
"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 450

'burning with love to heal the broken hearted'

On 08 Sep, 2016 the foundation of the **Cenacle Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (CSSH)** was erected as a *Pious Association* with a view to later becoming a *Religious Institute of Diocesan Rite*. This year we celebrate the 14th anniversary of that Association. Our hearts are overwhelmed with gratitude to God, along with blessed Fr Vincent and Mary Queen of the Cenacle, for guiding and blessing us to serve the church through renewal. Fourteen years sounds very little for a religious institute compared with the SAC itself which is one hundred and eighty-one years old. Today we have 16 perpetually professed sisters, 22 junior sisters and 46 candidates at different stages of formation.

Our mother house at Bilaspur is a Formation House for sisters, as well as a Centre of Renewal. We embrace this charism of renewal of the people of God with the motto "Burning with Love to Heal the Broken Hearted." It is given flesh through provision of 40 day Cenacle Experience Retreats specifically for priests and religious.

The aim of these retreats is to bring renewal to their life of consecration by spending time in prayer like apostles in the company of Mary, by entering into a personal encounter with Christ through contemplation of the Word of God, by rediscovering and living the richness of our basic Catholic traditional prayers and finally by experiencing the anointing of the Holy Spirit to be Spirit filled and Spirit led apostles for building up the church. The end of this year will see the 102nd Cenacle Experience Retreat.

Besides this, we have been involved with youth and children through retreats. Special programmes for couples have also been made available over the years. We have been able to cater to many priests and religious and major seminarians in various dioceses of India through annual retreats. Having realized the need for renewal in the church I am well convinced that the Cenacle Experience Retreat is certainly one means to bring it about.



Pope Francis, addressing the faithful on 'mission', said: "Mission is a passion for Jesus and at the same time a passion for his people." Around the beginning of 2012, the association considered extending outside of India. Along with our foundress, Mother Chandrika, I visited Peru. We were stunned by the topography of the place

with its nail biting cold climate. “We shall not send sisters to work here,” we said to each other. However, people came to us pleading with cries to send someone and to help them meet Christ. What I had failed to recognize was that the work we are to do is of Christ and nothing should deter us from doing it. August 2015 saw three CSSH sisters sent to work in Peru.

In one year those sisters learned the language, acclimated well to the harshness and embraced Peruvian culture. In collaboration with two priests, Pallottines from Brazil, they became involved in the indigenous work of winning souls and renewing contacts among many difficult-to-reach people, abandoned for years by an absence of priests and religious.

Recently, on 01 Sep, Sr Renu Maria cssh, left to join them. She had been the first candidate in the institute and witnessed the foundation of CSSH. What has been most striking has been her unflinching commitment. When plagued by many voices and condemned for joining this new group in the Catholic church she never wavered in her vocation. She remained steadfast in her goal to serve the Lord by bringing about a spiritual renewal in the people of God.



August 13, 2016, was a special day for Renu and for the Cenacle family. It was her birthday but also a day of sadness as we bade farewell to her. Our Cenacle family and thirty eight retreatants were elated to join her in thanking God through the Holy Eucharist.

Speaking on this special occasion Mother General exhorted her daughter to remember three guidelines: *to be Mary* – humble and obedient; *to be Gospel* – make her life gospel by walking the talk as Jesus and may people through her life know that she is a follower of Christ; *to proclaim the Gospel* – “Not everyone who says to me Lord Lord will enter the Kingdom, but the one who does the will of my Father in heaven (Cf. Mt 7:21).



It is in doing God’s will that we will always belong to the family of Jesus. When I belong to Jesus’ family it naturally impels me to bring many others into that family as St Vincent always prayed: ‘May they all be one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ.’

My wish is that Sr Renu Maria always remains in the Cenacle. It is only by being in the Cenacle, enjoying the presence of Mary and the apostles

and uniting oneself with them that we will be Spirit filled and Spirit led. Today like Mary we need to gather and bring to our fold many frightened apostles – people who are blamed, who have abandoned their faith and who find no meaning in life, those fearful and in bondage. We pray that the Spirit sets them free to build a new church.

I am excited about the opportunities and experiences that lie ahead when we will be able to see a vibrant and zealous church, as on the day of Pentecost. I hope you see the value in what we would like to accomplish through our charism of renewal. We wish God’s many blessings on our sisters and great success in their missionary adventure.

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item 451

African Congress on Divine Mercy

Two weeks ago [09-15 Sep] the church’s *Year of Mercy* found a loud echo on African soil – in the form of an **African Congress on Divine Mercy**. Held in Rwanda, in the Great Lakes region [sometimes called the heart of Africa], it was enhanced by the presence of several Cardinals and Bishops together with participants from more than 30 countries in Africa.

Its theme *<Divine Mercy: the source of hope for the New Evangelization in Africa>* expressed the dynamics of its objective, to remind the African continent of the urgency of the message of mercy.



As Pope John Paul II has pointed out:

“How much the world of today is greatly in need of the Mercy of God!!!! In each continent, from the depths of the human suffering, a cry for mercy seems to rise. Where hatred and the thirst for revenge dominate, where war brings suffering and death to the innocent, there the grace of mercy is needed to adjust human minds and hearts and to bring peace.”

The precarious lives of people in the Great Lakes region itself graphically exemplifies the situation. Insecurity has become their ‘daily bread’. One continually hears of wars, massacres and many kinds of violence. On top of which is the problem of ethnicity, which can block genuine relationships among peoples and be a major obstacle to the reconciliation process.



Behind it there are often hidden 'anti-Christian' ideologies that promote the loss of Christian values, especially that of human dignity. There is a local proverb which illustrates the point: "*A hungry stomach has no ear*". Famine, unemployment, poverty and many other ills affect the well being of people, pushing them to sometimes live in contradiction to themselves. And this often leads to other problems such as alcoholism, delinquency, prostitution, armed robbery, etc.

Africa, and the world in general, urgently needs to recall the value of life.

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn writes: "Mercy is at the heart of the Gospel." Mercy can be an antidote to the ills that ravage all of human society but specifically Africa. This Jubilee Year can be compared to a resounding trumpet whose echo extends eloquently across the African continent.

Pope Francis stated when opening the Year:

"I am convinced that the whole Church - which has much need to receive mercy, because we are sinners - will find in this Jubilee the joy to rediscover and render fruitful the mercy of God, with which we are all called to give consolation to every man and woman of our time".

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