodal Solidarity has a deeply missionary dimension. It is intended to enable the Congregation to better witness to the Gospel, especially with those who live on the spiritual, social, economic, political, geographical, and existential peripheries of our world. In solidarity we become a consoling, healing and caring presence of Christ 'journeying together' to the Father's loving embrace.⁶

Universal Fraternity: The world filled with good values, is also full of hatred, hostility, extremism, violence and bloodshed. Together with the People of God, we strive to build a better, more just and peaceful world, safeguarding the creation, fostering and contributing towards Universal Fraternity grounded in God's infinite love and mercy.⁷

¹ cf For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission Vademecum for the Synod on Synodality, 1.4

² cf Fratelli Tutti, 8, 85


³ Genesis 1:1, 31

⁴ cf Synodality in the Life and Mission of The Church

⁵ cf I Cor. 1:18-24

⁶ Pope Francis: time to develop a new form of universal solidarity, from www.libreriaeditricevaticana.va.

⁷ cf Fratelli Tutti, 276, 285



Message of Pope Francis on the Synodal Path

A certain rich man came up to Jesus “as he was setting out on his journey” (Mk 10:17). The Gospels frequently show us Jesus “on a journey”; he walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts. He shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side. He meets us where we are, on the often-rocky roads of life. Today, as we begin this synodal process, let us begin by asking ourselves – all of us, Pope, bishops, priests, religious and laity – whether we, the Christian community, embody this “style” of God, who travels the paths of history and shares in the life of humanity. Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey? Or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses: “It’s useless” or “We’ve always done it this way”?

Celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together. Let us look at Jesus. First, he encounters the rich man on the road; he then listens to his questions, and finally he helps him discern what he must do to inherit eternal life. ***Encounter, Listen and Discern.*** I would like to reflect on these three verbs that characterize the Synod.

The first is ENCOUNTER. The Gospel passage begins by speaking of an encounter. A man comes up to Jesus and kneels down before him, asking him a crucial question: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (v. 17). So important a question requires attention, time, willingness to encounter others and sensitivity to what troubles them. The Lord is not standing aloof; he does not appear annoyed or disturbed. Instead, he is completely present to this person. He is open to encounter. Nothing leaves Jesus indifferent; everything is of concern to him. Encountering faces, meeting eyes, sharing each individual’s history. That is the closeness that Jesus embodies. He knows that someone’s life can be changed by a single encounter. The Gospel is full of such encounters with Christ, encounters that uplift and bring healing. Jesus did not hurry along, or keep looking at his watch to get the meeting over. He was always at the service of the person he was with, listening to what he or she had to say.

As we initiate this process, we too are called to become experts in the art of encounter. Not so much by organizing events or theorizing about problems, as in taking time to encounter the Lord and one another. Time to devote to prayer and to adoration – that form of prayer that we so often neglect – devoting time to adoration, and to hearing what the Spirit wants to say to the Church. Time to look at others in the eyes and listen to what they have to say, to build rapport, to be sensitive to the questions of our sisters and brothers, to let ourselves be enriched by the variety of charisms, vocations and ministries.

Every encounter – as we know – calls for openness, courage and a willingness to let ourselves be challenged by the presence and the stories of others. If at times we would rather take refuge in formality or presenting the proper image – the clerical and courtly spirit, where I am more than Father – the experience of encounter changes us; frequently it opens up new and unexpected possibilities. Following today's Angelus, I will meet with a group of street people who came together simply because a group of people made an effort to listen to them, sometimes just to listen to them. And from that listening they succeeded in setting out on a new path. So often God points out new paths in just this way. He invites us to leave our old habits behind. Everything changes once we are capable of genuine encounters with him and with one another, without formalism or pretence, but simply as we are.

The second verb is LISTEN. True encounter arises only from listening. Jesus listened to that man's question and to the religious and existential concerns that lay behind it. He did not give a non-committal reply or offer a pre-packaged solution; he did not pretend to respond politely, simply as a way of dismissing him and continuing on his way. Jesus simply listens, for whatever amount of time it takes; he is not rushed. Most importantly, he is not afraid to listen to him with his heart and not just with his ears. Indeed, he does more than simply answer the rich man's question; he lets him tell his story, to speak freely about himself. Christ reminds him of the commandments, and the man starts to talk about his youth, to share his religious journey and his efforts to seek God. This happens whenever we listen with the heart: people feel that they are being heard, not judged; they feel free to recount their own experiences and their spiritual journey.

Let us ask ourselves frankly during this synodal process: Are we good at listening? How good is the "hearing" of our heart? Do we allow people to express themselves, to walk in faith even though they have had difficulties in life, and to be part of the life of the community without being hindered, rejected or judged?

Participating in a Synod means placing ourselves on the same path as the Word made flesh. It means following in his footsteps, listening to his word along with the words of others. It means discovering with amazement that the Holy Spirit always surprises us, to suggest fresh paths and new ways of speaking. It is a slow and perhaps tiring exercise, this learning to listen to one another – bishops, priests, religious and laity, all the baptized – and to avoid artificial and shallow and pre-packaged responses. The Spirit asks us to listen to the questions, concerns and hopes of every Church, people and nation. And to listen to the world, to the challenges and changes that it sets before us. Let us not soundproof our hearts; let us not remain barricaded in our certainties. So often our certainties can make us closed. Let us listen to one another.

The third verb is DISCERN. Encounter and listening are not ends in themselves, leaving everything just as it was before. On the contrary, whenever we enter into dialogue, we allow ourselves to be challenged, to advance on a journey. And in the end, we are no longer the same; we are changed. We see this in today's Gospel. Jesus senses that the person before him is a good and religious man, obedient to the commandments, but he wants to lead him beyond the mere observance of precepts. Through dialogue, he helps him to discern. Jesus encourages that man to look within, in the light of the love that the Lord himself had shown by his gaze (cf. v. 21), and to discern in that light what his heart truly treasures. And in this way to discover that he cannot attain happiness by filling his life with more religious observances, but by emptying himself, selling whatever takes up space in his heart, in order to make room for God.

Here is a valuable lesson also for us. The Synod is a process of spiritual discernment, of ecclesial discernment, that unfolds in adoration, in prayer and in dialogue with the word of God. From the letter to Hebrews we know that God's word is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). That word summons us to discernment and it brings light to that process. It guides the Synod, preventing it from becoming a Church convention, a study group or a political gathering, a parliament, but rather a grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Spirit. In these days, Jesus calls us, as he did the rich man in the Gospel, to empty ourselves, to free ourselves from all that is worldly, including our inward-looking and outworn pastoral models; and to ask ourselves what it is that God wants to say to us in this time. And the direction in which he wants to lead us.

Let us have a good journey together! May we be pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. Let us not miss out on the grace-filled opportunities born of encounter, listening and discernment. In the joyful conviction that, even as we seek the Lord, he always comes with his love to meet us first.



Synodal Solidarity A Challenge in Our 'Turbulent Times'



Sr. ANTHONY MARY DASARI
Provincial Superior
Bangalore Province

The document Synod on Synodality introduced by Pope Francis begins with a reference to our context today with a phrase the '*turbulent times*'. The Chapter theme reflects an apt response to our situation today at local, national and global levels. 'Synodal Solidarity' means to live the model of Jesus – '*God becoming human to understand and save humanity by being one among us (cf. Jn 1:14)*'. God's own Synodal Solidarity is shared with humanity in Jesus and only such Solidarity alone can eventually usher us to build Universal Fraternity.

Our world today is marked by division, war, violence, suppression, concentration of wealth and power, commodification of human persons, rule by deception by political leaders, miscarriage of justice, ecological degradation, etc. Universal Fraternity is a reality that is contrary to all these. It is symbolically presented in Isaiah 11:6 – "*The wolf shall dwell with the lamb...for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD.*" This text portrays truly a Universal Fraternity towards the realization of which we are called to labour with the Lord, with our own communities, provinces, the entire Congregation and simultaneously in the wider world.

Hence, we need to ask: Who are those that are at the peripheries among our people and in our communities? Or have we kept ourselves aloof or at the peripheries, isolated from others with bitterness in our minds or as an expression of a kind of passive aggression against someone for some reason or the other? Such attitudes surely do not help anyone and go contrary to the spirit of the Kingdom Solidarity. We need to introspect ourselves in this regard and strive for a fruitful reconciliation.

The Pope has deeply realized that to transform this world into a true fraternity, all must collaborate. How does and in what concrete ways each of our

apostolates promote such fraternity among those we serve? How does each apostolate usher such fraternity among ourselves? We need to consider these questions with utmost sincerity and openness to growth.

The theme of the Chapter invites us for an honest introspection to find out the factors that reduce, destroy or are hurdles against the synodal solidarity and fraternity among us, in our life and mission. How can we overcome them? What is needed to overcome them?

In the perspective of *Fratelli Tutti*, striving to build a more just and fraternal world is not just some sort of social work, but it is the most genuine expression of our authentic faith and spirituality. Mt 25:31-46 (the scene of the Last Judgment) bears witness to this - '*whatever you do or don't do to the least of the Lord's brothers and sisters, you do or don't do to the Lord himself*'.

We are chosen to be missionaries of hope and joy in all that we do in our life and mission. This speaks of what would become of us when we truly live by the synodal solidarity. It makes us missionaries of hope and joy. On the other hand, it is also true that only a missionary of hope and joy can live by the synodal solidarity.

Realizing the vision of our Chapter theme, is a herculean task of unimaginable magnitude. Let us not be under the illusion that things will be easy or will become a reality quite automatically. The theme of the Chapter may sound very attractive and even very inspiring. We need to remember that the '*spirit is willing, but the flesh, many times shows its weakness*'. Several huge challenges have to be faced both in our personal lives and in the common life of our communities, in provinces and the entire congregation on the one hand

and in the mission on the other. A lot of dying to our ego-interests, our possible hidden agenda, and individualism is needed and passivity needs to be shed before we even think of following a path of synodal solidarity and arrive at universal fraternity. Certainly, embracing synodal solidarity and walking along with it, itself is a very purifying process.

However, the enormity of the task and the challenging nature of the path should not discourage us from taking small steps towards this goal. We need to remember, that we are only the workers and not the master builders. The Lord is the master builder. This truth

sets us interiorly free to do what lies within our capacity in our respective places and contexts and leave the rest to the master builder, the Lord himself.

Let this be our attitude as we venture into this challenging but very rewarding journey of synodal solidarity. Let the Lord be the lamp to our footsteps; may He provide us with necessary strength, motivation, and direction in this necessary journey. May Mary our Heavenly Mother intercede for us, so that the journey that we venture into today may proceed according the will of the Triune God, the source and the ultimate goal of our existence.



Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity



Sr. TRESA KVM
Provincial Superior
Guntur Province

‘Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity’ is the theme for the Provincial Chapter - 2023 and the upcoming General Chapter 2024. This theme has evoked great joy and a sense of responsibility in the mind and heart of every sister in the Province, as it is evolved from the aspiration and vision of the members from every community in the Congregation.

I am hopeful that this aptly chosen theme for our Province Chapter and the Congregation Chapter, will certainly create more space for a deeper reflection and dialogue with a readiness to move forward in synodality with the Church, while revitalizing our own spirituality as a Congregation. The events of the local chapter and the input sessions on Synodality, Fratelli Tutte and Laudato Si have stirred the members to move beyond the horizons of the Congregation toward the universal Church, in communion, participation and mission.

In Fratelli Tutti Pope Francis invites the Church to live out the call to universal fraternity and social friendship, proposing “*a way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel*”. We are called to find God in everything – in poverty and simplicity, in contemplation and work, as well as in the natural environment, seeking friendship with all God’s creatures. It summons us to love, social friendship, and solidarity that honors the human dignity of every person.

Universal Fraternity is a way of being, a spirit that pervades all relationships and helps us to sow seeds of peace and walk alongside the poor, the abandoned, the infirm and the outcast, the least of our brothers and sisters.

Therefore, our Provincial Chapter 2023, aims at building an atmosphere and attitude of Universal Fraternity in our communities, ministries, in the Church, and the world around us, wherever we are. The path we have chosen is through the Synodal Solidarity.

Our Holy Father also cautioned us against some evils that create division in the place of fraternity. Some of them are:

- Deconstructionism
- The drive to limitless consumption and expressions of empty individualism.
- Throwaway Culture
- Addiction to digital media

Overcoming these hurdles from within and outside we build the communities and ministries with a spirit of universal fraternity through the path of synodal solidarity.

Three important aspects of synodality are:

- Towards deeper communion,
- Fuller participation, and
- Greater openness to
- Fulfilling our mission in the world

Hence, I wish and pray through this path of synodal solidarity that we as a province, region, and finally as Congregation become agents of fraternal spirit through this Chapter.

Chapter Theme a Guide to Discern God's Will



Sr. MUKTA XESS
Provincial Superior
Hyderabad Province

We begin our Provincial / Regional Chapters from August through November 2023. Time and tide wait for none is true of ourselves during this period. Spending our valuable time reflecting on the Chapter theme – *Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity* is appropriate now and I am profoundly thankful to *The Encounter* on behalf of the Province of Hyderabad.

The International Theological Commission (ITC) describes synod in this way “*Enlightened by the Word of God and united in prayer, we will be able to discern the processes to seek God’s will and pursue the pathways to which God calls us - towards deeper communion, fuller participation, and greater openness in fulfilling our mission in the world*”. This path of walking together is the most effective way of manifesting and putting into practice the charism of the Congregation as the pilgrim and missionary people of God. Summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel, we are all invited to listen to one another in order to hear the promptings of the Holy Spirit, who comes to guide our human efforts.

The objective of the synodal solidarity is to listen, as the people of God, to what the Holy Spirit is saying to each one and the Congregation. Listening to one another, and especially to those at the margins, and discerning our mission priorities according to the signs of the times is the essential dimension of our Provincial Chapter.

It is intended to inspire us, the members to dream about the Congregation of JMJ; we are called to be, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, to warm hearts, and to restore strength to our hands for our common mission.

In the atmosphere of *synodal solidarity towards universal fraternity* the whole province in the free

and rich diversity of our members, are called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advise on making decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God’s will.

From the commencement of the Local Chapter, all the sisters of the Province, intensified their personal and communal prayer. I am certain that beginning our synodal journey with prayer helps us to *listen* to what God is asking of us – listen to what each one of us have in our hearts, our concerns and challenges in life and mission. We plead God like Jacob in the Old Testament. “*Jacob prayed to the God of his Life, his great Preserver and Benefactor, that he would be with him in his way, and through his Life; guide, provide for him, and bless him.*”

The year 2023 is a significant year for us, a time to reflect together on the journey that has been made so far. We are able to learn from one another’s introspection, experiences and perspectives, guided by the Holy Spirit. The preparatory phase of our Provincial Chapter aims to revive and revitalize JMJ identity and our love and belongingness for one another and be privileged to be part of JMJ family. This experience of oneness redoubled our appreciation and gratitude to our Founder Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff and pioneer sisters whose legacy of love and liberation keeps us challenging.

Reading, reflecting on the documents - Synodality and Fratelli Tutti and our own books Sent by the Lord and Spirit & Charism; praying and sharing in the communities helped us greatly to enter into the spirit of the Chapter – *Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity*.

May the Lord stay with us, walk with us on our synodal journey and guide the process of our Provincial / Regional Chapters and bring them to a fruitful completion for His greater glory!

Provincial Chapter - A New Pentecost



Sr. MARYKUTTY ANTONY
Provincial Superior
Raipur Province

The Provincial Chapter 2023 is a new Pentecost of coming together to become a Congregation that God calls us to be. What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take in order to “*journey together*” in “*Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity?*”

Synodal Solidarity means placing ourselves on the same path as the *Word made flesh*. It means following in Jesus’ footsteps, listening to His Word along with the words of others. It means discovering with amazement that the Holy Spirit always surprises us, to suggest fresh paths and new ways of dialogue and listening.

Fundamentally, synodality is about journeying together. This happens through listening to one another in order to hear what God is saying to all of us. It is realizing that the Holy Spirit can speak through anyone to help us walk forward together on our journey as the People of God.

As we begin to reflect on the theme of the Chapter, let us understand the deeper realities of our world with the spirit of Synodal Solidarity and pledge ourselves to become promoters of Universal Fraternity as missionaries of hope and joy.

Our Chapter theme calls us to live life in Communion, Participation and Mission to:

- Journey together in footsteps of Jesus like our Founder ‘*with Lord of the world for the world of the Lord*’
- Spread God’s Kingdom of love, justice and peace through the gifts of each person with another in need.
- Build fraternal communities through personal conversion and sowing seeds of reconciliation.

- Respond to the cry to of the poor and cry of the earth by caring for people and planet our common home.
- Reach out to the margins by becoming a spark of burning flame that ignites human dignity.
- Renounce power and domination by embracing humility and simplicity.
- Create space in the tent of our hearts to let in people in the peripheries.
- Live the Gospel of Christ, walking together with the whole human family.
- Nurture a spirituality of synodality and solidarity towards fostering universal fraternity.

What are our JMJ life and mission challenges and priorities on our journey together in the world of today! Are we listening the Holy Spirit who is calling us to move forward together, as pilgrims on the same journey, to serve humanity as God wants us to!

Our Provincial Chapter invites all of us to *listen* - to listen to one another about our spirituality, community and apostolic life, about the relevance of current mission and exploring the new path ways in the reality of our times and to reflect on the theme which is decisive for our future religious life and mission.



Chapter theme in Ghanaian context



Sr. SUNDARI SINGAREDDY
Regional Superior
Ghana Region

The Chapter theme, '*Synodal Solidarity Towards Universal Fraternity*' inspires us to look at our world today and move with incarnational solidarity to bring universal fraternity.

My reflection on the theme in Ghanaian context makes me look into the current scenario in the country as a whole. Ghana is a beautiful country with diverse cultures, and languages as well as different belief systems. To journey together in Synodal Solidarity, we the missionaries in Ghana need to understand, learn and adopt the culture of our people to carry out JMJ mission in the socio-cultural, ethnic, and linguistic contexts of the country.

The worldview of Ghanaians includes their beliefs, values, and relationships. It's essential to have adequate knowledge about the religious beliefs and practices of the people. To work with them, we need to appreciate their core values. Ghanaian social and cultural values include relationships based on community, sacrifice for others, unity, peaceful co-existence, cooperation, hospitality, and inclusiveness.

The theme of our Chapter '*Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity*' calls us to ask who are those that are at the peripheries. In the context of

Ghana, they include rural-urban migrants, unemployed, victims of corruption, those in utter poverty, illiterates, those who have no access to quality education, and those who are excluded with disabilities as people consider them as evils. We also need to study certain major issues such as frequent clan fights, gender discrimination, the new form of slavery, unjust wages, human trafficking, lynching of widows, alleged witches, conjugal violence etc.

Seeing the complexity of the situation we realize that we need to collaborate and network with the people good will in the process of synodal solidarity towards the realization of universal fraternity. Collaborating and networking with people of various creeds, classes, ethnicity, and language is mandatory. Hence, we as missionaries of Ghana need to be implanted on this soil, respecting the culture and heritage of the people, vibrating in tune with the atmosphere here at the same time correcting what needs to be changed. In 'Fratelli Tutti' Pope Francis emphasizes that to transform this world into a true fraternity, all must collaborate.

Such synodality and fraternity amounts to visualizing a mission along '*with others*' and not merely '*to others*.' Here we need to change our traditional approach of being at the giving end. We have to adapt the strategy of working with the people and for the people, and for this we take the inspiration from our Founder Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ who worked with the people and for the people towards their liberation.

Our move towards Synodal Solidarity needs to consider these situations of our country and harmoniously get the people to move towards that dream of a Universal Fraternity where all live their lives as the Lord has planned for them, and hence, Reign of God on earth becomes a reality, '*where the wolf and lamb dwell together*.'



Dhyanavana - Awakened the Divine within in Me

Sr. PRIYA NALLABAI
Bangalore Province

Thanks to the Creator from the depths of my heart for giving me the sacred opportunity to discover myself from Dhyanavana experience. I owe my deepest gratitude to the Provincial Council who created a space to discover myself. My presence will go with you (Ex 33:40) are reassuring words that have reinforced me to begin my journey anew.

Dhyanavana is a home where I experienced lots of acquaintance with different congregations' sisters and priests. There was an atmosphere of composure of both spiritual and active life. It helped me to value my vocation with a holistic and integrated growth in all aspects of my life.

Community is walking together as friends and sharing life with one another. Though we are from various congregations, living together as one family, helped us to appreciate our intercultural richness and God's goodness with our own unique gifts and talents. These experiences offered us a space to learn from one another through life's seasons, stages and circumstances. Community recreation and group sharing brought greater openness and inclusiveness, and a readiness to listen with patience, and mutual understanding.

My life in Dhyanavana taught me to change my thinking pattern. I understood that nothing is impossible when I take a step forward towards my growth. All the activities were based on spiritual life that rekindled my spirit to grow in the love of God. Daily reflections, recollection days, contemplative Sundays and personal prayer germinated goodness in me as well as to see the goodness in others. The life in Dhyanavana helped me to be faithful and punctual in my prayer. I also got the opportunity to inculcate and deepen the values of love, gentleness, attitude of helping and living a simple lifestyle together with others in my community.

These are my thoughts as I was with God and in the lap of mother nature:

- *A rough diamond you are; let God cut and polish you,*
- *You sprout wild branches; He must trim and prune you.*
- *Sifted, melted and recast; He will burn the chaff,
And pick up the whole grain, He intends to laser read.*
- *Your inmost recesses; Burn up all your soot,
And bathe you in his light; you see the path right.*
- *Look not anxiously ahead; Or glance guilty at the past,
Burn your cherished plans; Learn to read his route map.*

Spiritual direction was a great help for me to investigate my own self and to accept myself as I am. The guidance and motivation of my spiritual director succoured me to come out of my own world. I am very happy about my dissertation. This helped me to grow in writing skills and scientific research.

Overall my experience at Dhyanavana helped me to spread the Gospel values of peace and joy in my pastoral work and imitate Jesus Christ radically. I am glad that I learned to accept myself as I am and to grow in the virtues of our founder Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff



Consecrated Life: A Call to Live the Evangelical Vows Creatively



Sr. SHIRISHA JADDU
Hyderabad Province

Very vividly I remember how pleased and eager I was when I was chosen to make my first and perpetual commitment to the Apostolic life, by promising the Lord to live the Evangelical Vows. At first, it rang in the soft corners of my heart, what exactly do they mean as vows in my Consecrated life? Perhaps, it is just ordering my needs, ordering my affections and finally ordering my energies.

Ordering my needs: The Vow of Poverty

The Vow of Poverty is self-emptying and calls me to be very careful with the means at my own disposal to achieve my apostolic labor. As an inspired disciple of Jesus, following His own exemplary life, who selflessly emptied Himself, I learnt to share my own gifts, talents, resources in common so as to be united in solidarity with my fellow brothers and sisters. This commitment is a daily invitation that reminds me of what Jesus said “*to carry nothing wherever I go*” which is a source of strength for me to grow in that maturity of faith and my complete dependence on God and be oriented towards my mission. It is also a challenge to see on what exactly I spend my resources. A

simple way of life promotes an attitude of openness that welcomes all the challenges that come my way.

Ordering my affections: The Vow of Chastity

The Vow of Chastity is a vow of deep loving commitment, which is an exclusive gift of being the lover of God and the lover of the souls to save. This vow of celibate chastity has helped me to exercise my gift of freedom to remain open to experience the love of God and to share His experienced love to all those I serve. It is also an invitation to keep myself vigilant over my disordered desires to seek affection for my own selfish ends. It is not easy to love others indifferently, yet my intimate relationship with God inspires me to love others as He loves me. Therefore, to conquer my affections in today’s context requires a lot of personal effort, however, it also leads to a deep maturity. Through this commitment, my inspiration for the love of Jesus and for the love towards my mission, everyday calls me more and more to focus on Jesus and to share his

unconditional love and freedom to all equally.

Ordering my energies: The Vow of Obedience

Finally, the Vow of Obedience is always a self-will, where I decide to let go my own self for the generous love of Jesus and others. It helps me to develop my abilities for the greater benefit of the other, rather than for my own sake. I believe and trust it is a way of ordering my energy, through obedience to God, so that I feel free to offer myself entirely to the service of the Gospel and its values.

In conclusion, to live a joy-filled consecrated life these three evangelical councils should be a source of inspiration and strength to discern my daily way of life and to perceive diligently the promptings of Holy Spirit in order to make my life, after the exemplary life of Jesus Christ, the sole guide. The inspiring life of our founder Fr. Mathias Wolff, stirs me to become a true sister of JMJ and I pray that his blessings help me to be effective and assertive in my apostolic consecrated life.

Formation never Completes but ever Continues



Sr. MAMATHA BATHULA

JMJ Jyothi Nilayam
Hyderabad Province

Very truly I tell you, unless a seed of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. - John 12:24

Everyone and everything that exists on this earth has to go through a process of change. That is called formation or transformation. Formation is nothing but to be “*Born again in Christ*”. A child in the mother’s womb, a plant in the womb of the mother earth, a bird in the egg shell, a rain drops in the clouds need to be formed to have life. Formation is a memorable moment in the life of anyone where the transformation takes place. Formation never completes but ever continues.

As for my experience formation is similar to that of a tiny seed which transforms to be a large plant. I would like to demonstrate the experience of my formation in a symbolic way.

Seed in the hands of the gardener:

The seed experiences the warmth of the love of the gardener. Like the seed, I experienced the unconditional love and mercy of the Lord in my life. He has chosen me to be in His hands through my call to live in His house. As I transform myself in my consecrated life, I need to grow in my passion for God who loved me with an everlasting love. The blessing and miracles I experience from God’s unfathomable love, have strengthened my faith in the Lord and I wish to grow like a tiny seed in the hands of my loving God.

Seed in the soil:

The seed is dropped in to earth from the hands of the gardener, because the gardener knows the potency of the seed but the seed could not know and understand the plan the gardener has. Same was with me when God planted me in the garden of MJM, I was not aware of myself. I was in confusion and dilemma that I could not understand what is happening in my life and like the seed in the soil surrounded by

darkness and dirty. I could not find the hand of God in my life at that time.

Seed sprouting:

In order to become a plant, the seed has to die to itself. In this process, the seed goes through lot of struggles. Just like the seed, I had gone through a battle within me to become aware of myself. At some point of time, I felt to end up my fight rather to break myself. Days seemed like as if they will never end. I was tired of endless conflict within me. But the Lord helped me through my formators who strengthened, directed and challenged me to fight against the evil force, henceforth to grow in inner freedom of heart, self-awareness and personal growth.

Seed transforms as a Plant:

The seed comes out of the earth with folded leaves turning towards the sky, likewise, I offered my life to the Lord with gratitude for everything that happened in my life. At some point of time, I used to think never again I want to remember these days of my life, but after that I realized that these days are the best part of my life which strengthened and deepened my love for God.

Ever forming plant:

Forming oneself is a continuous journey, however, the level may differ. As the plant has to be replanted, grafted and continually pruned to yield good fruits which is the ultimate purpose of the seed. Likewise, I need to be available and adaptable in all the circumstances for the mission of Jesus. I need to be ready to be pruned by God to become a fruitful tree in the garden of MJM. I remember what our founder said: “The shortest and safest way to achieve perfection is to conquer oneself in everything”. Yes, it takes a life time effort to conquer myself to grow in the love of God and my neighbour.

Spirituality of Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ



Sr. DIONYSIA ELENJIKULAM
JMJ Formation House, Bhopal

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is the way a person receives God's Word and responds to it, like that of Christ. God's Word does not mean only the Holy Scripture, God's word implies, all that happens to us, in our day-to-day life, both pleasant and unpleasant events and experiences in and around us.

It refers to our way of relating to God, relating to oneself, relating to others, and relating to the world, in the light of Jesus Christ, the Gospel, the Church and all of creation in relation to God. Spirituality is a way of living the values of Christ.

What is Personalized Spirituality?

A personalized Spiritual life expresses one's intimate relationship with Christ, that will empower the person in carrying out his/her ministry effectively. Personalized Spirituality enables us to grow in deep relationship with the Lord and our neighbour.

A spiritually mature person is the one who has encountered God, both in one's interior and external life. It means that the person lives in God's compassionate presence being grounded in the reality of our daily life. Thus, prayer and action ought to be intimately linked and integrated. Only then, will the spirituality of a person be meaningful and effective.

When our spiritual life is deeply rooted in Christ, then we are able to live – *“With the Lord of the World, For the world of the Lord.”*



The kernel of Ignatian Spirituality is: *To find God in everything, Love Him in everything, and Everything in Him.* We all know that being a Jesuit, Fr. Mathias Wolff lived the spirituality of St. Ignatius.

Spirituality of Fr. Mathias Wolff

Fr. Mathias' Spirituality was certainly grounded and rooted in Jesus' spirituality, of finding God in all things and doing His will. Now we focus at some important aspects of spirituality of Fr. Mathias Wolff.

1. The Word of God deepened his faith

The Word of God pierces the soul, like a double-edged sword. God's Word strengthened Fr. Wolff's faith and helped him to find God in all things and people. It is the sword that pierced the heart of Mary, when she uttered her fiat, *“Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to Your word”* (LK: 1:38). Like Mother Mary, Fr. Mathias obtained the clarity of God's plan in his life and ministry, through the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. He knew, God's purpose in his life. Deeper knowledge of the Word of God, has truly enabled him to love Christ, and to genuinely share in the mission of Christ.

He empowered the Dutch Catholics and liberated them from their clandestine existence by the ministry of preaching the Word of God. He emancipated the people of Culemborg, through the proclamation of the Word and rival of their faith through the sacraments. The proclamation of the Word of God, strengthened his steps *to liberate the people* of his time.

2. Daily Eucharistic Celebration and Prayer

Great was his reverence for the Eucharist. The center of his daily life of prayer was the "Holy Eucharist." Contemplation and prayer undoubtedly strengthened the foundation of his apostolic attitude. Fr. Mathias Wolff says, "I have put on Christ. It is therefore Christ who thinks in me, speaks and works through me. He is to guide my thoughts, words and deeds". His spirit proceeds along two directions, namely; *Ascending to God in prayer and reaching out to people in service.*

In prayer he found the insight in God's will, obtained clarity about himself and God's intentions, He says, "*I wish to exercise my priestly ministry from an attitude of gentleness, prayerfulness and I wish to be there, where God wants me to be.*" Fr. Mathias Wolff lived the spirit of apostolic availability fervently and faithfully till the end of his life. His impetuous urge for the salvation of souls is expressed in what he said, "*I want to work as a giant, sure of God's help. I wish to work without ceasing, and I wish to redeem as many people as I can.*"

He was a man of God. His deep interest in the people found its source in God, who is present in all people and in all circumstances. He worked and prayed unremittingly. No difficulty was too hard for him. His zeal for the souls made him free for God and others. He was free from personal ambition and popularity. He had an extraordinary talent to win people over, at the same time his simple, cheerful and strong personality attracted both young and old.

3. A fervent Zeal for all that concerns Greater Glory and Honor of God. (Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam)

His whole life was concerned with greater glory of God. He sought and lived for the glory of God at all times. Fr. Mathias writes to his sisters, nothing is contrary to the spirit of the Institute for Christian education, as seeking for honour out of vanity, because its members are obliged to seek the honour of God in all things.

Undoubtedly, he lived from the spirit of St. Ignatius, as it was lived in the Society of Jesus. Fr. Mathias worked and stood for Christ values. For him what mattered was the *glory of God and salvation of souls.*

Fr. Mathias lived and worked like a giant for God's glory. We read the following prayer from his personal diary: "*Only to God be the glory, I surrender myself completely to you, like John the Baptist. Strengthen my will, that I may serve you as John the Baptist did, grant that I may fulfill my ministries evermore faithfully and for your greater glory.*"

He says the spirit of true poverty requires that I must give credit to God for the possession of things and myself their use; according to His holy will. "*To God be the Glory, for me the work.*" He gives the highest value to God in everything, so that whatever he does; he does it for

the glory of God.

Seeking God's Will

Fr. Mathias Wolff was a man of God's will. He allowed God to call him and order his life according to His will. He says: "*We must surrender to God. Our only prayer should be, Your will be done.*" This attitude was not passivity but it forced him to be ready to take on the responsibility of God's redeeming and liberating message in Imitation of Jesus. In this he wished to be a giant. His deepest longing was to do the will of God.

His prayer was, "*Change me into thyself dear Lord, that I may live in thee and for thee alone. May my happiness on earth consist in fulfilling thy Holy will.*"

Fr. Wolff himself described his interior surrender as follows: The soul attaches itself to God to such a degree that it finds pleasure in nothing else but what God requires. This inner strength, which grew into heroism, revealed itself more, when he was misunderstood by one of his companions. He was silent then, and he said to himself that "*I must learn that God's footprints are also discernable in human errors*".



4. Finding God in all things and Taste for the divine.

He who finds God in everything, to him everything is prayer. Fr. Mathias was a man of prayer, a man of God. In prayer he found the insight into God's will, obtained clarity about himself and God's intentions. Finding God in all things had become for Fr. Mathias, his pre-occupation. No aspect of his life was left out from it. He acquired the habit of finding God in all things at all times.

He worked and prayed unceasingly. In his spiritual direction and giving retreats to priests he says: Do not waste much time on reflections, but with childlike faith, confine yourself in Christ's words, taking them lovingly to your heart. He says the kingdom of God is not a flow of words, but in the surrender of the heart and in good works, according to your faith.

We find his great openness regarding mystical prayer. He says, those whom God calls to mystical prayer should ask advice. If they are faithful to grace, they will never be disappointed by Him, but they obtain everything from Him. St. Ignatius' contemplation on divine love had become his normal view of life. *"Take O! Lord and receive whatsoever I have and possess."*

One of the maxims, written during his novitiate time is: *Union with God in and through the work, is indeed for Ignatius a true matter of the heart. God bestows His gifts on us, He communicates himself in it. Therefore, learn to find God in everything, love Him in everything, and everything in Him. He who wishes to serve God in everything, to Him everything is prayer.*

Fr. Mathias was sensitive to listen to the voice of the Lord; speaking within him. *'I am with you.'* This inner voice that he heard was from the Holy Spirit. Fr. Mathias says, he who trusts in Christ's justice shall be saved. He continued to say, *"I do not wish to lay aside the difficulties and problems of my life, but carry it until the end of my life in serenity and love."*

Conclusion: After having reflected on the various aspects of our Founders' Spirituality, and how he lived in communion with the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, bring home to us that we need to deepen and intensify our spiritual journey, being in communion with the Lord. He who wishes to serve God in everything, to him everything is prayer and this is the spirituality that Fr. Mathias Wolff S.J. has passed on to his daughters of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph.

Let us as the sisters of JMJ, reflect on the depth, the height and the length of our Founders' Spirituality and personalize it in our everyday life. Fr. Mathias has marked out for his daughters a sure and distinct path, to walk the way of the Lord, keeping always before our eyes, mind and heart *'the clarion call'*, of doing everything for the greater glory of God and for the Liberation of all people especially the poor and marginalized.

Let our love flow towards Him and give thanks to Him, because He is personally inviting us to become a committed religious in the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph.



Fruitful Experience - Seminar on JMJ Non-Negotiable Values

Sr. LILLY E.D
Bangalore Province

Change is a song of life. Day and night are attuned to that tune. Changing seasons hum that melody. Why do we dread change? Is it because of the discomfort? Is it the fear of the unknown? Or the trepidation that we will not have control over the unfamiliar? When I resist change is it because of my unwillingness to adapt, and follow the right path?

Change is inevitable for growth just like a caterpillar becoming a beautiful butterfly. We are profoundly grateful to our Province for this initiative to help the members to 'change' towards becoming a true member of JMJ as envisioned by our Founder. It's change that finds expression to our living out the spirit of the Congregation, expressing the invaluable treasure hidden in the 'JMJ Non-Negotiable Core values'.

From 2nd to 4th December 2022 were the memorable days in the garden of JMJ, Bangalore Province. The place of silence and solitude, sang a welcome note with the arrival of 45 spirited sisters from different communities. Every sister hummed a note of gratitude in their hearts, for the wonderful experience they had through the seminar on JMJ Non-Negotiable Core values. Fr. A. Wilson Sagayaraj SVD, the resource person animated us to understand profoundly that the Non-negotiable Values, the foundational principles, guide the life and mission of every JMJ sister. Reflecting on the these seven JMJ Core Values stimulated the sisters to keep up the fire of Founder's spiritual legacy and apostolic spirit at the centre of JMJ Congregation's Mission.

*"In the constant
confrontation between the
rock and the water,
the water wins finally, not
by strength but by
perseverance."
- Anonymous*



*Father of his time,
Father of vision,
praying Father,
Father of the soil,
prophetic Father,
Father of shadows
and creatively
courageous Father.*

Our founder Fr. Mathias Wolff, stirred by the Holy Spirit, lived a holy life, finding God's will in his life, was totally available to be sent as a missionary. Known as a miracle worker, a man of prayer and people, Fr. Wolff encountered the God of mercy in his prayer and apostolic action. He walked many extra miles to share in the redemptive mission of Christ. After the example of our Founder, we ought to live our Non-negotiable Values, through our unconditional apostolic availability with zeal and zest. It was a great opportunity to be deeply rooted in the spirit of JMJ and grow a step higher in our spiritual journey.

It was indeed a great joy to know and reflect on the various topics from 'The Roots of JMJ' such as revitalizing religious commitment, the vision, mission, and the seven JMJ Non-Negotiable Core Values. Fr. Wilson highlighted on the seven characteristics of the Founder as - *Father of his time, Father of vision, praying Father, Father of the soil, prophetic Father, Father of shadows and creatively courageous Father.*

Overall, the sessions were thought-provoking and encouraging us know and share our life and mission based on 'The Roots of JMJ'. It was indeed an unforgettable seminar which helped us to experience our Founder's deep spirituality, that facilitated us to love him more deeply.

When we want to flow smoothly, easily, freely, and happily, we need to lighten ourselves. No more carrying the heavy baggage of past hurts, toxic of guilt, inadequacies, shame, fears and revenge. We realized that change teaches us trust, humility and surrendering. That Non-Negotiable Core Values can bring better outcomes, improve our lives and help us to grow.

We are delighted to say that these three days of holistic spiritual seminar was truly renewing and revitalizing our spirit. We are grateful to our provincial team who provided us this opportunity to rejuvenate our JMJ life with a special focus on the Core Values of the Congregation.



Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam



Sr. SUVARNA KADIRI
JMJ Jyothi Nilayam
Hyderabad Province

*Father Mathias Wolff, our visionary Founder,
An inspired Jesuit by the wisdom of St. Ignatius.*

*'Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam,' his life driving force,
All for God's Glory, his life resource.*

*Always on gaze towards heavenly master Christ,
Glorifying God through every action his thirst.*

*Everything guided by God's providence,
Spirit of MAGIS as his confidence.*

*Father Wolff, a man of unshakable trust in God,
Convinced of God's mercy founded the JMJ squad.*

*We must surrender to God always was his slogan,
Our only prayer should be, your will be done.*

*His indomitable spirit inspires our apostolic zeal,
To love Christ and save many a soul.*

*With lot of passion for Christ he always said,
I wish to work like a giant, certain of God's continual aid.*

*I wish to work without ceasing,
As many people I could and I wish saving.*

*The Congregation of JMJ ever dreams to strive,
Always on the path of Christ to thrive.*



Finding God in all Things

Sr. MARY PUSHPA LATHA VANAPARTHY
Rajnandgaon, Raipur Province



Everyone on the earth experience God through different situations of life. The one who is touched by God, grows like a seed in her intimacy with God. The process of growth is so painful but the joy is boundless. My parents' strong faith and devotion inspired me to join religious life. My Father is the role model of my life in experiencing God. His often-repeated exhortation is – *'if it is God's will everything will go on well; we only have to accept whatever comes our way.'* He never questioned God in any situation. His unshakable trust in God influenced me greatly and I have grown up in that spirit.

From class VII, I had a vague desire to become a sister to serve the poor. But after my class X, I did not know where to join. My parents prayed ardently to offer one of their children to God. God showed the way to my mother through Sr. Vijaya Suri as they were travelling together. My mother expressed to Sr. Vijaya about my desire and she became my vocation promoter to JMJ. I was affirmed that when we possess a great desire for God, He takes the first step to reach and accompany us. During my formation, I had certain health issues which were troublesome and I expressed my difficulty to my father. Once he wrote me *'even the sky falls on you never shake in your faith in God. Be strong like Job and accept whatever comes your way'*. It was the antidote that strengthened me and even today these words resonate in my heart.

I have experienced God through the intercession of Dr. Sr. Mary Glowrey. For two years my elder sister was suffering from psoriasis caused by some tragedy

that took place in her family. She went through a lot of stress and sleep disorder. She underwent treatment from Kerala and from many places but had no relief. She suffered a lot but never questioned God. At this moment I suggested her to visit the shrine of Dr. Sr. Mary Glowrey at Guntur and pray to her. Due to pain and suffering she could not visit the shrine but both of us started praying every day. Our prayer was heard through the intercession of Dr. Sr. Mary Glowrey and now she is completely healed and healthy. We believe that it's a great miracle that my sister is healed through the intervention of the Servant of God, Mary Glowrey.

I relate all these events of life and thank Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff who inspire me to live by faith not by sight. In spite of many struggles in founding the Congregation, he never lost faith in God. His total surrender and unshakable trust in God's providence motivates me to surrender everything to God's plan. I wish to live as a happy sister of JMJ enthused by our Founder as well as my father's life of faith and surrender to God's will.

*'even the sky falls on
you never shake in
your faith in God. Be
strong like Job and
accept whatever comes
your way'.*

My Heart Leaps with Ineffable Joy

Sr. LOURDHU ANTONY RAYAPPAN

JMJ Prasanthi Nilayam
Guntur Province



My heart leaps with ineffable joy as I share my encounter with Jesus. I was born and brought up in a Catholic traditional family. My parents lived from a strong Catholic faith that had an impact on us in a great way. I am the youngest of 11 children, very much loved and cared by everyone. In my early years, my siblings and teachers nurtured my faith in God and I enjoyed being a Catholic all through. My father, in particular, was a great devotee of Our Lady and taught his children to pray the rosary every day.

God's ways are always incredible. When I was just seven years old, I desired to become a religious. Once our entire family went on a pilgrimage to our Lady of Lourdes Church which is located in mountainous area. There, I had a fall as I was coming down the mountain, that ended up in head injury resulting in severe bleeding. Miraculously, there was a lady holding a baby in her arms who protected me from major mishap. Almost everybody thought that I may not survive. With immediate medical assistance, I was saved from severe blood loss and in a month's time I recovered completely. From that day onwards, my devotion to Mother Mary increased and I started loving God above everything for the gift of my second life. Henceforth, if someone asked about my future ambition, I used to spontaneously say that I would become a nun.

After my 12th standard, I met Sr. Gnana Soundari, a JMJ Sister, who shared with me about the Congregation of JMJ. She inspired me to join in the Congregation, and thereafter Sr. Antonial too encouraged me to take the daring step to respond to

God's call joining JMJ. I pledged to live for him forever as a happy religious by knowing him more and more and thus to love and serve him joyfully.

Being part of JMJ family is a gift of God to me and I wish to live my vocation joyfully with no regrets at all. As a pharmacist, I am available to all and as I dispense medicines, my priority is patient care and safety. My mission demands good communication services, patience, reliability, answerability, flexibility, and paying attention to detail.

Living with our elderly sisters at JMJ Prashanthi Nilayam, Guntur, sharing and listening their experiences of faith and wisdom inspire me greatly and strengthen my belongingness to the Congregation. I am grateful for all that God has gifted me with, and helping me to grow as a humble person and to work hard relentlessly like our Founder for the people of God. Our togetherness has deepened the unity in our community. I value our community prayer and recreation that fills us with moments of joy.

I am grateful that the Congregation has given me the opportunity to deepen my prayer life, review my relationship with God, and be hope-filled. I firmly believe that prayer and community life are essential for a happy religious life, where I nurture my vocation to follow Christ till the end of my life.



Father Wolff a guide to the Consecrated Life

Sr. SIRISHA MALLAVARAPU
Guntur Province



Consecrated Life, deeply rooted in the example and teaching of Christ the Lord, is a gift of God the Father to his Church through the Holy Spirit. By the profession of the evangelical counsels the characteristic features of Jesus - the chaste, poor and obedient one - are made constantly "visible" in the midst of the world and the eyes of the faithful are directed towards the mystery of the Kingdom of God. (Vita Consecrata)

In every age there have been people who, obedient to the Father's call and to the prompting of the Spirit, have chosen this special way of following Christ, in order to devote themselves to him with an "undivided" heart (cf. 1 Cor 7:34).

Moved by the Spirit, like the apostles, Fr. Mathias Wolff left everything to follow Christ more closely. Fr. Wolff gave us our specific JMJ charism and helped to pave the way for each one of us live faithfully our spiritual and apostolic life conferred on us by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, each one of us commits herself to make the mystery and mission of the Church shine forth, and in doing so we contribute to the renewal of the society.

"Man directs himself to God in such a way that he does not desire anything but what God asks of him. In such a state of heart and mind he experiences that everything is guided by God's providence. In this he finds his peace. His whole being is directed to God's glory." - P.M.109.

I was moved by this pious Maxim and took it to heart to shape my consecrated life. The following statements, keep stirring me to be ready to take on the responsibility and work like a giant filled with apostolic zeal in my ministry of education.

"I wish to work like a giant, certain of God's continual help."

"I wish to work without ceasing."

"I wish to redeem as many people as I can." Spirit & Charism Pg. 24.

Fr. Wolff's deep interest to save as many souls as possible, found its source in God. In this surrender to God, Fr. Wolff found his strength in heroic obedience. In order to become spiritually strong, I need to become a contemplative in action. Constantly, I need try to be united with God through contemplative prayer, which is undoubtedly the foundation of an apostolic attitude. As Fr. Wolff's spirit proceeded along two lines – 'Ascending to God and Going out to the people', so also, I need to work on myself to integrate my interior and exterior spiritual movements by becoming a contemplative in my apostolate.

There two lines do not remain separate, but blend continuously fructifying each other. Fr. Mathias Wolff knew that he was called to the service of the Church. Convinced of God's call, I experience God's love and try to live my vocation in a concrete way. My consecrated life is enriched by following the example set by our Founder.

I am very much grateful to my Congregation for the formation I had, and for its rich spirituality, values, traditions and above all the exemplary life of our senior sisters who live true to the Founder's Spirituality and Charism. We also seek the blessings of our dear Mother Mary, the Virgin of listening and contemplation, the first disciple, the beloved daughter of the Father, endowed with every gift of grace, as the unsurpassed model for all those who follow Christ in the love of God and service of their neighbour.

Let's take a U-turn... in our approach...



Sr. LUVIZA MIRANDA
Bangalore Province

The Vatican II Document *Perfectae Caritatis* mandated the religious Congregations to return to the original spirit and charism of their foundations and to adapt themselves to the changing signs of the times. It's indeed a clarion call for us as we are in the Provincial and Congregational Chapter preparations to take a *U-turn* and make the much-needed shifts and turns in our own life and that of the people whom we serve.

Change is the most constant factor in our times, today everything is changing. We have moved from letters to emails, greeting cards to face book, twitter, phone calls to WhatsApp, offline to online meetings, cash to cashless

transactions. Every moment there is something new and something relevant. If we do not change and empower ourselves to meet the new challenges, we will soon become irrelevant. There are new roads to walk on, and new challenges to be faced. We need to resist the attitude of survival and search for alternative ways to meet the contemporary needs of the world. It is clear from the history of religious life that various religious founders and foundresses at different historical periods initiated something new. They were pioneers in many fields, being creative, innovative and taking risks to walk on the road less travelled.

As the Chapter theme, "*Synodal Solidarity towards Universal Fraternity*" is a **Pointer to the future** with its own challenges in our wounded world, we need to explore, new strategies to respond to new needs that are emerging. We have to re-define our very lifestyle, our formation, ministries, and administration to be more relevant to this changing world.

The Good Samaritan who met another human being half dead, a victim of robbery and violence can be a source of inspiration and challenge for us religious today to start a new. Let us take an active part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies. Today we have a great opportunity to express our innate sense of fraternity, to be good Samaritans who bear the pain of other people's troubles rather than fermenting greater hatred and resentment.

"There is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor. May we never abandon them"

-Pope Francis

Jesus came to propose a new way of life, not just the old one with a few laws. Every time Jesus says: '*you have heard... but I tell you..., Love your enemy*'. Jesus meant that change the way you are living and the way you are doing. God's work

should always remain in the *movement stage*. It should never lose its vision, its vitality and dependence on God. It should be in a *constant stage of change*, maturing and growing and bearing fruits that last forever.

The Samaritan who stopped along the way departed without expecting any recognition or gratitude. His effort to assist another person gave him great satisfaction in life and before his God. All of us have a responsibility for the wounded, those of our own people and all the peoples of the earth. Synod is a response to it. The Chapter theme also reflects an apt response to our situation today at local, national and global levels. Let us care for the needs of every man and woman, young and old, with the same fraternal spirit of care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan by 'walking together' or doing things together in a participative way with others that is capable of building universal fraternity.

Chosen to be a refined Gold of JMJ



Sr. ANET ROGDRIGUES
Bangalore Province

*“He knows the way that I take, when He has tested me,
I will come forth as Gold.” - Job 23.10*

Refined gold of JMJ: Sr. Rosy Karukuttikaran is the refined gold of the Congregation. I call her refined gold because her life has gone through testing by fire. Her focus is how much more she can be refined to become a pure gold for her beloved Jesus. She a woman with discipline and virtuous life, and never feels it is enough; she says it can be refined still.

Born on 25th May 1947, she was baptized as Rosy. Her parents were gifted with seven children, five girls and two boys. The daily family prayer, and Holy Mass was norm of the family. Her mother’s spirituality, hard work, silent endurance and surrendering to the Will of God have set an example to her. She was greatly inspired by her father and his words, *‘Pray from the heart, heart must melt like candle while praying’* keep resonating in her heart.

Call to Religious Life: Sr. Rosy did not express her desire to become a religious to anyone as she thought it was impossible with her education qualification to embrace consecrated life. She prayed to St. Theresa of Child Jesus to live a holy life in whatever state of life she lived. As a solidarity member and catechism teacher, her Parish Priest Fr. Joseph guided her to join the Soc. of JMJ and on 14th February 1969, she left for Guntur. She made her temporary profession on 28th July 1974, and perpetual profession on 25th January 1979. She lived her life as a religious under the mantle of Our Lady Mother of God and always prayed to St. Joseph to be strong, obedient, gentle and always surrendering to the Will of God.

Mentor’s inspiration: Sr. Rosy’s vocation is something unique. As she lived her vocation, God remained faithful to her, Jesus walked along the way whispering in her ears: *come back to me and stay with me*. In spite of all her littleness, she lived faithfully till today with the prayerful support of her mother.

Golden Years in JMJ: Life was like a roller coaster and every time there was a bump, but in God’s will, each had a purpose. Sr. Rosy didn’t scream in fear but threw herself in to God’s hands and enjoyed the ride. Having fruitfully spent time with refreshing courses and one month retreat, she celebrated her silver jubilee in 1996 and golden jubilee in 2021. As a flashback to her assignments, God gave her varied experiences in different fields – ministry in JMJ communities, social work, formation of the blind, hostel warden and animator of the community.

Special Features Sr. Rosy:

❖ **Severity when necessary and goodness when possible:**

Sr. Rosy’s life as formator for over 25 years, reminds us that she allows God to melt and mould her each day. She lived by the teachings of our Founder



Fr. Mathias Wolff's parents - *Severity when necessary and goodness when possible.* She gives ample opportunity to the formees to make progress and when really needed she was stern. She won the heart of every candidate and every one of them was at home in her presence. She puts her heart and soul in every task she is entrusted with.

❖ **Never grow tired of doing good:**

She is a person who never grows tired of doing good and never said 'no' to anyone, young or old, rich or poor, authority or subject. Her generosity is for the greater glory of God. With this attitude she could win the hearts of all around her. She is a person in whom the fullness of the fruits of the Spirit overflow. Her gifts of patience, fortitude and tolerance are amazing. She fits into the shoes of everyone because she knows what hard life is. Her love for the creation is seen around her and never a plant or the creature goes hungry.

❖ **Confidentiality is the hall mark of her life:**

Confide to Sr. Rosy all that concerns you and she will take it to her God and it is sealed in her heart. She advises you in her wisdom and experience and her prayers become a source of strength. We can write into her heart like a personal diary and it remains with her. Whatever you share is a true story and she values it. When you are in utter need to share something and she is there. She finds time for you.



❖ **Humility is the source of her virtuous life:**

Humility plays a vital role in the life of Sr. Rosy. She adorns her life with roses of virtues. She is humble to the core that she allows obedience to rule her life. Her varied apostolic ministries portrait her humility. Being in-charge of the kitchen, she sought God's will to nourish the sisters with delicious food. Being a warden in the hostel she sought the will of God by being a mother to the little children. Being a formator she sought the will of God to become a perfect potter to mold the clay. Being a superior she is seeking the will of God by being a servant leader.



Interview with Sr. Rosy

• **Your experience being a JMJ sister.**

From candidacy onwards JMJ is my family. I am contented with whatever I am and I have. I appreciate my vocation to the congregation of JMJ. Under the patronage of Holy Family and after the example of our Founder Fr. Mathias Wolff, I live my life with an interior joy, in spite of the ups and downs of life.

• **Any of your unaccomplished dreams.**

There is nothing like unaccomplished in my life so far. I surrender all my concerns to the Lord, and He takes care of everything for me. So, any change of apostolate, change of place etc., I tell Him my helplessness and ask his guidance to rightly choose according to his will.

• **Your advice to the younger generation.**

My advice to the young ones is to live fully the spirit of religious life without any comparison or

compromise and authentically live the evangelical vows for the sake of your commitment to God.

• ***What would you like to do for the rest of your life as JMJ?***

I never chose anything for myself till today, so I continue to seek the Will of God, according to the need of the Congregation and the Church.

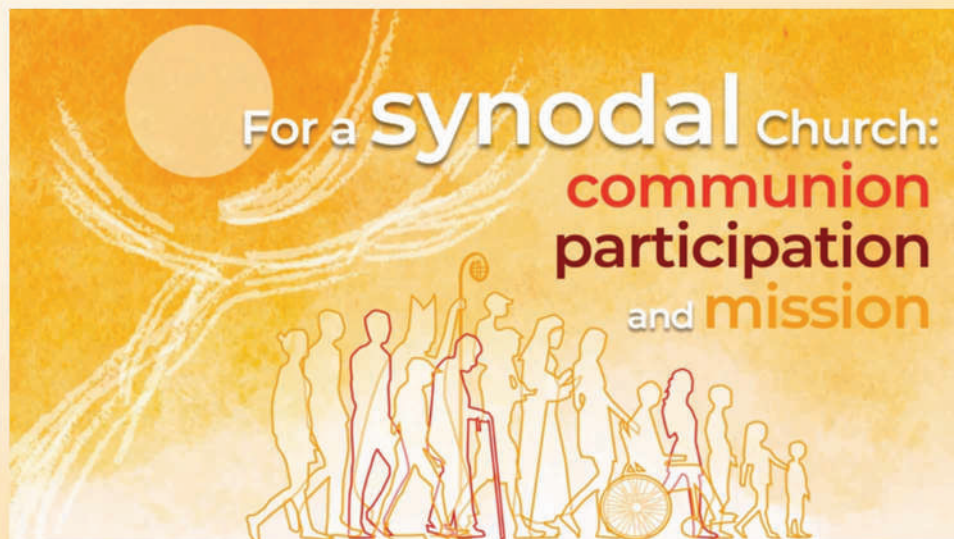
• ***What was your most satisfying ministry?***

The most satisfying ministry was as mistress in the orphanage. Caring for the poor and the innocent children was most satisfying. But with no regrets, I am always happy doing the will of God and it's my way of life.



Finally, I wish to conclude that Sr. Rosy's life has just been like a painting. She has drawn the lines with hope, erased the errors with tolerance, dipped the brush with lots of patience and colored it with loads of love. As we look at her life in the Congregation, wherever she was placed, in season and out of season, she has done her best giving herself fully for the mission without counting the cost.

I wish Sr. Rosy KC God's blessings to live her life gracefully in the coming days and inspire many more to come closer to God.



Synodality represents the main road for the Church, called to renew herself under the action of the SPIRIT and by listening to the WORD.

Whispers of a Grateful Heart



Sr. SUJATHA DASARI JMJ
St. Theresa's Convent, Hyderabad

I received the divine call from God through late Sr. Helen Madanu JMJ, when I was studying Intermediate at St. Joseph's College, Kurnool. In fact, that was the age when I didn't have any knowledge about my life or future career. I was so young and innocent, knowing nothing of religious life. It was indeed, my fortune that God has chosen and appointed me to be His daughter to carry on the mission of my life to glorify the Lord. My heart whispers grateful tones especially for blessing me with gifts of heart and mind to serve the socio-economically underprivileged children.

JMJ is not simply a name, but a society with indomitable spirit and charism of an *ever adaptable, apostolic, availability*. For me it's something and everything. When I am noting down my experience tears rolled down with mixed emotional state of joy and grief. My society has given me everything. My cup of chalice is overflowing with graces that are sufficient for me. I constantly feel grateful to God and to my Congregation of JMJ.

I am the eldest daughter having two younger brothers and one younger sister. I started my life journey with innocence, obscurity and unawareness. The society has given me knowledge to see the world. Senior sisters in the province showed me the best path and passed on the rich heritage. They trained me in such a good way, and humbly and happily I can say that I am able carry on the good work for the Lord and his people, which is appreciated by my sisters in the community. I am delighted to be a JMJ, being blessed with a life so worth of it.

Everyone has a story, but my story is entirely different. I was living my life with much zeal and zest as a teacher and later as a headmistress, also accompanying and caring for the poor and sick persons especially those with cancer. Accompanying cancer patients some of

them being my students' parents, and counselling and giving them moral support brought me lots of peace and delight. This was a regular mission that I loved to do for my master, who assured "*Whatever you do to the least of my people that you do unto me...I was sick and you looked after me,*" (Mt 25:35-36).

It was in July 2017, I was struck down with illness. Dr. Krishnamani, an Oncologist, a kindhearted gentleman suggested me to go for cancer screening. I was shocked first, but placing my trust in Jesus, I finally went for testing. The 5th July 2017 was a black day in my life because I was diagnosed having adenocarcinoma of lung. Then, I was reminded of St. Damien of Molokai who was affected by leprosy while caring for people affected by leprosy. "*Our only prayer should be your will be done*" was the prayer of my soul as was taught by our founder Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff.

At this point, I want to tell you something about my state of mind - *the positive affirmations*. Think positive, speak positive and do positive is the song that I sang in my mind. I was suffering from a throat problem, unable to speak a single word with others, but then I dare to talk to God about my health. I used to discuss it with Jesus my divine healer - "*Jesus you are the only God who rose from death and I have faith in you alone, make me to rise from my sickness*" was my daily prayer. To my surprise, I started reading the bible, gradually started singing and finally I was cured and got back my normal voice. Praise and glory be to God.

I am thankful to the Congregation of JMJ for caring me like a mother, and the treatment provided to me to expand my life span is unbelievable and on par with global standards. I am so grateful to the Congregation and Province leaders for like a father taking care of



the child, they hold my hand gently, affirming me of their love and care. My community sisters are like my siblings giving me moral and prayerful support from day one. The constant love of my fellow sisters is inexpressible in words.

So much, I am indebted to God, for making use of this unworthy instrument so proficiently. In 2019, I was awarded by the Govt. of Telangana as a best teacher. On 19th January 2023 I was awarded "Vidhushan Puraskar" for the best administrator. At

present, I am able to give my utmost as the principal at St. Theresa's State and CBSC Schools. With God's healing grace and blessing, and sisters, staff, well-wishers and friends prayerful support and with my strong will power and indomitable spirit, I am able to go on in the service of the little ones. My heart whispers grateful tones for making so many impossible things possible in my life, all for the greater glory of God.

Synodality is an expression of the very nature of the Church, the process of discerning how the Spirit is moving us, so that we may continue to fulfil our mission to evangelize in the world. How is your community participating in this synodal journey?

The Joy of Evangelical Freedom



Sr. JOYAMMA CHANIKUZHAY
Bangalore Province

I am spurred to pen this Inspiration from the book of my life.

I glad to share my reflections about Evangelical Freedom (EF). The Evangelical Freedom is the permission I grant myself to live my religious life in its Authentic Spirit of Being with the Lord and Sent out.

It is very much required to make religious life relevant in today's world. JMJ Constitutions interpret 'Inner Freedom of Heart' as 'An attitude of being - indifferent' (Const. # 1). Yes, indifferent to all that is worldly.

"I want to say a word to you, and the word is joy. Wherever there is religious, there is joy" – wrote Pope Francis in his circular letter to consecrated people. When we experience and exercise EF, we become Joyful Religious, Joy that is unlimited, that cannot be taken away and Joy that is permanent.

What is all about living religious life in its Authentic Spirit? I express it in one sentence: *'It is living the Religious Professional Promise in the light of the Gospel without making any compromise, in every circumstance.'* What makes me qualified and capable of experiencing this EF? Academic excellence? Philosophical or Theological studies? Spirituality courses? Social position? Without any of these, most of our pioneer and senior sisters who went before us have lived their lives in EF.

Religious life may not be relevant at all in today's context and in the eyes of secular world. But for me, religious life is significantly relevant in today's world to bring back the lost sheep of Christ Jesus. Living in this commercial and digital world, how are we going to experience EF to make religious life relevant? Is it possible? Its very much possible because I have two exceptional weapons against the opposing worldly spirit.

- **Prayer:** Being charged and energized from the power of prayer. *"The integration of prayer and work is possible only when we develop great familiarity with God"*. (Const. # 28)
- **Community Life:** Being and living in an uplifting Community of Consecrated Women Religious. *"Do everything you are charged with in the community with the greatest possible love"* (SbL.55)

Charged by the above two we could exercise the following to achieve and experience this EF:

- By being my real self, without fear and without looking into my neighbor's business. It requires self-generated freedom, self-control, self-confidence, self-esteem and respect for others.
- Doing what I should, for the Congregation without the fear. It requires spiritual courage, spirit of self-denial, Congregational spirit, spirit of generosity and responsibility.
- Undo the knots of prejudices, greediness, individualistic behaviors, indifference, exclusiveness, evil thoughts, words and deeds with a greater love for God and people.

If I don't experience EF, it just says that I am not with God and with the Community. I may excuse them both under the pretext of the Apostolate. If I am a person of excuses, then I am not to be called Consecrated Woman.

When I make a difference in my attitude, prayer life, communication, interpersonal relationship, service, learning, use of technology, in my behavior and use of time – I become a person of Evangelical Freedom, living an authentic religious life, bringing a change within myself and in the lives of the people. As a result, I make my religious life relevant in today's world.

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord anointed me



Sr. SHANTA PUDOTA
Guntur Province

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. (Lk 4:18)

I am called by God through the inspirations from many to proclaim the Word of God and stand upon it no matter what! Over the many years of my life as a religious, I have preached the Word of God when it is convenient and when it is not, as St. Paul to Timothy said – “preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching” Timothy 4:2

Fr. William, a priest from the diocese of Guntur encouraged me in a retreat to embrace religious life in the Congregation of JMJ, and the word of God that stirred me at that time was “*For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?*” (Lk 9:25). Likewise a course on Evangelization by Fr. Thomas SVD, had a great impact on my life as a young sister.

I remember how the then Provincial Superior, Mother Josepha Rachamalla was instrumental in my option for evangelization ministry, that began from Bayyaram Parish in Medak district of Telangana. Together with my fellow sister, I used to go on foot long distances and sometimes by bullock cart to evangelise people in interior villages. Many people have heard the name of Jesus for the first time and accepted Him as their Saviour. We have evangelised people even in some Catholic villages in Gajwel area and helped to renew their faith by conducting retreats and prayer meetings.

Later, I had the opportunity to teach and continue evangelization ministry in various places like, Porumamilla, Kadapa, Kanchili and Ramachandrapuram. Even, after the retirement from the government post as teacher, my second career is evangelization. I visited many families in nearby villages and witnessed to faith sharing of sick and suffering

people like Job in the Bible. Many people were released from the bondage of witchcraft and were healed from their ailments in the name of Jesus. I remember that while walking through fields, we narrated the bible stories to the shepherds. Through family counselling several couples were united and Catholics came back to faith.

Our weapons, in preaching the Word of God and healing were the Cross, Holy water and the Bible. One day I saw a sick man suffering for more than 24 years, was healed miraculously from his sickness as the priest prayed over him - “*In the name of Jesus, I command you to get up and walk*” he said, and immediately the man got up and went around the village.

I sincerely acknowledge and thank God and the Cong. of JMJ for the many opportunities given to me to proclaim Christ to the simple people. May the good Lord bless each one of us and fill us with a great desire to grow in our passion for Christ and to evangelise people in Jesus’ name.



JMJ Mission in collaboration at Giridih, Jharkhand



Sr. RAJNI KUSHRAM
Giridih, Jharkhand
Raipur Province

My call to religious life in JMJ Congregation is God’s gift to me. Reaching out to the poor in the margins through collaboration is like encountering the suffering Christ. I am grateful to God and the Congregation for the opportunity given to me to work in a collaborative ministry first in Varanasi Diocese and now at G. D. Bagaria Sewa Sadan, Giridih, Jharkhand.

I am indeed very happy to share what the Chairman of the Trust said to our pioneering sisters. *‘At the initial proposal to invite JMJ Sisters to take up the administration of the hospital most of my family and friends objected because of Christian religion. But as the chairman, I whispered to them “for me what matters is service to humanity, not the religion.”* Such a response from a lay Hindu business man is truly amazing. The Trust’s door is always open to the poor, underprivileged and total free treatment is given to the deserving patients. Bagaria’s ordinary lifestyle, good will and holy thoughts inspire me and help to strengthen my commitment to the cause of the marginalized people.

In this remote area we serve people who are poor and illiterate. They lack basic amenities like healthcare, education, transport, and access to market. Through our service in the hospital, as well as through health camps we reach out the nearby villages to provide basic health care to them. In this way we give witness to God’s love for humanity. We are indeed happy that we are able to live faithfully our vocation and privileged to give an expression to our JMJ Charism of Apostolic Availability.

Mission in collaboration here is an encounter by itself, how these two opposing religious faiths co-exist, collaborate and sow the seeds of God’s kingdom. It is a unique experience which fills me with great zeal and dedication in my mission. Lots of freedom is given to us by the Trust, to develop and build a collaborative atmosphere. Our working style enveloped with mercy and compassion is appreciated by the public. The members of the Trust consider our consecrated and prayer life as the source of all goodness. The chairman often says, *“Sisters are little angles. Your simple and sacrificing life, your dedication and hard work, your honesty and goal-oriented effort is just admirable.”* They appreciate our acts of mercy, charity and gross root level service for the development of the poor.

Our mission here proclaims Gospel values and witness Christ among the non-believers. The 25th April 2022 was an auspicious day for the Trust and JMJ Sisters as the mission was extended by starting a School of Nursing in the campus which is the first School of Nursing in the entire District of Giridih. There is so much to learn in a collaborative mission. It helps me especially in Indian situation to respect and appreciate the other. Through persistence in learning, creative team work, appreciation and respect for each one’s cultural diversity, listening to one another, being transparent in our work and mission, clear and timely communication, we live together as happy JMJ family. I feel blessed being part of this collaboration with GD Bagaria Trust at Giridih.



Serving the Least of these God's People

Sr. LEATITIA ULINDALA
St. Ignatius Convent, Durgi
Guntur Province

"For many are called but few are chosen" -Mt. 22:14

I heard God's gentle voice calling, "somewhere out there is someone who needs your service would you reach there?" With humble heart I did respond to God's call. I am ever thankful to God for this opportunity of sharing His love and kindness with the elderly poor at St. Ignatius home, Durgi.

I remember the words of Rabindranath Tagore "amidst your numberless stars let me place my own little lamp." Yes, I feel among countless people, God has chosen me for a special purpose to be at the service of poor destitute senior citizens. From a healing ministry, I am placed in Durgi community like a little lamp to brighten the lives of the elderly people who were abandoned by their family members. From the beginning I had great desire to serve the poor and sick. Being a qualified nurse, I rendered my services in various JMJ centres but mostly in St. Joseph's Hospital, Guntur. Moved by the compassion of Lord Jesus, I served the sick and suffering out of my deep love for God.



As a true daughter of our founder, Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ, walking in his footsteps, I began my services in the home for the aged with great eagerness and passion being inspired by his words "*always ready for anything and work like a giant.*"

Volunteering my services to these senior citizens taught me a lot about myself. Caring for the elderly is a rewarding experience in my life because they are extremely vulnerable and they require special care and attention. Being with them and serving them every day, I have realized that every person has a story - a story of who they are and how they came to be here for the rest of their lives. I have learned to give importance to each person, recognizing their uniqueness, and understanding their own story of life. I think fulfilling my mission with utmost respect and personalised care for each one of them during their advancing years adds joy to the story of their lives.

Aging is just another word for living, hence, understanding the elderly and with simple actions like providing for their basic needs and medical treatment and being with them in their solitude brings joy to them that radiates from their smiles and simple conversations. Although, it's very challenging apostolic task, but with providential care of God and through channel of my personal prayer, I am able to move forward in their service.

At the end, I like to mention how good is our Congregation that takes care of senior citizens in many unique ways. The surprised people on the right side in the parable of last judgement ask when did they do these things for Him, and Jesus replies, "*Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.*" (Matthew 25:40).



German Mission - A Tangible JMJ Presence

Sr. BALA PREMA SILUVAPPAN
Stimpfach, Germany

Our vocation brings with it that we are ready to do anything, to go anywhere, to do whatever obedience asks from us, we should only find happiness in doing what God asks us to do.

- Fr. Mathias Wolff

Community life and prayer life are the two essential aspects of our JMJ life and will not have an end until the end of our life. Its now 10 months that Stimpfach, in Germany has tasted JMJ Presence with much delight. Our life journey in Germany began on 11 September 2022, the day when Sr. Madhu Mamta Tirkey, Sr. Bala Prema Siluvappan and Sr. Usha Nekkanti landed in Frankfurt. We were warmly welcomed by Sr. Valsa Koreth, Sr. Christina Manikam, and Mr. Friedrich Haegele, our benefactor who is our guardian angel. It was an exciting day as we travelled along the beautiful landscapes of Germany and reached Ellwangen as the pioneer missionaries of JMJ in Germany. We are very happy and satisfied that the dream of the Congregation is fulfilled with our arrival.

The most awaited day has dawned in the history of the Congregation of JMJ on 15 September 2022, when we began our apostolic mission in St. Anna Home for the Aged, Stimpfach. Due to the lack of accommodation at Stimpfach, we stayed at Ellwangen, 15 kms away, from where we travelled daily to the work place by a taxi. On 10 February 2023, we shifted our residence to Stimpfach where an independent house was bought by the Institute and given to us for rent.

Taking personal responsibility to shape a purpose-driven life as sisters of JMJ, requires us to connect ourselves with the Divine, to devote our energies to caring for each other, and affirm ourselves of the blessings bestowed on us as the missionaries. We took up our mission as a privilege and a blessing to help the senior citizens at St. Anna. Although it's a challenging ministry, we are trying our very best to be witnesses of God's love and care for the aged, trusting in the providence of God who brought us here for a purpose. We are certainly happy and thankful for the concern and prayerful support that most of our sisters, family and friends express to us.

Difficult roads lead to beautiful destinations. We truly desire to live a spiritually-grounded life. Owing to different working hours, sometimes it's not possible to follow a common time table and there is no daily regular holy mass in the area. However, we take personal responsibility for our spiritual exercises and participate in holy mass whenever there is one either in the institute or in the Parish Church. As every experience is an opportunity for growth, we look at our small inconveniences, discomforts without a trace of complain, and try to grow in our relationship with the Lord through our personal prayer and with each other in our daily encounters.





We hopefully wait for the erection of JMJ community, in Stimpfach soon, so that we can arrange Holy Mass whenever possible and spend the time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. We thank the Lord Almighty for keeping us happy, hale and healthy, and blessing us with many good-hearted people around us. Our sincere gratitude to our Congregation and Provincial Leadership Teams and all the sisters for preparing us well and sending us on this pioneering mission.

Confide to God all the things that occupy you: your inner confusion, your cares, and all your problems. (PM I.67). This our daily prayer for you and for ourselves. May God bless us and fulfil our mission for his greater honour and glory!

SYNODALITY SYNODALITY

SYNODALITY

is a way of living and operating in the Church that makes the communion between God and human beings tangible. It has implications for how we lead, live together in community, serve those in need, and evangelize.

Synod
2021
2023



Ignatian Spirituality at Gregorianum - A Journey of Gratitude

Sr. JAYASHEELA TIRUMALAREDDY
Guntur Province

“All the things in this world are gifts of God, created for us, to know him better, love him more surely, and serve him more faithfully.” Ignatius of Loyola

Every single date on the calendar is important with an opportunity to learn and expand our vision of life. The year 2022-23 had been a remarkable one for three of us, Vijaya Geetha, Sleeva Rani and Jayasheela as we set out to discover God more alive in our lives and the world around us. We are grateful for the opportunity accorded to us to deepen our understanding of Ignatian Spirituality, and the rare privilege of visiting Rome, and Founder’s places in The Netherlands, as well as Loyola and Manresa in Spain.



Gratitude for entry to Eternal City: Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more. When we started our journey to Rome, the Eternal City in September 2022, this day seemed so far away. Now it is here and we cannot believe that time has passed so quickly. As we look back to the past year, it has been full of blessings, cherished beautiful memories, experience of bond of togetherness, and felt presence of God every moment. With all the vicissitudes during this year, we have experienced the providence of God every single minute and the support, encouragement, care and concern of our dear sisters in Rome.

Studying in Rome - a memorable episode: It has been an incredible opportunity to study at the pontifical university commonly known as Gregorianum. It’s a centre for theological, philosophical, biblical, spiritual and secular studies. Studying Diploma course in Ignatian Spirituality at Gregorianum has been an incredibly enriching experience for us. The course was stimulating and inspiring with the teachings of Saint Ignatius and his spirituality. The calibre of the faculty is truly exceptional with passion and in-depth knowledge of their subjects. Their dedication and pedagogical teaching strategy to nurture the minds and hearts of the students is something new and innovative.

Throughout our time at Gregorian University, we were impressed by the sense of community among the students and faculty. Interculturality among us was an enriching experience. Our learning has been truly transformative, connected to our faith experiences and widened our perspective and deepened our spiritual lives.

Monte Senario a Supportive Community: One of the most enriching experiences of our time in Rome is from our Monte Senario convent. Our community is closely knitted together with an array of intercultures, each bringing their unique gifts and experiences to our shared journey. We are ever grateful to our community that played a vital role and been instrumental in our personal learning and spiritual growth.

Rome is not built in a day: The ancient city of Rome was not built in a day. It took nearly a decade to build the Colosseum, and almost a century to construct St. Peter’s Basilica. So one day in Rome is not nearly enough time to explore the incredible history of Rome. Romans will say that Rome is like *lasagna* – it has many layers, and all of them are equally fascinating and worth our time. The myriad of opportunities we have taken to visit the magnificent churches with rich architecture and the historical monuments of the city have elevated our spirits. These spiritual experiences have not only enriched our personal spirituality but also equipped us with valuable life-skills that we will carry with us long after our course.

Our takeaway gift: As our study comes to an end in the Eternal City, we are filled with a sense of accomplishment and deep gratitude to God and each one of you. We are grateful to our Congregation for all the opportunities we have been offered, and the countless memories we carry along, treasuring them for a life time. Grazie mille!

Celebrating the Season of Creation



Sr. THRESIAMMA KUDIYIRUPPIL
JMJ Provincialate
Bangalore Province

The theme for the Season of Creation 2022 was “*Listen to the Voice of Creation*”. In Bangalore Province, we have reflected together on the theme and shared a common call to care for creation. Spending quality time in Nature helped us to reconnect ourselves with the world around us. It’s true, nature provides beauty to our environment and when we spend time on nature’s lap, it teaches us many lessons for life.

The Season of Creation is marked throughout the Christian world from 1st September to 4th October (Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi) and celebrates the joy of creation as well as raising awareness and encouraging initiatives to protect our natural environment.

During this Season of Creation, our prayer and action to protect our common home has helped us listen for the voice of creation. The Season was celebrated in all the convents, schools and hospitals of our Province, with the staff and the students. We had set apart a day to clean the campus with the aim of discarding the plastic and other wastes found in the campus.

Prayer Service

Convent chapels were decorated with flowerpots, vegetables and fruits. We created an ambiance of natural beauty of creation and creator. During the hour of adoration, we reflected on the theme ‘*Listen to the Voice of Creation*’. “The global Christian family is called to awaken to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and with each other and to encourage our parish communities to do the same, for we know that things can change!” (Laudato Si’ 13).



Awareness Education Programs: The Superiors, JPIC Promoters and HODs in different ministries have taken care to create awareness among the staff and students on the theme “*Listen to the Voice of Creation*”. The following are the activities done during the season of creation.

- Plants are gifted by the students to teachers on teachers’ day and each one took responsibility to plant them in the campus and nurture them with great care.
- Students pledged to keep the campus clean and green, making the campus plastic free zone.
- Teachers have educated the students about ‘*Only One Earth*’ bringing awareness on the need to care for our common home and preserve the gift of creation.
- Through lay collaboration, sisters have promoted cultivation of medicinal herbs in the campus, in the neighbourhood as well in the parishes.
- Distributed many fruits and flower saplings to the employees and people in the neighborhood.
- Cultivated and planted variety of saplings in the unused land in our campuses.
- Most of our sisters and co-workers have learned to grow indoor plants in their rooms, houses, corridors, work places and chapels.

Little act of love brings joy, hope and light. Let us join our hands with the Church to renew the face of the Earth making it beautiful for you and me.

JPIC - LEARN TO DO RIGHT !



Sr. DIVYA THOMAS
JMJ Convent, Delhi

From our contemplation on the pierced heart of Jesus helped us to reflect on the wounded humanity and our common home, and stirred in us a desire to commit ourselves with greater passion and compassion to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

“We are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty and fullness.” (Laudato Si, 53)

We aim to promote the spirit of JPIC among the young mindsets of Delhi JMJites and be actively engaged in the transformation of the society while caring for our common home. Drawing inspiration from our charism and mission, we take the responsibility to focus all our education endeavors towards creating a feeling of inclusion, harmony, and promoting life in abundance. Our profound desire to promote JPIC activities in our campus include - Mystic Healers, Eco custodian, Swatch Bharat Abhiyan, Eco brick making, E-Waste Management, Hydroponics and Eco conservancy.

Mystic Healers: An activity called ‘Mystic Healers’ was organized to encourage and enhance students’ knowledge about different types of medicinal plants found in various habitats. Exploring herbal medicinal plants and their uses was indeed an attempt to disseminate ethno-botanical information of these plants to the public and to the students’ families.

Eco Custodian: Caring for nature is at the root of our tradition. We developed this tradition in new and profound ways by emphasizing the importance of interrelationships and strengthening our collaboration with the nature. Our Eco warriors adopted a park and in collaboration with NGO Sankalp Taru students took initiative to nurture plants and trees by regularly caring for them.

PoshanMaah / Nature nutrition month: To inculcate social responsibility an awareness was created among the students wherein the students brought eatables and showcased their generosity by serving the underprivileged ones.

Swatch Bharat Abhiyan: Our school participates actively in Clean India Mission, which is a country-wide campaign initiated by the Government of India to eliminate open defecation and improve solid waste management. The program also aims to increase awareness on menstrual health management.

Eco brick making: An innovative way to deal with non-biodegradable plastic menace, students participated in an activity to prepare eco-bricks with the use of plastic bottles.

E-Waste Management: In collaboration with Nokia E-Waste was collected by the Delhi JMJites and disposed in safe and sustainable manner. A speaker from the company addressed the students detailing them about the harmful side effects of unethical disposal of E-waste.

Hydroponics: Students were educated about Hydroponic growing that allows for faster growth and higher yields than traditional soil-based growing systems.

Earth Justice Award: An award was conferred to those students who came up with innovative ways of conserving nature and its resources to create a sustainable planet.

While we seek the transformation of ourselves, these initiatives and experiences help us greatly to humanize the social fabric which in turn lets us to move towards global transformation. We therefore look at JPIC as a way of life and feel called to discern and transform our way of being and doing to protect our mother planet and people.

Congregation's JPIC Action Outcomes in response to Laudato Si' goals

JPIC Promotors

"Bring the whole human family together for we know that things change." Laudato Si' 13

JPIC is the conscious prayer and sacred action to transform the world in the spirit of the Gospel through the initiatives of Justice, Peace, and caring for the Integrity of Creation. JPIC is at the very heart of our Congregation's vision and mission and gives us hope to journey with people from multi-religious faiths, languages, and cultures. Our sisters across all provinces are profoundly aware of the joys and sufferings of humanity, different types of poverty, inequality, exclusion, violence, and environmental destruction that are present in today's world. We feel connected and willing to reach out those in need. There is a greater need to focus all our endeavors towards creating relationships of equality, inclusion, non-violence, and harmony, believing that all have life and life in abundance. We are happy to share the JPIC Action outcomes from the provinces in response to the Seven Laudato Si goals.

I. Response to the Cry of the Earth

Optimizing the use of Empty Land around all JMJ communities: The deserted land at the back of the convents have been turned into fertile lands which are yielding fruits, flowers and vegetables. Fostering cleanliness in the campus have reduced the snakes in the surroundings. In collaboration with the local people, we have created awareness among the public to compost food waste and use it as organic fertilizer. Women in the rural and semiurban areas are educated to grow terrace gardens, with the help of grow bags for the cultivation of vegetables and making this planet cleaner and more oxygenated.

Journey towards Laudato Si Movement in the Communities: Planting of trees, clearing of the ground, weeding, plant trimming and pruning were carried out systematically as an expression of our respect and care for God's creation. NCC (National Cadet Corps) students took a vital role to clean the river banks addressing the climate crisis which is critical part of caring our common home. Rainwater harvesting, and conservation of water was initiated to solve the long-term problem of shortage of water in some communities.

Improved access to Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: Importance of saving water and drinking clean water and good hygienic practices including good hand washing technique is taught to the students and general public in remote areas. Health and hygiene awareness programs are conducted in the villages to promote health and well-being of people.

Plastic free Campus drive: Most of the campuses of the communities have become plastic free with an year long campaign undertaken by the staff, students, women, youth and families by promoting the use of bags made of jute and cloth. Many staff and students started to use reusable bags and cloth bags. News papers are made into bags to carry drugs from the pharmacy outlets.

No to Junk Food: In many communities' sisters have organized awareness programs to different groups of children and youth in the schools, colleges and villages on the adverse effects of junk and fast foods. Motivated and encouraged them to consume home cooked food, which will help them change their lifestyle and maintain good health.





Improved Waste Management: Awareness programs on waste management were organized to children, youth and families and other beneficiaries in the work place by most of the healthcare, education and social service centers. Methods of segregating the dry and wet waste and how to prepare manure from kitchen waste have been demonstrated to them.

II. Response to Cry of the Poor

Service to the poor: Sisters and their lay collaborators have exhibited spirit of sharing food by feeding the hungry in our neighbourhood and villages. Our well-wishers have offered support to care for the health needs of the underprivileged patients, and special teaching classes were given to the slow learners through tuition centres, besides extending free education to the deserving students in support of their school and college education as a means towards a hopeful future.

Supporting Employees' Welfare: Employees' houses were renovated with the support of the communities and institutions, enhanced remuneration and paid just wages to the employees. In solidarity with the families of our staff and students, as well as institutions supported them with financial and material help, and cared and counselled women victims in difficult circumstances, so that they could lead their life with dignity and conviction.

Solidarity in Action: Many of the institutes have organized solidarity day to raise funds to support the education of children from socio-economically backwards communities. The students and staff have collected food items, clothes, text books from the passed-out students and donated them to the underprivileged ones.

Healthcare Services to the Poor: Our healthcare centres have given free medical and surgical treatment including fee reduction to some needy poor patients. Extended healthcare services to the poor in the rural and urban slums, to the aged, people with HIV/AIDS, and terminally ill. Health camps were conducted in

the villages and slum areas to treat and educate people on health and hygiene.

Adoption of Green Slums: Teachers from our schools have initiated coaching in English Language and basic computer literacy to the underprivileged children living in the slums. Reading, writing and listening skills via practice sheets and oral recitations were undertaken as right to education is the right of every child. Applied for Government scholarships for the eligible students and taken measures to improve literacy rate among the children from the underprivileged areas.

Disaster management: Under disaster management our communities have launched into action to rescue people caught in floods, carried out relief operations that helped people to get out of their flooded homes, and take shelter in relief camps of the Government. Distributed food and other essential things to the people in the affected areas.

III. Ecological Education

Promoting Ecological Education: Created JPIC Clubs in our institutions and training programs were conducted on green awareness for the staff, and students. 'Plastic free zone' posters are displayed in the campus. 'Play with Clay' for kindergarten students to teach them the importance of the mother Earth. Displayed Laudato Si' banners in the campus. Educated the employees on saving of water, electricity and no to plastic at home and in the institutions.

Observance of Important days: The World Earth Day was observed on 22nd April 2023 with its theme "Invest in our planet, and Laudato Si week from 21 to 28 May 2023 was observed to bring in the spirit of Laudato Si' to life and the need to care for our common home. On 5th June, 2023 the National Green day is organised as Plantation drive, by planting hundreds of saplings in various campuses of JMJ. Celebrated the Season of Creation from 1st September which is the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and up to 4th October the feast of

St. Francis of Assisi the patron saint of the Environment.

Praying for the people of Ukraine and for countries in conflicts: “Every war and unrest in the name of religion, ethnic issues leave our world worse than it was before. (Fratelli Tutti, 261) Sisters of JMJ respond to the calls of JPIC e-newsletter and in solidarity with all, we join the universal Church through prayer for Ukraine war to end and also for other parts of the world under conflict and destruction.

Pathways to Leadership Qualities: Sisters take new initiative of building leadership qualities among the children, youth and families, staff and students through capacity building, action-oriented and life skills programs, empowering themselves and community at large.

IV. Ecological Economics

Minimizing the Wastage: Sisters and their lay collaborators have overall learned to grow natural plants both indoor and out, replacing plastic flowers, bags, plates, glass and cups and careful use of electricity, water and fuel for cooking. Installed few solar lights and solar water system in our communities. Growing herbal plants and using them as home remedies for several ailments as well as teaching others about their benefits. Junk foods and soft drinks are avoided by the sisters in general. Making Brooms out of coconut leaves and using coconut husk for the plants as manure and insecticides. Plants are gifted for Birthdays, and Jubilees, replacing fresh or artificial flowers. Growing own organic gardens that yield fruits and vegetables, which reduces regular food expenditure.

Optimal use of Natural Resources: Awareness program on the importance of natural foods and bioproduction was conducted for students and staff. Encouraged to buy and use the local products and use of public transport to reduce environmental pollution. Educated the students to avoid food and water wastage.

V. Adoption of Simple Lifestyle

Developing Healthy Lifestyle: By and large sisters are conscious of fitness through physical exercises like walking at least 30 minutes a day and yoga and meditation for at 30 minutes daily. Yoga is introduced in all our JMJ Institutions which creates mental clarity and calmness; increases body awareness; relieves

chronic stress patterns and relaxes the mind. Physical activity includes taking active part in community activities like cooking, cleaning, gardening etc. All the sisters and co-workers including other lay collaborators and associates in a spirit of solidarity share from their earnings to help the people for basic amenities.

VI. Ecological Spirituality

Creating Laudato Si and Contemplation Chapels: Communities have initiated to pray and meditate in nature. Few communities have created simple Laudato Si chapels using their own resources and creativity. Nature prayer services and contemplative walks in nature are regularly organised and encouraged in all the communities.

VII. Community Engagement and Participatory Action

Awareness, Advocacy in the Community: Awareness programs using mass media and street plays were organized on the harmful effects of throw away culture. Large number of sisters have participated in Women Empowerment conferences, JPIC workshops, Laudato Si promoters seminars. Skits were put up in daily School assembly about the humanitarian, philanthropic values. Campaigns, awareness drives and rallies were carried out by health care teams in the villages on - save water, safe drinking water, water bone diseases and sanitation.

Building Team Spirit and Creating Happy Community: All our communities together with other associates are taking lots of effort to fine-tune with one another to build positive relationships and good team spirit, involving everyone in decision making through contemplative dialogue and spiritual conversations.

Conclusion: Millions of people are promoting the JPIC activates across the globe of which we are a tiny part. Its our gift to God when we celebrate the nature and protect the planet so that we become partners in making our world a happier, and healthier place for everyone to live.



Mission and JPIC Development Tidings

Sr. DENIN MARY & TEAM
Cong. of JMJ Generalate, Rome

The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph is a nonprofit missionary institute based and registered in Rome, since 2018, established its own JMJ Mission Development Office to support its missions in Asia and Africa. The Congregation works with JMJ sisters, supporting the projects, initiatives and other networks that aim to eradicate poverty through sustainable economic development and respectful human dignity and safe environment. Besides, it provides services to protect and empower human rights of women and children who suffer from violence and poverty, and indignity of human trafficking. The Mission cum JPIC office is glad to share the report of some of its activities.

Joined World Peace Day organised by SANT' EGGIDIO on 1st January 2023

The Community of Sant' Egidio is a worldwide movement of lay people, based on prayer, solidarity, ecumenism, and dialogue. Prayer, Poor and Peace are its fundamental points of reference. JMJ Mission Development Office participated in the Ecclesial World Peace Day on 1st January 2023 in collaboration with Sant' Egidio to be in solidarity with the world around us. The peace gathering represented the countries where there is unrest. On this occasion, Pope Francis addressed the gathering with his message and blessings with a resolve to live in peace. Participation has led JMJs to represent our presence in the Ecclesial Church activity and initiative.



Participation and Collaboration with the Working Groups of JPIC Commission, UISG/USG Rome from January 2023

A sense of deep communion with the nature cannot be real, if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings. Everything is connected. (Laudato Si', 91) As sign of the compassionate heart of Jesus, USG/UISG has been creating awareness within the Congregations and in the wider society about human trafficking, refugees and migrants, climate change and to strengthen the efforts to end these evils. Therefore, the working groups consists of JPIC promoters from different Congregations, meet on the first three Thursdays of every month, for two hours in the afternoon at JPIC office to share their best practices and success stories. This paves a path for our Congregation to learn different methodologies of functioning both in the ecclesial and civil society.

Mensuram Bonam: Faith-Based Measures for Catholic Investors

The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences with its publication, Mensuram Bonam (good measure) hopes to shed the light of the Gospel and of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) on the specific area of economics and the world of finance which may be referred to as the management of financial assets or investing. A seminar organised by Pax Bank in January 2023 is emphasised on the importance of teachings of faith and in the Church's social teaching, and Mensuram Bonam (MB) supports the faith and contributes to the promotion of an inclusive and integral wellbeing and advancement of people. MB seeks to offer such an opportunity for discernment, providing guidance and principles to enable everyone to respond to the call of the Gospel and the wisdom of the Tradition of the Church by more fully integrating the Church's social

and moral teaching into the management of their financial assets with a focus on investing in listed securities or mutual funds.

Participation with Talitha Kum, UISG for the celebration of Saint Josephine Bakhita day on 8th February 2023: The Catholic Church celebrates the feast day of St Josephine Bakhita on the 8th of February each year. Her life was a journey from slavery to freedom and faith. The life story of the patron saint of Sudan, inspires hope in the face of modern-day indifference and exploitation. As Pope Francis states: *'She is charged with showing to all the path to conversion, which enables us to change the way we see our neighbours, to recognize in every other person a brother or sister in our human family, and to acknowledge his or her intrinsic dignity in truth and freedom.'* The gathering at St. Lucia church with the representations from different congregations, churches both young and old organised by Talitha Kum with a meaningful prayer service and Eucharist for the survivors of trafficking has strengthened the network and collaboration of inter-congregations' participation.

Advocacy Programs with Talitha Kum, UISG from March 2023: Talitha Kum's actions are aimed at all those who are disfigured and deprived of their liberty, regardless of their lifestyle, race, religion, economic status or sexual orientation. The members of Talitha Kum recognize and bear witness to Christian values, in dialogue and respect for the various religious traditions and for non-believers. We as Congregation started to collaborate with this Commission in Rome and in Ghana Region and India to combat human trafficking prevailing in the society.



Orientation about Globethics in April 2023: Globethics is an international non-governmental organisation working to equip individuals and institutions for ethical thinking, decision-making and action through higher education and policy engagement from cross-cultural and global perspectives. Mission / JPIC coordination team participated in the orientation program organised by Christine Housel. Globethics welcomes the possibility of JMJ involvement through an agreement to develop new skills with courses on ethics to learn the true meaning of plurality, accountability, importance of dialogue and engaging with all stakeholders irrespective of class, religious, philosophical and political differences or literacy.

Collaboration with Dicastery of Promoting Human Development through Catholic Sisters Program from May 2023: A section of the Dicastery deals specifically with issues concerning migrants, refugees, victims of slave trade and human trafficking, giving necessary attention to issues pertaining to the needs of those who are forced to abandon their countries or those who are without one. Therefore, we JMJs are invited for African Regional webinar series on training volunteers by the Catholic Sisters Project to Share and Learn from Each Other the Best Practices by the sisters from the grass roots and then to express their concerns and insights to build a better fraternal world.

As we conclude, we the Mission/ JPIC Coordination team is thankful to God and the General, Provincial and Regional teams for the encouragement and timely enlightenment to take this responsibility forward in an effective and productive way.



An Exciting Encounter

Sr. MARY KARICKAKUNNEL
Cong. of JMJ Generalate, Rome

On 10 June 2023, I had a unique opportunity to visit Barbara Skorupa, a Polish-born specialist in Pop-art, lives in Cologne, who portrayed a picture of Servant of God Mary Glowrey for an exhibition – **‘Große Frauen des Glaubens’ (Great Women of Faith)** – inspired by an “inner voice”. When Ms. Fiona Power, the Curator of Mary Glowrey Museum, Melbourne has informed me about Barbara’s work and her visit to the Museum in February 2023, I scarcely imagined that I will have a chance of meeting her. While in Germany, I took it as a privilege to visit her at her home in Cologne. God allows things to happen!

Barbara says, portraying objects in nature was her initial focus but something extraordinary happened in 2013, as she was walking on the streets of Cologne and captured the attention of the poster of a film star which attracts many in the modern world. She felt stirred to draw the pictures of holy women and display to the world in contrast to the present trend. Thus, she embraced a new direction in her career; she began with St. Barbara, her own patron saint, St. Theresa of Lisieux and St. Edith Stein and reflected what next.

Barbara states, at this instant she had an intuition urging her to think of other holy women who are not yet canonized but lived a holy life. She began the “google search” and found a small article in English with the picture of Mary Glowrey in her young age. Even though, she never heard of Mary Glowrey earlier, she felt it was the grace of God and inspiration of the Holy Spirit to include her portrait among the first 30 persons in the exhibition.

Barbara has created over 100 portraits of extraordinary women who played an important role, who are beacons for all in existential search and longing for God, who can provide radiant connection with God in the midst of our lives. Her portraits are created through a careful process: she begins with a photo of the woman, reads about her subject, deepens her understanding and empathy for her. Then she decides about the background colour, picture design and other details. She had the first exhibition in 2015 at San Maria Magdalena Chapel in Cologne and then in 2016 and 2023 at Uberwasserkirche, the oldest Church in the German city of Münster. She will have another exhibition in Germany in a few months.

May the Lord bless the skilful hands of Barbara to bring many souls closer to God through her artistic abilities! May the holiness of Mary Glowrey be known to the people around the world through the endeavours of such great persons!

136th Birthday of Sr. Mary Glowrey, the Servant of God on 23 June 2023.
With fondest memories we wish you a Happy Birthday!



The Fundamental Question: Journeying Together

A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys together:” How is this “journeying together” happening today in our Congregation and the Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “journeying together”?

“By walking together, and reflecting together on the path taken, the Congregation / Church will be able to learn from what she will be experiencing, which processes can help her to live communion, to realize participation, to open herself to the mission.”



Significant Aspects of “Lived Synodality” (PD, 30).

This Synod poses the following fundamental question: A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys together.” How is this “journeying together” happening today in your local Communities / local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “journeying together”? (PD, 26)

In responding to this question, we are invited to:

- Recall our experiences: What experiences of our local Communities and local Church does this question call to mind?
- Re-read these experiences in greater depth: What joys did they bring? What difficulties and obstacles have they encountered? What wounds did they reveal? What insights have they elicited?

- Gather the fruits to share: Where in these experiences does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound? What is the Spirit asking of us? What are the points to be confirmed, the prospects for change, the steps to be taken? Where do we register a consensus? What paths are opening up for our Communities, Congregation and the Church?

Lived Synodality – Ten Themes

As a way to help us understand what “lived synodality” means, ten themes are named that can help us become a *Listening Congregation / Church* that journeys together (PD, 30).

The 10 Themes help us explore the highlights and significant aspects of “Lived Synodality”

1. Journeying Together: (Preparatory Document, nos. 1, 9, 20; Vademecum nos. 1.3, 1.4, 5.3)

- In the Church and in society we are side by side on the same road.
- A truly synodal Church walks together, side by side, along the same road, towards renewal in the Spirit and the good of all people.
- Journeying together requires great commitment to listen to the voices of all who make up the People of God, but especially those who have often been marginalized, and the openness to discern the path forward that prophetically renews and enlivens.

2. Listening: (Preparatory Document, no. 26, 30; Vademecum, nos. 1.5, 5.3)

Listening is the first step, but it requires an open mind and heart, without prejudice.

- The synodal process necessitates that we, as the People of God, first listen with an open heart and open mind to where the Spirit is calling us and discern to whom we are needing to listen and what steps need to be taken to more fully live out our mission.

- Lived synodality is only possible through the approach of a listening Church, open to gathering and reflecting on the lived experiences of all its members, including making space for those often excluded and discarded: women, youth, victims of sexual abuse, and the poor and vulnerable.

3. Speaking Out: (Preparatory Document, no. 30; Vademecum, nos. 2.3, 5.3)

- All are invited to speak with courage and parrhesia, that is, in freedom, truth, and charity.
- Synodal dialogue insists on the open and honest contributions of all the People of God. Both in speaking and listening a deep sense of courage and openness must be present to welcome all that the Spirit may bring forth.
- Courage must also be the foundation for the process by which the People of God discern and dialogue towards clarity, welcoming all contributions and working together to reveal the truth of the Spirit.

4. Celebration: (Preparatory Document, no. 30, Vademecum, 5.3)

- “Walking together” is only possible if it is based on communal listening to the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist.
- Journeying together is only possible if rooted in the Church’s communal listening to the Gospel and the celebration of the Eucharist.
- A synodal Religious Community / Church discerns how prayer and liturgical celebration inspires and empowers the community’s active participation in our communal mission.

5. Sharing Responsibility for Our Common Mission

(Preparatory Document, nos. 20, 27, 30; Vademecum, no. 5.3)

- Synodality is at the service of the mission of the Church, in which all members are called to participate.
- The synodal process calls each member of the People of God to equally participate and take responsibility for the method of listening and dialogue being called for by the Spirit. The

participation of each member of the faithful is required to further the mission of the Church.

- Just as Jesus sends the apostles and the crowd out, so too, each member of the faithful is invited to live out a synodality that listens to the needs of the community and engages courageously in the work of the Spirit at work in the world.

6. Dialogue in Church and Society: (Preparatory Document, nos. 23, 28, 29, 30; Vademecum, no. 5.3)

- Dialogue requires perseverance and patience, but it also enables mutual understanding.
- The synodal process consists of the invitation and experience of encounter with the larger community of the People of God, embracing dialogue with those outside both our faith and cultural community, with those of different faith traditions, and with the entire human family to promote the flourishing of all.
- The call to “journey together” invites us to enter into relationships of listening and dialogue that engage shared and different realities, experiences of suffering and joy, to promote collaboration and foster the work of the Spirit.

7. Ecumenism - with the other Christian denominations: (Preparatory Document, nos. 29, 30; Vademecum, no. 5.3)

- The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one baptism, has a special place in the synodal journey.
- As we walk together on our synodal journey, the fruits of dialogue with and between our brothers and sisters of different Christian denominations can help us to see the Spirit at work in the world.
- A listening Community / Church is open to and invites collaboration with those from differing Christian denominations as we walk together towards unity within diversity.





8. Authority and Participation: (Preparatory Document, nos. 1, 30; Vademecum, no. 5.3)

- A synodal Church is a participatory and co-responsible Church.
- The Synod calls the People of God, in all their diversity, to embark on a journey together toward a common mission to witness to the love of God at work in the world.
- A synodal Church recognizes the call of God to foster co-responsibility in pursuit of the mission. The People of God must examine, together, how authority is exercised within the Community / Church and what practices of teamwork can be taken to better promote the unity of the diverse people of faith.

9. Discerning and Deciding: (Preparatory Document, nos. 26, 30; Vademecum, nos. 2.3, 5.3)

- In a synodal style we make decisions through discernment of what the Holy Spirit is saying through our whole community.
- The synodal path is not only one of listening but also one of discernment that invites us to “reread” the experiences brought forth in our listening to discover joys and challenges, insights and opportunities.
- Journeying together calls the Church out of attitudes of complacency and towards an openness to listen, discern, and dialogue with the community towards a consensus that arises from the Spirit and points the People of God toward our mission

10. Forming Ourselves in Synodality: (Preparatory Document, nos. 25, 30; Vademecum, nos. 1.2, 5.3)

- Synodality entails receptivity to change, formation, and on-going learning. How does our Church / Community form people to be more capable of “walking together,” listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue?
- Synodality must be lived and adapted into the local context that engages all in a method of being Church that is guided by the Spirit and responsive to the reality of the world it exists within.
- The synodal path is one that is guided by the Gospel and grounded in Tradition and requires the equal participation of all those in the People of God who participate in the mission of the Church to together, listen and discern the work of the Spirit within the world.


Resource links:

Synod 2023 Preparatory Document

Synod 2023 Vademecum




It's time to listen to...
What God is telling us...



Spirituality, Discernment
and Spiritual conversation



Journey together with
those at the Peripheries



Journeying together with
Women, Youth and Children



Safeguarding
our Common Home

**What God expects from the
She-Wolves in the third millennium
is to walk on the path of Synodal Solidarity ...**

**Our “journeying together” is, in fact,
what most effectively enacts and manifests the nature of
the Church as the pilgrim and missionary People of God.**