

Good Shepherd News

No. 181 November 2005

Asia -Pacific Circle Meeting in Macau

The Good Shepherd Sisters in China District welcome the members of the General Leadership Team, Sisters Armelle Dehennault and Sister Sabina Pathrose, and the unit leaders of the Asia-Pacific Circle for their meeting in Macau on October 2-7, 2005.

The creation of an Asia-Pacific Circle was one of the fruits of the meeting of Provincials of Asia-Pacific region in Indonesia in November 2004. The Provincials will meet regularly for better networking and support.

Sister Anne Dalton of Australia, Sr. Catherina Wahyuningsih of Indonesia, Sister Anita Fernando of Sri Lanka and Sister Carmelita Cruz of the Philippines arrived on Sept. 29 and 30th in Hong Kong. Sisters Armelle, Sabina and Bridget Pailey of India arrived on the 1st of October. Sisters Agnes Yamamoto of Japan, Susan Chia of Singapore and Ramani Silva of Korea went straight to Macau.

We are very happy to welcome



(Standing, left to right) Srs. Anne Dalton, Australia, Bridget Pailey India, Sabina Pathrose, Armelle Dehennault, Congregational (Leadership Team) Susan Chia, Singapore/Malaysia, Anita Fernando, Sri Lanka/Pakistan; Carmelita Cruz, Philippines; Agnes Yamamoto, Japan; (seated) Bernadette Yuen, China District; Ramani Silva, East Asia; and Catharina Wahyuningsih, Indonesia.

them, to hear stories about our Sisters, and bring them around Hong Kong. On the Feast of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and the Celebration of China National Day they experienced "Yum Cha" Chinese style of breakfast.

After lunch they took the ferry boat to Macau. It must have

been a happy journey. We prayed for a grace-filled, fruitful meeting. The agenda during the meeting included restructuring, networking, especially on work for migrants.

The visit of our Sisters to our District, truly strengthens the internationality and networking of our Good Shepherd family.

**Sr. Mary Aida Casambre
Hongkong**

RIMOA Meeting in Kenya

Good Shepherd Sisters in RIMOA (Réseau Îles, Moyen Orient, Afrique) met in Nairobi, Kenya, November 14-22, 2005.

All the unit leaders along with 1-3 sisters with leadership potential in Africa, the Isles and Middle East participated in the activity.

The meeting included a workshop on 'leadership' facilitated by Sr. Honorine Yamba, SND, and a process on restructuring led by the Congregational Leadership Team. The gathering was held at the Istituto Dimesse di Padua in Nairobi.

(Visit our website's Photo Album)

**Sr. Helene Hayes, RGS,
PhD writes about**

**ZEAL AND THE FACE
OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING
A Haunting Cry
in our Time**

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Letters LETTERS Letters

(The following are letters received by Sr. Brigid Lawlor regarding the letter she and the Congregational Leadership Team sent to Ambassador Ronald Spogli on Sept 24, 2005. The article was published in GSN 180, October edition.)

IMPORTANT WORK

Thank you for your letter of Sept. 24. I would like to commend the Sisters of the Good Shepherd for all the important work you are doing, both on a world-wide basis with women and children, and in response to Hurricane Katrina. The Katrina disaster has resulted in an outpouring of help and goodwill from all over the world, and the response from Italian citizens has been tremendous.

I view the ability of Americans, both here and abroad, to voice their opposition to US policy as a fundamental strength of our democracy. While I do not share your bleak assessment of the situation in Iraq, I think we both agree that the Iraqi people deserve a future of peace, prosperity and freedom from tyranny and terror. As President Bush has made clear, any withdrawal of US troops will be done in coordination with Iraqi government and our coalition partners, and in a time frame that will not jeopardize Iraq's security and stability.

I send you my best wishes as you continue to work in Rome, and I appreciate your offer of prayers,

Sincerely
Ronald Spogli
Ambassador, Embassy of the
United States of America
Italy
Sept. 30, 2005

IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE IRAQI PEOPLE

It is with great emotion that we have read the letter that you have addressed, in the name of our Congregation, to the American Ambassador in Italy, Mr. Ronald Spogli, in solidarity with the Iraqi people.

Although we wish to express our deep thanks to you for your support to our brothers (and sisters) in Iraq, and to the Iraqi families who are spread all over the world, and especially in Syria, I wish to tell you how proud we are of our Congregation. Greetings from Damascus.

Sisters Etienne, Thérèse, Lolita and Marie Claude

GRATITUDE

We are Iraqi family living in the Good Shepherd convent (in the Shelter). The sisters here share with us, your Wonderful message that you sent to the Ameri-

can Ambassador, We are grateful to you and to the all Sisters who work with you.

God bless you All.

(These words are from our children: My heart is broken, but people like you could keep us smiling)

God of Peace be with you.

We are a group of Iraqi people who fled our country to go to Syria. We heard from our Good Shepherd Sisters about the letter you sent to the US Ambassador in Rome, concerning the situations of Iraqis out of Iraq.

We would like to thank you for what you did and hope that you continue your efforts for humanity. Sister, we are suffering. We need help for our children ...!

May God bless and keep you.

Group of Iraqi families

November 21: Presentation of Mary



Mary responded in openness to the Spirit giving herself totally to the person and mission of Jesus. (Const 9)

"I confirm and renew with my whole heart": these are the words that we pronounce aloud on the Feast of the Presentation, in union with Mary's self offering. This is not merely an outward ceremony: it is an act of the heart, sincere and without limits...

— **St. Mary Euphrasia, Conference 17**

Australia/Aotearoa /New Zealand's new Leadership Team



From left, Srs. Jan Ryan, Joan Murphy, Caroline Price, Anne Manning and Pamela Molony, new province leader, were elected during the Provincial Chapter held this month.

Contemplative Corner

Province of Austria-Switzerland

Complementarity in Innsbruck

The Contemplatives of the Austria-Switzerland Province welcomes Sr. Elena Jalop from the Philippine Province who arrived on June 6, 2005. Sr. Elena is the fourth CGS member of the community.

Our gratitude goes to the Philippine Province and the Contemplatives of Cebu City who generously shared Sr. Elena for the missions. The CGS of Austria-Switzerland live in complementarity with

one Apostolic Sister, Sr. Regina Exenberger, the fifth member of the community.

We welcome any one who wish to join us from other lands. We are sorry that Sr. Tresina from India has not yet come. At present, Sr. Elena is taking up German language course in Innsbruck. She is enjoying her studies. We ask our Shepherd God and our dear Mother Foundress to send us



The Sisters and their friends

good and solid vocations to our Congregation especially to our Province. As we pray for the Works of our Apostolic Sisters we also keep deep in our hearts the NGO prayer Network that we may truly be "life bearers with and for the poor of the world".

**Good Shepherd sisters
Innsbruck**

Province of India/Nepal: CGS Growth and solidarity with RGS

Our presence in India began in the year 1878 during the time of Mother Mary of the Visitation, and has continued in Bangalore up to this day (127years) with the exception of a few CGS's seven years' stay in Trissur, Kerala (1994-2000)

In response to the call of Vatican II and our Chapter directives, a process of change in our life began. While implementing these changes, the essential elements of our mission were maintained.

CGS growth and solidarity with RGS

The efforts at the Generalate, the Chapters, General assemblies, the participation with the apostolic sisters, had bought us in touch with our apostolic sisters and the contemplatives of other Provinces. In our Province, the sharing about the apostolate and ministries of our apostolic sisters, brought us very close to one another. A meet-



From left, Sr. Brigid, Sr. Lilly

ing that took place in Bangalore in 2001 which brought CGS from East Asia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka to India was an enriching experience.

One of our sisters, Sr. Lilly Kunnanattu, returned to our community after three years of her live-in experience in Korea. Our Inter-Province relationship has brought great solidarity among us and has strengthened us. Three sisters from Korea had come here to attend the Theology course. Our sisters Jacqueline Maria, and Agnes com-

pleted their theology course, and at present Srs. Bridget and Lilly are attending the same.

As a community we have been enriched by the regular sermons/ reflections given by the Jesuits and monthly talks by Benedictine Fathers on various topics. Our weekly reflection/sharing of the Word of God (Lectio Divina) leading to resolution and practice of a point has enabled us to grow as a community.

CGS Presence and its impact in our Millennium

While carrying on some of the traditional services such as sewing, embroidery work, host (altar bread) preparation, candle making etc., we had decided to have exposition daily from 8.30am -6 pm. This has drawn many RGS and the laity to our chapel for prayer. In silence and solitude, they commune with God, find solace and peace. Laity from all walks of life knock at our door asking for prayers.

We continue to pray God to send us more vocations.

Sector of Senegal: Vocation Camp

As part of strengthening our campaign to promote vocations and to accompany those who are interested to join our congregation, we, the Good Shepherd Sisters in Senegal, organize vocation camps every year.

Two camps were held this year. The first, held on July 7-8, was participated in by the younger ones, those who are in elementary level. Thirteen girls participated. The other camp, held on August 29- September 1, was for those in high school and college levels, 16-22 years old. Eleven young ladies came. Both camps were held in Thies, our first community in Senegal.

The theme chosen for the camp for the younger ones was "Stay With Us, Lord". It was organized by Sisters Carmela Rodriguez, Yvonne Bambara and Euphrasie Farag. The young girls, showed enthusiasm as they actively participated in all the activities. They expressed their appreciation for the camp and wished to continue their participation in future activities.

The camp for the older ones was organized by the sisters from the different communities: Sr. Yvonne Bambara (Thies community), Sr. Brigitte Ndione, (Dakar community) and Sisters Juanita Daño and Jeanne Ndene (Mbour community). The girls came from the different regions of Senegal.

The theme for this year: "Eucharist is the Source of our Vocation" was chosen in line with the universal church's celebration of the Year of the Eucharist. The sub themes were: 1st day- "Different parts of the Eucharist"; 2nd day – "The Word of God and the Eucharist"; 3rd

day – "Eucharist is the Source of Solidarity and Communion" and, 4th day – "Eucharist and Mission."

The four day camp was filled with activities, joy, sharing of responsibilities and sharing of experiences. The participants enthusiastically and untiringly participated in all the activities. Many talents were discovered and the participants creativity came to surface. Every one was enriched by the experience.

The four-day event helped one of the aspirants, Philomene Thiaw from Mbour, to decide to

begin the Pre- Novitiate program this year. The other participants said, the camp enhanced their desire to embrace religious life and encouraged them to nourish their vocation as they continue with their discernment while studying and while waiting for the right time to join the congregation.

The camp concluded with the celebration of the Liturgy followed by sharing of meals and recreation. It was indeed a spirit-filled gathering.

Sr. Juanita Daño, RGS

PAEDAC: A counseling center

As the Pastoral year 2005-2006 is about to begin here in Senegal, we would like to share with you about PAEDAC (Point d'Accueil d'Ecoute et d'Accompagnement). This is a counselling center located in the heart of Mbour (beside the Parish Church), 90 kilometers south of the capital Dakar.

PAEDAC is a structure created in December 2003 as an extension of PARI-Dakar (a center that responds to the needs of refugees). Upon the request of the Bishop of Dakar, Sr. Nirmala Abeyashinga voluntarily animated the team with four other lay people coming from the pastoral team and who worked on a volunteer basis. When Sr. Nirmala left for her new mission in Mauritius in 2004, Sr. Yolande Roy took responsibility of the center.

The initial funds came from the personal purse of Hermine and Marliese Borsh, two good-hearted lay women from Ger-

many. Kindermissionwerk of Aachen, Germany also helped fund the project.


The initial objective in putting up this counselling center was to respond to the immediate needs of any person who needs to be welcomed, to be listened to and to be accompanied as they try to find solutions to their problems. The center offers them moral and spiritual support.

During its first year of service, the center welcomed and received many demands such as basic needs for the extremely poor people in the city of Mbour and some nearby villages. As days passed, PAEDAC extended its services and welcomed different sort of problems that included disintegration of family life, unemployment, illiteracy, people leaving the villages to seek employment and helping persons who are infected with HIV-AIDS.

Often times we received requests for school supplies, medical assistance for those who are sick, transportation for the prisoners who just left the prison and wished to go back to their place of origin, tuition fees for elementary and high school students, micro-projects and many others.

PAEDAC collaborates with our

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PERPETUAL VOWS

Sr. Ma. Juanita Daño, missionary to Senegal, makes her final profession of vows at the Good Shepherd Convent, Cebu City, Philippines on June 4, 2005.
(Visit our website's Photo Album)

In July 1991, Mt. Pinatubo, a volcano that was dormant for 600 years, in the province of Zambales in Central Luzon of the Philippines, suddenly erupted. Tons of volcanic ash (lahar) rained down, submerging many towns almost up to the roof tops. Besides the terrible destruction suffered by the townspeople and the indigenous tribes living on the slopes, another unexpected effect of the

Philippines

Reaching out to the women in the 'City of Angels'



Many of them come from provinces in the south of the country.

Today, Sr. Natividad continues to go every week, together with one or two sisters. During the weekly gatherings, about 40-50 women are able to attend the Sisters' simple lessons on faith and morals. Later in the morning, another group gets the same lesson. So about 100 women are reached every week. Those who wish to have individual counseling are seen by another Sister in a private area.

Christmas is the high point of the year and the sisters always try to prepare a party and little gifts for each one present. More sisters are able to volunteer for the annual Christmas party and they also help out in leading the singing which the girls enjoy. Photos show some of the activities during the Christmas party last year.



Srs. Frances Therese Sunga, Jane Pineda, Natividad Banaag, Carmelita Cruz and Lea Comia.

eruption was the sudden evacuation of the American military personnel of Clark Air Base in Pampanga.

The Good Shepherd Sisters of Manila decided to look into the situation of the bar girls working in the night clubs of Angeles city and what could be done for them after the departure of the American soldiers. They found a number of girls eager for counseling and religious instruction. From then on, two or three Sisters volunteered to take turns going once a week to meet with the girls who wanted to see them. This meant a 1½ hour drive each way from Manila. They met in whatever room was available in the government hygiene clinic, often having to clean the room themselves before they could even sit down. These informal meetings went on for several years until the Sisters obtained permission from the Mayor of Angeles City to construct a counseling center close to the Hygiene Clinic where all the girls working in the night clubs had their weekly check-up to get a

clearance to continue working. The Center was built and has been in operation since 1997. Initiated by two former Provincial Superiors, Sr. Natividad Banaag, RGS and Sr. Guadalupe Bautista, RGS, the Center offers counseling services and spiritual and moral formation every week. Girls who desire to leave the flesh trade are helped to find other means of livelihood. Most of these women were lured to the night clubs because of economic needs and dire poverty.

Angeles City, literally "City of Angels", has often been called "Sin City" because of the proliferation of bars and night clubs and the rampant prostitution going on. The Angeles "apostolate" is but a tiny attempt to reach out to women and girls who seem to have no means of survival except to sell their bodies. Hopefully, the Sisters' kindly presence and non-judgmental help enable these women to experience the Good Shepherd's healing love and eventually lead them out of the morass of prostitution.

Sr. Mary James Wilson

Profession of Vows in Hungary



Sr. Rojkó Ildikó makes her First Profession of Vows in Budapest, Hungary on October 22, 2005.

(Visit our website's Photo Album)

(The following is an excerpt from an article published in the Palermo Daily, "La Sicilia" on September 25, 2005.)

At Torretta (outskirt of Palermo, Sicily) a big building for the disabled and elderly people is expected to be built soon. This is possible because of the generosity of volunteers, politicians but above all as an initiative of the Good Shepherd Onlus Association of Palermo, headed by Ms. Maria Rita Ribaudò.

Province of Italy

A centre for Disabled and Elderly at Torretta

The project Oasi Arcobaleno (Rainbow Oasis) was presented to the authorities Sept. 24, 2005 by Sr. Juliana Carollo of the Good Shepherd Centre in Via Riserva Reale 7. The new three-floor building is meant to be a residential centre that caters to 10 persons with disability and 10 elderly ones, with a maximum of 40 persons per day.

Space is also ensured for in-service training, occupational therapy and agriculture. A multidisciplinary team of doctors, social workers, therapists, nurses, child-care workers, trainers and a range of rehabilitation therapies are included in the programme.

It is a huge project which, hopefully, will be launched within two years. The construction of the building designed by Architect Michela Pergolizzi will start before the end of 2005. The social project is signed by Anna Maria Pepi, Director of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Palermo.

This project was conceived as early as 1999 when the Association of the Good Shepherd purchased the land at a good price from Oasis Centre when it went bankrupt. Now the goal is to render the concept of "loving one's neighbor" visible and concrete. It fits with the Good Shepherd identity. Having overcome the preliminary procedures, one of the

News from Ivory Coast

We are very happy over the visit of Sr. Elaine Basinger, member of our Congregational Leadership Team. It was very short but very comforting! The political situation remains very fuzzy, and people of Ivory Coast continue to suffer. It seems that all is quiet and streets are busy during the day. But, at night it is necessary to stay in one's house so as not to be attacked! The insecurity reigns and a number of religious communities have been visited by bandits who take advantage of the situation to rob and sometimes to attack...

We are fortunate to be in a quiet enough district, and under a guard's constant surveillance. Our vicar himself and other priests had been victims of such bandits. We remain prudent, but we manage to lead normally our activities: the health centers are full of patients with very difficult cases. Others go to the parish to attend courses on literacy, others go to the house where we receive girls and women of the district to give them courses on embroidery.

What else can we tell you? That we live from day to day, without thinking too much that we should leave, but trying to place everything in the hands of the Lord!

- Sr. Renée Mocci

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Profession of Vows in Medellin

With joy and gratitude we joined our two young novices, YOLANDA ARBOLEDA SALAZAR, contemplative, and DIANA PATRICIA DUQUE GIRALDO, apostolic, who pronounced their first vows last July 31, 2005.

It was a very solemn ceremony and the families and friends of the newly professed were so touched that they did not want to miss any detail of the beautiful profession mass.

The Eucharist was presided over by Fr. Humberto Duque Giraldo, brother of Sr. Diana Patricia.

God continues to call and to



move the hearts of young people to commit themselves to His mission of love. And the dream of our Mother Foundress to keep alive the two branches of our Congregation continues to be made possible through the ardent listening of these two young women.



From left, Sr. Yolanda and Sr. Diana Patricia
(Visit our website's Photo Album)

ZEAL AND THE FACE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: A HAUNTING CRY IN OUR TIME

By Helene Hayes, RGS, PhD

The specific mission of our Congregation comes right out of the New Testament story of the Good Shepherd who leaves the 99 well-tended sheep to go in search of the "lost one". Over our 170 year-history and in each of the 67 countries where we are located, we have tried to discern ever anew in each era and culture, who the "lost ones" are; the poor, the marginalized, the ostracized, those wounded by life and excluded from full participation.

This mission is fueled by one simple, bedrock idea; that every human person is sacred. This core Good Shepherd value is captured in our identifying motto, "One person is of more value than a world". Our mission calls us to stand with those who are in some way "lost"; the powerless, those who do not count in society, those who are the 'non-persons' of our day. Our 4th vow of zeal defines us as existing for



Sr. Helene

dream together on behalf of a suffering humanity". In particular, it spoke of "the poor becoming poorer and the rich richer, that women and children are exploited and trafficked; and that migrants, refugees, indigenous people, Dalits, and many others are being excluded and marginalized." In response, the Delegates, on behalf of all of us, pledged themselves "to be present at the margins; to make a preferential option for the poor by giving priority to women and children who are exploited and

reduced the possibility that the interviews would re-traumatize the women. (The U.S. research sample is progressing at this moment.) The variables studied were the women's "social and emotional adjustment", "life before trafficking", "the experience of being trafficked", and "life after trafficking". I used two research instruments; a structured interview of trafficked women and a structured interview of Key Informants or service providers that asked questions similar to the trafficked women's questionnaire. However, several questions were added that addressed "best Practices" in terms of treatment, and legal and policy relevant issues specific to their countries. In each location I was accompanied by a sister or staff member who knew the women, knew the primary language that the women spoke, and also knew English so that she could act as my interpreter.

In Sri Lanka, I interviewed six women in a female prison where one of the sisters does outreach work and four young women from three NGO programs that serve trafficked women. Two of these programs were run by Good Shepherd sisters.

In Thailand, I interviewed five Thai trafficked women from our Good Shepherd Program located in a large seaside resort area and "foreign tourist Mecca".

In Korea, I interviewed five Russian women who had been trafficked into Seoul. Two Korean Good Shepherd Sisters run this residential program.

In the Philippines, I interviewed ten Philippine trafficked women and adolescents from six Good Shepherd programs located in Quezon City, Caloocan City, Angeles City, General Santos City, Batangas City and Cebu.

In Belgium, five women were interviewed in programs sponsored by the "Le Nid" Movement

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"Our mission calls us to stand with those who are in some way "lost"; the powerless, those who do not count in society, those who are the 'non-persons' of our day. "

these others, the ones that Jesus, the Good Shepherd said He knew, that He called by name, that He loved, and for whom He laid down His life. There is a searing clarity about our Good Shepherd mission and its driving force, our 4th vow of zeal. This mission places the individual who is at risk or in any way excluded at the heart of our ministries.

Not surprisingly, the issue of human trafficking emerged as a top priority in our 2003 General Chapter Direction Statement that guides the entire Congregation for the next six years. Another way of describing a Direction Statement is to speak of it as a means of "dreaming our best

trafficked."

My own involvement in the human trafficking issue has led me to design and carry out a research project on behalf of the Congregation that took me to Sri Lanka, Thailand, Korea, the Philippines, Belgium, Paris, Milan and Palermo to interview trafficked woman. I chose these specific countries in Southeast Asia and Europe because Good Shepherd Sisters are already involved and have relationships with women who have been trafficked in each of these locations either in our own Good Shepherd programs or other programs serving trafficked women. This process facilitated my access to trafficked women and

ZEAL...

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where Good Shepherd Sisters volunteer and where they run an emergency shelter for trafficked women. The women had been trafficked in from Romania and Albania.

In Paris, eight women were interviewed at a residential program run by a religious community that several Good Shepherd Sisters were familiar with because of their own outreach work to trafficked women.. Two other women were interviewed in Strausberg by a Good Shepherd Sister involved in the "Le Nid" Movement. The trafficked women were from Sierra Leon, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Moldavia and the Czech Republic.

In Italy, five trafficked women were interviewed in Milan from a Good Shepherd Residential program that works in collaboration with Caritas Ambrosia. In Sicily, at a Good Shepherd Residential program, five women who had been trafficked were also interviewed. The women were from Nigeria, Romania, Belarus, Bulgaria and Moldavia.

Although I have not yet analyzed the data nor completed the interviews of women trafficked into the United States, I can share the responses of some of the women on two questions about their experience:

"Human trafficking is a stark, haunting cry in our time that matters deeply and must be answered. "

What was the hardest part of being trafficked?

"Being a prostitute, having no choice,"
"I was 11 years old when they took me,"
"This was my life, what right did they have to take it?"
"It is impossible to forget what I have been through,"
"I complied because I did not want to die,"
"The violence of the customers,"
"I am very bitter, no girl goes into

this on her own, a hatred grew within me,"
"I must drink before I do this, if not drunk, I cannot do,"
"Being badly beaten,"
"They looked at us as if we were bad women."

What was your greatest fear during the time you were trafficked?

"That I would be killed by a customer,"
"That the customers would get violent,"
"That all my dreams would vanish,"
"Getting AIDS and STDs,"

"One of the girls jumped from a building and died, and I envied her,"
"That I would lose my mind,"
"That what they did to others, they would do to me,"
"I was afraid most of sadistic clients,"
"That they would kill me or tell my parents what I was doing."

The last question asked the women what their experience of the interview was. Many said that it was difficult to go back

there in memory but if it could help one girl not to experience what they had been through, it was worth it. Another woman, when answering this question said of her experience of being trafficked: "It was painful. I accept that it happened. I survived. And I struggle every day."

The goal of this research is to publish a book which places the voices of these trafficked women, the world's most silent, dispossessed and nameless of women, at its center. Carefully rendered research can make it difficult for governments and individuals to avoid facing this harrowing, global human rights violation. Seeing trafficked women as full human beings can be the first step towards a needed shift in consciousness and conscience.

What is at stake in the issue of human trafficking in a very stark way is our core, bedrock belief that every human person is of infinite worth and dignity, not a commodity to be bought and sold for profit in the underground marketplace. Martin Luther King Jr. reminds us that "our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter". Human trafficking is a stark, haunting cry in our time that matters deeply and must be answered.

First Profession of Vows in Sri Lanka/Pakistan



From left, Sr. Surani Karawgoda, Sr. Uzma Inayat (Pakistani) and Sr. Princy Jayamanna pronounced their First Vows at the Good Shepherd Convent Chapel, Nayakakanda, Sri Lanka on October, 22, 2005. (Visit our website's Photo Album)

Ethiopia: Saving and Credit Association launched

Woman Empowerment Project, a savings and credit program was launched recently in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This development is in line with the new project agreement signed by the City Government of Addis Ababa — Social and Civil Affairs Bureau on February 11, 2005.

The project aims to help the mothers of the children who are sponsored for education at Good Shepherd Sisters Center (GSSC). Two hundred women have been registered and up to 300 homes were visited prior to the registration. During the registration, women had to pay Birr 3.00 and commenced savings immediately as policy states that a woman must have saved 20 per cent of the amount she proposes to borrow. The women are formed in groups of 20 and the members have to complete a five-day Basic Business Skills Training Course.

The Basic Business Skills Training course includes topics on:

- Definition of Poverty
- What do I want to Achieve in my Life?
- What does being a business woman mean?
- Do I want my business to grow?
- Identifying business ideas
- The business environment
- Problems in the business environment—Marketing, Customer's needs, improving products, place, price, advertising
- Planning—costs, investment, labor cost, running costs, price setting and profit calculation
- Managing Business- Record Keeping
- Managing resources.. re-



source utilization, planning, time utilization, improving knowledge and need for rest.

- Basic health Education
- Basic Gender Trainings

Sr. Clemencia Flora, a Good Shepherd Sister from the Philippines, designed the program in its many phases and stages and sees its implementation with the help of two Ethiopia staff, Zemen Tadesse, community worker and Tigist Worku, savings and credit officer.

Sr. Clemencia is a firm believer in people helping themselves while Zemen and Tigist, both energetic and pro-

fessional in their fields are committed to the empowerment of people, particularly women.

Taken from "GSSC Women's Empowerment" June 2005



The Good Shepherd Sisters have been working in Ethiopia since 1971. The community in Ethiopia is an international group of 12 sisters from Ethiopia, United States of America, Ireland, Philippines, India and Indonesia. We have three communities and five project sites—3 in Addis Ababa and 2 in Wolayta Soddo.

Employment Creation Program

The program is composed of two parts—formation of two credit and saving associations each having 40 women members and the building of the capability of another 120 women so as to be able to access credit at a later date.

This program is challenging and presently we are exploring possibilities of a community-based literacy and innumeracy program.

The government has its rules and regulations with regard to the forming of associations and the giving of credit. These guidelines have to be known by the women and there must be agreement before the legalization of the association. It is only after this that the women can have access to credit. Study and discussion of the Association rules, election of Committee members are essential to the program.

To ensure the sustainability of the group, much care and attention must be given to group dynamics and an understanding of the following: cooperation vs. competition, participation vs. Withdrawing, interest vs. indifference and unity vs. division.

Province of India/Nepal: **Legal Empowerment Process**

Out of work...Into school

About four million child-workers, never enjoy their rights to education, health, childhood, life... in a country whose Constitution guarantees compulsory primary education as a fundamental rights.

Education in Andhra Pradesh is a picture in contrasts. The State is known both for its many successful experiments in the field of education, but also has a poor literacy level. Andhra has been ranked 22nd among States/Union Territories of India as far as overall literacy is concerned and 29th in the case of literacy of Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribe. Still, Andhra Pradesh has the lowest literacy rate (61.11%) among the four southern states of the country (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu).

In the year 2000, the Good Shepherd Sisters at Mangalagiri and Amaravathi, Andhra Pradesh, started focusing attention on the Rights of Children-- survival, protection, development and participation. Since Education is one of the fundamental rights of the child, we are making efforts to ensure that all children go to school. As part of that process, we started a Residential Bridge School for child laborers from the neighbouring villages. To date, about 1,400 children have been incorporated into the main stream of education. We continue our efforts in promoting children's rights by mobilising and motivating the community to take up this responsibility and help secure a bright future for the children.

Even though we are in the 3rd



The oath taking ceremony of children after the parliamentary elections towards self-governance is witnessed by the local Government personnel, in one of the villages in the outskirts of Bangalore.

millennium, the vulnerable and the voiceless, whether from the rural or urban areas, are denied their basic necessities, their access to information, and to education which will lead our people to liberation, to empowerment. It is the call of the hour for the Shepherdesses to look for alternative solutions and continue to challenge the corrupt system that devalues life.

Neighbourhood community networks

Grassroots participatory communities and network:

The children of today get prepared for political participation through a democratic process.

Neighbourhood Community Network towards self Governance, instills hope in a society that has failed to secure its people the socio-political-economic stability, and paves the way to the disadvantaged to participate in the decision making process, and to have access to information and infrastructure, which in turn redefines the scope of parliaments and other tools of governance. Parliaments should come to where people are, rather than make the people go to the parliaments. It should come to the grassroots, to places where people live.

This is the process that Sis-

ters, involved in the struggles of the marginalized at the grass root level, are at present concentrating on.

Grassroots Participatory Communities and their networks: A community that is empowering, liberating and healing, enables its members not only to decide on the choice of solutions proposed but also to see the problems together.

Children's parliament... towards self governance

Children are the future and if they are given a new understanding of governance and participatory concept we shall have a better world to live in. We will not have wars to fight, nor fear the Superpowers, neither store nuclear weapons to show one's strength that consume a larger portion of our yearly State/National budget.

The Children's parliaments consist of children 6 to 18 years, coming from 25 to 30 Neighbourhood families at the grassroots. As such there will be 3 to 4 parliaments in a Village, according to the population of the village. The elected representatives from each parliament of the village form the village parliament/Gram Sabha, representatives from Gram Sabhas to the Panchayath level parliament,

(Continued on page 12)

Province of India/Nepal

Nepal, a country situated at the foothills of the Himalayas is the mark of natural beauty, untouched by pollution. But the socio- economic- political scenario of the country does not promise a healthy future to the people, especially for women and young girls. The present political scenario has constrained the movements of the people. Girls are not sent to the schools in the villages. Most of them work in the field. They are sent to the cities and outside the country to work as domestic maids. Trafficking of girls is very common. Our response to the needs of these girls is gradually gaining momentum.

Our sisters live in a Village named 'Opportunity Village', the name was given based on the concept of providing opportunities for the young girls to learn and earn a livelihood. At present there are 15 girls who are undergoing trainings in various skills, such as, driving, tailoring, handicraft, etc.

Living in difficult situation in Nepal is a challenge to our sisters, but our commitment to the cause of the young girls and women continue to give meaning and purpose to strive towards



Girls at the Skill Development Centre

achieving our mission.

Floods in Mumbai, Maharashtra

Lives of more than 20 million people were disrupted, and thousands lost their lives, as heavy rains pounded Mumbai, the country's financial hub. Schools remained shut; people had to stay indoors for days together, unable to have access to food and water in time; roads were submerged; trains and flights were delayed; rubble, mounds of garbage and bloated animal carcasses were found floating in many areas. Water in some parts of Mumbai were knee-deep. Nearly 130,000 municipal workers tried their best to repair potholed roads, unclog sewers and restore electricity and drinking water.

The Community of our sisters in Andheri, Mumbai, was badly affected - Water entered the ground floor of the building; sisters who had gone out were stranded at the Railway Stations and in the buses throughout the night; they had to walk several miles in neck-deep waters to return home after 24 hours. It was a harrowing experience for them.

Most of the slums in the area were affected beyond recognition. Our sisters and the staff of the Anandini Slum Development plunged into relief work at once, and continue to assist the people in rehabilitation programs.

Jan Shakti Sanchalan, Garatola

Jan Shakti Sanchalan is Movement for People's Empowerment, striving to enable people towards self-reliance. In collaboration with HCDI (Holistic Child Development International), development activities in 15 villages are in progress. To name a few activities - Children's education, Boarding for children, Health education, Trainings, Dispensary, Grihini (Women's) training Centre, Self-Help Groups, Children's Group, Youth Group, farmers' Group, Pastoral Work. There are 300 children who are sponsored and another 300 are supported for their studies.

St. Euphrasia's Hostel for girls



Temporary shelter near Nagapattinam

was opened to give opportunity for better education for the tribal children living in remote villages. There are 30 girls studying in the Montfort School nearby.

Jan Samarth Sanchalan, Balaghat

Sisters in Balaghat work in 20 villages for the holistic development of the marginalized, especially the tribals. Women's groups in all the villages have gone ahead with Income Generating Programs; recently they started making leaf plates with the help of machines. They were also trained in preparing herbal medicines for common illnesses.

Under water-shed program, a pond and a dam were constructed by the people with 50% of the contribution from IGSS (Indo-German Social Service Scheme), this has enabled them to irrigate 150 acres of land and cultivate fish in the pond.

Market your Product...

At a Business conference two women were in deep conversation. A, being the MD of Trance National Cooperation and the other, B, being the Superior General of a Corporate body, a Religious Congregation.

A: Oh this product that we are expecting to release within 3 months is taking an enormous time and energy.....it is taking some shape. It must capture the Global Market, hit the top. What about you, what are your products like?

B: What are my products....my sisters.....my people... my being ...that can make a difference in the Global market.

Sr. Bridget Paily and Sisters Province of India-Nepal

INDIA...

(Continued from page 10)

thus follows block level, Taluk, District, State, National and finally the Global link. Each Parliament elects ministers for various works/programs and they take an oath to fulfill the given task and the process for the Neighbourhood parliament continues. They are exposed to discussion, reflection and analysis, identification of the problems and finding solutions creatively through alternatives. After the age of eighteen they merge into the Neighbourhood communities. They are guided by an ideology when decision making power is shared or decentralized to the various parliaments at the community level. This will enable the people to live with dignity, justice and integrity, ensuring life to the full.

SENEGAL... *(Continued from page 7)*

Lay Partners. The center has become the training ground for those who are trying to imbibe our charism. It strengthens our networking with other religious congregations, specifically Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (the congregation often

Good Shepherd News

December

Czech Republic, Indonesia,
Netherlands, Singapore/
Malaysia

Invitation

Please send articles, photos
with captions
for Good Shepherd News to:

REGINA KUIZON
Casa Generalizia,
Suore del Buon Pastore
Via Raffaello Sardiello 20
00165 Roma, Italia

Email: ginargs@buonpastoreint.org

MISSION

The Eudists celebrated Mass at the Good Shepherd Generalate on October 2 in thanksgiving for their forthcoming mission to the



Philippines. Shown in photo, from left, are Frs. Ron Bagley of the United States, Amadeo Pedrosa of Colombia and Pierre Marchand of France.

ITALY ... *(Continued from page 6)*

Commissions at the House of Commons, approved the project by allotting three and a half million euros.

Many friends and promoters of this initiative were present at its Presentation. A M.P. declared: "It is an initiative that deserves our support because it witnesses, in our social milieu, a means of alleviating the suffering of the poorest ones."

Various expression of encour-

agement were pronounced by the politicians present at the Presentation. Among others, the Minister of Regional Affairs said: "I promise you right now that I will guarantee all the support necessary for the realization of the project when it will pass on to the executive phase, that is, when it will start functioning. Also Mayor Davi remarked that; "this is a concrete and positive answer to occupational and social needs.

provides medicines), and government and non-governmental agencies. One Sister assures our presence in the local health center and initially accompanied several women who are engaged in prostitution, to get to know our work. Since our community in Mbour has no allocated funds yet to help sex workers who needed medical assistance, PAEDAC oftentimes responded.

Other PAEDAC activities: Literacy and Numeracy Program handled by our lay partners., awareness raising program regarding HIV-AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases provided by SIDA Service, tutorial lessons, conscientization regarding the risk of prostitution and value formation which is being integrated in Catechetics.

Oftentimes the needs and problems we try to respond to out-number the resources of the center. We do not give the impression that PAEDAC has the answer to all their problems. We made it clear that our first priority

is to welcome, to listen and to accompany. It tries to empower any person, regardless of race and religion, who happens to seek help from this centre. In reality the extreme poverty over rides all concerns.

As our resources are scarce, we hope to raise funds for the centre. We are hoping that this year the local church goers will share generously in helping those who are suffering and are marginalized.

Gratitude

The Good Shepherd Sisters of the Senegal Sector would like to express their deepest gratitude for the generosity of Sr. Yolande Roy who returned to her Province of Canada on October 11, 2005. Sr. Yolande spent 11 wonderful years in Senegal. She served as Sector Councilor for six years and Juniorate directress for nine years. We will miss her but we will continue in union with her in her new mission. Thank you and Good Luck Sr. Yolande!

Sr. Juanita Daño, RGS

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