

Inter – Ursuline



January – April 2025

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Sainte Angèle d'Afrique

TERTIANSHIP - IMMERSION

Sr Jacqueline Asta shared her experience of immersion in the province of Croatia from 24th April to 25th June, 2024. This information was completed by Sr Mirjam Šurjan.

It was a very rich and profound experience for me on every level. I spent most of my time in the community of Varaždin and was able to visit the two communities of Zagreb and Slavonski Brod. My home base was the Varaždin community because of the presence of Sr Mirjam Šurjan, one of the first members of the community in Cameroon. I'll never stop thanking Mirjam, all the sisters in the province and their friends for my stay, which was well organized. I am very grateful for the opportunity to have visited some important places in the history of Croatia: some of the most visited, Marian shrines because of their history, then the North and South of the country with their natural beauty and richness. I was lucky enough to take part in the national youth meeting in Gospić, where I was struck by the faith and openness of the young people to the Word of God. I was also touched by the various stalls prepared by the congregations with a view to awakening religious and priestly vocations.



National Youth Meeting in Gospić

What was special for me in the Varaždin community?

Spiritual life:

The place that Christ occupies in the lives of the sisters was the first rich experience for me. Between community prayers, Mass, adoration, lectio Divina and examination of conscience, everything flowed naturally. Despite their physical frailty, the sisters knew from where to draw their strength. Because of mental frailty, a sister may forget to eat, but she will never forget the time to go and meet her Beloved. At the hospital, when I removed the wedding ring from Sr Valentina's finger, because it had become too tight, she couldn't hide her displeasure, saying: 'Now I'm nothing, no more wedding ring, no more crucifix, no more Mass'. By making a gesture of friendship, I made her understand that Christ was always with her and would stay forever. She looked at me and then calmed down.

At the request of Bishop Bože Radoš, our sisters donated a room in their convent for perpetual adoration, open to the public 24 hours a day. I often went there to pray.

The welcome : I felt very welcomed by the sisters who were waiting for me at the airport. The day after my arrival, Sr Mihaela, the provincial, noticed that I didn't have suitable shoes and immediately took me to the market to buy shoes and things for the summer. Every sister showed

me their closeness and took an interest in me. My drawer was full of apples, chocolates and sweets, because each sister left me a little of her portion. The prioresses of the two communities in Varaždin (Sr Jasna for the apostolic community and Sr Elvira for the community of elderly sisters) were very attentive to me.

Community life: It is solid and true, based on fraternal love and mutual support. The younger sisters are keen to help the older sisters and to let them know what is happening in the Church, in the world, in the country and in our school of St Ursula. The older sisters enjoy their regular recreation time. They know how to give joy to one another through celebrations of anniversaries and jubilees. On 27 April 2024, the Jubilee of Sisters Mirjam Šurjan and Salezija Blaško took place in the church, where all the sisters joined in the joy of this beautiful celebration.



The Diamond Jubilee of Sisters Mirjam and Salezija

On 1st June we joined in the celebration of the jubilee of 25 years of religious life of Sr Suzana Crnčec in Slavonski Brod. It was a simple but profound celebration, like that of Sr Damjana, which had taken place the day before in the community of Varaždin.



Silver Jubilee of Sr. Damjana, 31.5.2024



Silver Jubilee of Sr. Suzana, 01.06.2024

Dedication in service: Young or not so young, each one did her service with discretion and joy. Seeing the Provincial Prioress, in spite of her responsibility, clearing the vines with determination, not just once but several times, was a great challenge for me. In fact, when I arrived, I wondered what I could do for my sisters not knowing the language and coming from another culture. It was a great joy for me to work with sisters Laurentina Hrastić and Jacinta Hrastić in the community garden, planting tomatoes, leeks, lettuce, beans, cucumbers and so on. Every day, after meditation, we met in the garden to weed, plant, sow, prune and from 11.45 I went to pick fruit for the community.



Sr. Laurentina & Sr. Jacinta with Sr. Asta Jacqueline in the garden.

The dedication and determination with which our sisters run our two schools of Saint Ursula puts our schools among the best in the city, if not the country. Visiting the classrooms I noticed a good atmosphere between the teacher and the children, which is very important in the integral education of children and young people and in the growth of their faith.



Sr. Asta Jacqueline

The pupils with



The choir : « The stars of St. Ursula »

What can you say about the Croatian people?

I discovered a very religious people with a very strong spiritual sense. The churches are well attended by young and old alike, with beautiful celebrations. They are a generous and welcoming people. How many times have people come to leave baskets of fruit at the door of the community, or sent cakes or flowers to decorate the church? In fact, speaking of this generosity, I was able to visit several historic sites thanks to friends who drove us (Sr Mirjam and I) from one place to another using their own vehicles or paying for our transport.

People who love life and who are trying to encourage families to have more children by organising the 'March for Life' in every major town in Croatia. There are associations that fight against abortion and encourage women to keep their pregnancies by providing them with all the support they need (work, housing and psychological support). It's so sad to know that couples have ended their third pregnancy to keep just two children. These associations organise marches for life and pray for 40 days in front of hospitals to stop these scourges forever. This is the case of Marija Sošić, coordinator of these associations in the Dalmatia region, who accompanies all these women in difficulty in Split. During the March for Life in Varaždin, I asked a young couple how many children they had. The husband replied with a laugh: 'Sister, I have three, and I'll stop when the Lord wants me to'. Today I'm amazed to see families with 4 or 5 children, and even 11, even though abortion is legal in this country. Father Marco, the youth coordinator, said to me when I was sharing with him about the vocations crisis: 'Sister, my job is to encourage young people to get married and have children. That's the only way we can hope for new priestly and religious vocations'.

Finally, I would like to thank Sr Mihaela, all the sisters of the province, the priests and the dedicated lay people for all they have done for us.

Ste Angèle d'Afrique

NGAOUNDÉRE – CLUB “SERVIAM”

This article was issued in the Group news in June 2024.

On October 15 in the school year 2022/2023, the Sainte Angèle School set up the “SERVIAM” club. Its goal is to introduce young students to charity, sharing and compassion. With the motto: “God loves those who give with joy”!



Since then, the students have organized themselves by classes under the leadership of convinced and committed teachers to be involved in works of charity, sharing and compassion. This means being attentive to one's classmates, those around them and to one's living environment.

Since its creation, the “Serviam” club has opened its eyes to the miseries of students, the elderly, the sick and the abandoned. The students generously visited these people, helping to bring cleanliness and order to their homes, fetching them water and wood, and offering them food for survival.



The 2024 Lent effort focused on elderly people and we called this intergenerational charity. 20 elderly people were chosen. A sum of 100,000 FCFA was collected with the support of a benefactress and purchases were made. The students packaged the goods with love. On the big day, it was beautiful to see the two generations walking hand in hand. For the elderly, it was a great opportunity to go out and meet others and, for the youngest, it was a very good opportunity to share the wisdom of the elderly.

Indonesia

THE POPE'S VISIT

This article was written by Mr. Mikael Corre, special correspondent in Jakarta (Indonesia), on 5/9/2024. It is published in the Inter-Ursulines bulletin, with the authorization of the newspaper “La Croix”, for internal use only.

The Pope's visit: for Sister Christina Ayda, the importance of Francis' appeals on the environment.

On Wednesday 4 September 2024, Pope Francis spent a friendly moment with Indonesian clergy and religious in the Cathedral of St Mary of the Assumption



in Jakarta. Among them was Sister Christina Ayda, an Ursuline sister who has been deeply affected by his appeals on the environment.

Sister Christina Ayda's face is covered in tears. Mid-afternoon on Wednesday 4 September, this 49-year-old Indonesian Ursuline is sitting at the end of the 27th row, almost at the back of St Mary of the Assumption Cathedral in Jakarta, where the Pope is meeting the Indonesian clergy.

"I don't know how to describe how I feel. Did you see me cry? Yes, it was joy. But I wasn't the only one, other sisters were in tears too! The sister lowered her voice so as not to disturb the prayers and songs that continued in the Gothic building after the Pope's departure. First of all, I wanted to tell you... I wondered for a long time why Pope Francis was coming here, at the age of 87. But now I think I've understood..."

Raising ecological awareness

The sister in the blue veil and thin glasses says she was worried about the physical capabilities of the Pope, the oldest to undertake an intercontinental trip – *"We prayed for him every day"*. But listening to his first words this afternoon, seeing him so energetic and happy to talk, sometimes urging his translator to speed up to add an anecdote, she now interprets his presence in Indonesia as *"an encouragement to continue, to never give up"*.

"We're a small country, from a Catholic point of view," says Sister Christina, *"in Indonesia we represent 3.12% of the population. But by coming and showing himself to be so humble, by talking to us like a father talks to children, the Pope makes me feel that it makes sense"*. For this forty-something Indonesian, who grew up in the middle class, part of that meaning is to raise awareness of ecology among her compatriots, including Muslims.

"Laudato si' was not written just for Catholics, and today the Pope reiterated the importance of respecting the environment. With the nature we have in Indonesia, we must do everything we can to protect it for future generation."

Addressing the clergy and religious, Francis presented natural resources as *"a reminder from God"*: *"Indonesia is a great country, endowed with enormous natural wealth, in terms of flora, fauna, energy resources and raw materials, and so on,"* said the Pope. *"But if we look at it with an open mind and heart, it can instead be a reminder of God, of his presence in the cosmos and in our lives, as Holy Scripture teaches us."*

Rising waters

Sister Christina Ayda, who took her final vows fifteen years ago, would also like to see more electric vehicles in the crowded streets of Jakarta.

"That might help solve the (environmental) problems that lie ahead. The city can't go on like this". In 2023, a study by the specialist Swiss-based agency IQAir placed Jakarta at the top of the list of the world's most polluted cities. Situated below sea level, the capital of 11.3 million people also regularly experiences deadly flooding due to rising water levels.

Sister Christina Ayda and a large number of Catholics, some of whom have travelled from the Philippines, will join Francis on Thursday 5 September for a Mass celebrated in the large stadium, which can accommodate 65,000 participants. Others will follow the celebration from a giant screen set up in a nearby stadium.

Indonesia and East Timor

EDUCATION CONFERENCE

A conference on Ursuline Education was held in November 2024 for Indonesia and East Timor. The theme was “Ursuline Education Bridging Tradition and Innovation.”

Bandung served as a significant venue for the National Ursuline Indonesia Education Congress, which took place from November 6th to 9th, 2024. Centered around the theme “Ursuline Education: Bridging Tradition and Innovation,” the event gathered 126 participants from 22 Ursuline schools throughout Indonesia. Over four days, the essence of Saint Angela Merici was revitalized through profound discussions, reflections, and innovative plans that harmoniously blended tradition with modernity.

Sr. Lita Hasanah, OSU, the Provincial of the Ursulines in Indonesia, formally inaugurated the event. She reminded the participants of the significant responsibilities involved in Ursuline education. "We find ourselves at the crossroads of Saint Angela's spiritual legacy and the ever-changing demands of the modern world. Our mission is to connect these two realms with love and wisdom," she emphasized.



The Conference sessions were delivered by two distinguished speakers:

- **Mr. Johanes Eka Priyatma, Ph.D.**, introduced the Actor-Network Theory (ANT), an innovative framework designed to manage change and improve educational networks. He encouraged participants to perceive education as an interconnected system in which every actor—from teachers to students—plays a vital role in driving meaningful transformation.
- **Father Lucianus Suharjanto, SJ**, led participants in a thoughtful reflection on the profound Ursuline educational tradition. He highlighted that character education, rooted in Serviam values—such as the pedagogy of the heart, goodwill, and critical thinking—forms a solid foundation for cultivating compassionate and empathetic individuals.

Four Key Areas of Focus

The recent conference led to strategic decisions that emphasize the Ursulines' dedication to adapting to today's needs while preserving their traditional strengths. Four main areas of focus were identified:

1. Character Building and Learning Environment

The significance of Serviam-based character education was highlighted as a crucial element that must constantly evolve. The conference stressed the importance of creating child-friendly, joyful, and comprehensive learning environments.

2. Relational Civilization



Through the Insieme (togetherness) approach, the Ursulines continue to promote a civilization that prioritizes human relationships, where each individual feels valued, loved, and empowered to serve with compassion.

3. Mental Health and Well-Being

The well-being of the academic community was highlighted as a top priority, including the provision of opportunities to deepen engagement with Saint Angela's spirituality and to promote a balanced lifestyle that nurtures both physical and spiritual needs.

4. Family as the Foundation

The Conference underscored the essential role families play in education, reinforcing the belief that a strong family foundation is crucial for student success.



The use of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) stood out as one of the important features of the conference. This method allowed participants to develop innovative solutions that tackle modern challenges while still honouring their rich traditions. It provided new insights into how all aspects of education can collaborate to create sustainable change.

A Legacy That Endures

The Education Conference 2024 The Education Conference concluded with a deep sense of gratitude. Participants, representing Ursuline Educational Schools from various regions, reaffirmed their commitment to serving others with steadfast love and compassion. "Guided by the Serviam spirit and the teachings of Saint Angela, we are ready to continue this journey, blending tradition and innovation for the glory of God and the betterment of all," shared one participant.

This congress was more than merely a gathering; it served as a testament to the enduring legacy of Ursuline Education, which continuously adapts to meet the needs of the world. This meeting represents a significant milestone, where tradition and innovation converge to promote a more humanistic and relevant approach to education.



CELEBRATION OF AN ANNIVERSARY

“Five Loaves of Bread and Two Fish” or the celebration of an Anniversary: 300 Years since the arrival of Ursuline Sisters in Trnava, Slovakia. A story by our sisters in Trnava

The year 2024 is an anniversary for us Ursuline sisters from Trnava, because 300 years have passed since the arrival of five sisters from the Bratislava convent on 24.9.1724. They came to fulfil their mission here, in Trnava.

We have been experiencing a strong fellowship with our sisters, benefactors, priests, former pupils and teachers, those who had passed away as well as those, who are still among us today. A Mass of Thanksgiving has been celebrated monthly for the deceased and for those who help us with our mission.

The celebrations reached their peak on Saturday 19th October, as we celebrated the arrival of our sisters in Trnava in the presence of the whole province, together with our Prioress General, Sister Susan Flood; Sister Agatha Linda Chandra; Sister Neusimar Marques da Silva; Sister Elisabeth Binet; Sister Iwona Skorupa; Sister Jeannie Humphries; and sisters from the Czech Republic. Our papal nuncio, Archbishop Nicola Girasoli, encouraged us during the Solemn Mass to look at the past with gratitude, live the present with enthusiasm, and look to the future with hope.



After the Solemn Mass we had a festive lunch prepared for our dear guests, followed by tours of the schools, the church, and the convent. We reconnected with our former pupils, teachers, friends, and acquaintances. A gala event “Ursulines in the Service of Life” topped off this wonderful day. The atmosphere of this great day was filled with excitement, radiant joy, and happiness experienced in the community together with those who helped us with preparations, as well as with former pupils

and teachers. Once again, we were reminded that the Lord is our mighty God, the God of the impossible, the Overcomer, who does not dwell in our weaknesses but instead shows His power, love, and kindness.

We had been awaiting this day all year, feeling a sense of weakness and incapability. Everything seemed beyond us, everything seemed to surpass our strength, and yet we still came to realise that our sisters, teachers, pupils, benefactors, the deceased, and those still with us today deserved to witness our gratitude. This motivation proved stronger than any obstacles and problems we faced.

As the big day approached, we still did not know how our programme would look, how many people would come, or how much we would have to prepare. The tension grew, the uncertainties arose, and the physical and mental strain became almost unbearable. Prayer and the desire to do everything for God's glory were all what we were left with.





Only a week before the celebration, we began learning the programme we would perform for the general public – while the programme was still being created in the meantime. Some sisters, with frailer health, succumbed to a virus. Others practiced whenever and wherever. Each of us had to go beyond ourselves, step out of our comfort zone, and hold on to the hope that our

Lord would help us.

During the celebration itself, one of the sisters came to realise how deeply people appreciate us and how many longed to celebrate with us. The struggles of preparations united us, brought us joy, and gave us a new zest for life.

As the celebrations came to an end, we all reflected on what our Lord had done in our lives and our community. One sister remarked that, like the apostles that had nothing, we stood before a challenge we could not face alone. We offered the little we had –five loaves of bread and two fish—and our Lord has shown his glory.

Another sister felt that our situation could have been described by the words of St. Paul in 1 Cor 1:27-28: *“God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world —what is viewed as nothing.”*

We would like to express our gratitude to our dear Provincial Prioress and Sr Susan Flood, and all the sisters who came to celebrate with us for the time they spent with us, and for the internationality we create. We are also grateful to all the sisters who prayed for us and supported us, to the sisters of our province for their help, and to our co-workers for their extraordinary engagement in this significant event.

Thank you for your constant prayers, that we may persist faithfully and joyfully in the mission our predecessors began 300 years ago.



To see more in video, please visit our website!

France/Belgium/Spain

AUBRAC MOUNTAINS IN MALET

At the foot of the Aubrac mountains, in Malet, what happened on 15-17 March 2024? An article written by Sr. Françoise Bonnaterre, osu

At the request of a number of host staff* last season, it seemed that it would be good to spend a weekend together, to get to know each other better and to deepen the meaning of their mission in the spirit of Saint Angela. As it was a first, questions crossed Cédric Comello's mind. He is the leader and coordinator of a small team. Would there be a response? How to organize the weekend? Encouragement came in the form of enthusiastic responses, but some weren't too happy about the dates. But the ball was rolling! Without delay, Cédric Comello, together with Sister Marie-Pierre Chassaigne, drew up a timetable and a breakdown of the various services and preparations needed: reception, rooms, premises, badges, etc.

And so 15th March 2024 arrived... Almost everyone was there well before 5 p.m., the scheduled time for getting together ...a good opportunity to reminisce, to get to know each other, and to admire the garden.

After refreshments and a slice of 'fouace' (a brioche from Aveyron), it was time to settle in, a time of prayer with the sisters of the community for those who wished, followed by a meal using local products brought by everyone. We could have invited all our neighbours!

Then we headed to the amphitheater to watch a short film made by Daniel Borzakian, a long-time host, about **'the Convent of Malet'**. The discussion that followed confirmed the relevance of this project, which combines the history of the site with personal accounts.

For Sister Marie-Bénédicte Moyrand (in the photo, in the middle), from Toulouse, who will be joining us for the season, it was a full day of discovery.



The next day was not without surprises. At the start of the morning, a short discussion between hosts gave everyone the opportunity to review their experience: my story with Malet, what I discovered, what I give and receive, my mission as a host in a team... It was profound and rich, and could have gone on for even longer, however...

Sister Marie-Pierre Chassaigne had a message for us to discover: **'Being a host in the light of Saint Angela's life...'**. Tracing the life of Angela step by step, with the help of images and texts taken from her writings, Sister Marie-Pierre developed the fact that Angela was personally the guest of several people while she herself gave hospitality on a large scale; the reciprocity is striking. It is now up to each of us to make our own the qualities highlighted during the presentation!



After this intense, reflective time, everyone got into their sports gear, and set off on the walk **to the church in Cambon**. The route was longer than expected and there were some hungry people at the end. Fortunately, a hearty picnic brought everyone back to full strength! Guided by Brigitte Julien, well known to the Ursulines, we admired the vaulted ceiling of the Romanesque church, the pillars and the frescoes as we wandered around this little jewel. Time passed too quickly: we had to get back on the road.



The late afternoon at Malet was an opportunity for informal meetings, and in the evening the group was invited to the vaulted hall to meet up with Cédric Comello, Sister Marie-Pierre Chassaigne, Sister Marie-Bénédicte Moyrand and Sister Françoise



Bonnaterre (on the left in the photo), to **share** what they wanted to say about their journey, in complete confidence. It was a time for listening and to ask questions.

At the end of this busy day, it was time to get some rest, as some had a long way to go the next day. On Sunday morning, Morning Prayer brought together those who wished to join in, and we gathered in front of the church, in the inner courtyard, for **a tour**, guided by Cédric Comello. Then it was time to head either to Saint Côme at the regional market or to Espalion to take part in Sunday Mass. On the way back, we were treated to Muriel's famous 'farçous'!

To everyone's delight, we rounded off this convivial weekend with coffee with the sisters of the unit called "Welcome". Then it was time to say goodbye and see you soon!

***The 'hospitality'** we are talking about is characterised by welcoming, listening, receiving in a kind and open spirit, on the way to Santiago de Compostela.

France/Belgium/Spain

BEAUGENCY - URSULAB

On 22nd & 23rd June 2024, a meeting organized by the team "Souffle" brought together members of the Merician network in Beaugency: Ursuline sisters, employees, volunteers, alumni and friends. This article was written by Sr Claire Marie Vincent - Toulouse.

The 'Souffle Team' was set up a few years ago in the France-Belgium-Spain Province and sent on mission by the Provincial Governance Team:

- Forge links with all the members of the network,
- Encourage Merician fraternity groups,
- Invite people to build together, to share and to develop projects,
- Bring to the fore all that is experienced in the Merician spirit in the various places, whatever the organisations,
- Stimulate the implementation of the charism in the Merician network,
- To be a source of ideas.

Last June, the first meeting, the first summer university of the Merician network took place in Beaugency, bringing together 88 participants from different parts of France and Belgium: Ursulines, collaborators in the mission, employees, volunteers and friends of Saint Angela. This great turnout is a first sign of hope!



This meeting was part of the desire to imagine together, sisters and lay people, what the ‘Merician family’ could be in 2035 (the year of the 500th anniversary of the foundation of the Ursulines by Angela Merici)! The aim of this first meeting was to become aware together of each person's place as heir with responsibility for the present and future life of the charism, to move from the spirituality of the Ursulines to Merician spirituality.

It also aimed to identify ways of forging links between the Merician players, translating and communicating the Merician charism in different versions so as to make it accessible to all, and identifying spaces/times for dialogue, interiorisation and updating of this charism.

The meeting opened with a word of welcome from Philippe Maité, a member of the Souffle team. Then the Provincial of the Salesians, Fr Federspiel, who was very happy to be with us, gave a very simple and enlightening talk on the question of charism.

Former and current female students from our Serviam (Paris) and Merici (Angers) student hostels were delighted to be with us and to take an active and joyful part in the discussions.

We worked in several workshops on the following three themes: Forging links, Co-training and Fraternities.

Reflections in groups, time for synthesis, sharing in an atmosphere of conviviality and celebrations contributed greatly to knitting the group together and energising it for tomorrow.



It all ended with a warm thank you from Sr M. Thérèse to the “Souffle” Team who had initiated this beautiful and hopeful meeting.

We spent two intense days together, full of creativity and dynamism.





And now ‘Do what needs to be done’, as St Angela tells us, and ‘lead a new life’.

Thank you to the Maison de la Parole in Beaugency, who spared no effort in welcoming the group in the best possible conditions, opening doors and windows to a future yet to be invented.

Thailand

CENTENARY OF THE PROVINCE OF THAILAND

Article written by Miss Emanuela Lauro, Ph.D, General Archivist. You can find the article on the website in the archives section. “Happy centenary in the Province of Thailand (1924-2024)!”

The Ursulines of the Roman Union have been in **Bangkok** since **24th November 1924** (fig. 1), but it was not until 24th January **1925** that they were entrusted with the running of a **school** called **The Calvary** (fig. 2), located at the **Rosary Parish** in the Chinese part of the city; the school had been opened for poor, Chinese and Siamese children. There, for three years, the first mothers, **Thérèse de l'Enfant Jésus Mertens**, then prioress, **Marie-Raphaël Vurnik**, later prioress of Mater Dei,¹ and **Marie Agnès de l'Eucharestie Delattre**, taught at the school and took care of the parish; they also ran a small **orphanage** (fig. 3).



1. AGUUR, Rn. THA.03/2.3, *First four missionaries to Thailand: Flanking the superior of the community of St. Omer, Srs. M. Agnes Delatre (French) and M. Thérèse de l'Enfant Jésus (Belgian); standing, Srs. M. Xavier Pirc and Raphael Vurnik (both Yugoslav). Photo taken before they left for Thailand, 25th November 1924*

¹ Prioress since 6 April 1932, appointed by the Provincial Council of Northern France; cf. AGUUR, Fa, *Thaïlande*, 15, *Bangkok Mater Dei School*, act no. 5/32, 1932 March 6, ff. n.n.



2. AGUUR, Rn.THA.03/1.1,
Rosary School or Calvary School, [1954]



3. AGUUR, Rn.THA.03/2.10,
Orphanage Calvary Church, 1925

At the request of **Bishop Rene Perros**, the Ursulines opened another school in Bangkok in 1928 for the Siamese in the upper classes: '**Mater Dei Institute**' (figg. 4-5).



4. AGUUR, Rn.THA.04/1.1, *Mater Dei, Bangkok*, 1928



5. AGUUR, *Collection Souvenirs des missions*,
Mater Dei chapel, Bangkok, [1928-30]

A large plot of land had been purchased in an isolated part of the city; the sisters had chosen the date of 2 February, the Feast of Light, to open this new Catholic school in a neighbourhood where Catholicism had not yet arrived. On the morning of 2 February, ten Ursuline sisters, led by the Reverend **Mother Marie-Bernard Mancel**, gathered in the room that would henceforth be the chapel, lit the sanctuary lamp and celebrated the first Mass. The Ursuline schools offered classes with modern equipment and the laboratory helped with history, geography and science. The study of languages was considered of great importance. As for **The Calvary**, ten nuns remained there to continue the work, somewhat modified: there was **Mother Marie Gabriel van Nieuwkuyk** and **Mother Marie Agnès de l'Eucharestie Delattre**. Gradually the school adapted to the new **official programmes for girls' schools**.

In **Chiang-Mai**, a town about 470 miles from Bangkok and destined to become the centre of the new Catholic Mission in the North, the Ursulines founded a school, **Regina Coeli**, in 1932² (figg. 6-8). The sisters felt it was important that all the various forms of educational activities that

² Founded on 7 April 1932; cf. AGUUR, Fa, *Thaïlande*, 17, *Chiang.Mai Regina Coeli School, Membres et charges*, ff. n.n. The foundation was authorised in March 1931 (cf. AGUUR, Fa, *Thaïlande*, 17, *Chiang.Mai Regina Coeli School, Affaires*, act no. 80/31, ff. n.n.) and approved by Protocol No. 767/32 by the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, February 1932 (cf. *ibid*, *Authorisation*, ff. n.n.).

belonged to the missionary apostolate were inaugurated in this area of the mission. Therefore, in addition to schools for the upper and middle classes, they organised free courses in schools for children from the poorer classes.



6. AGUUR, Rn. THA.06/2.04, Foundresses of the second Ursuline school and community, Regina Coeli, Chiangmai, 7th April 1932



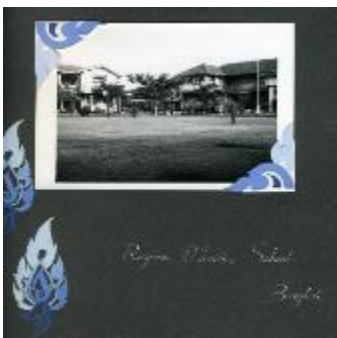
7. AGUUR, Rn. THA.06/1.1, Regina Coeli, Chiangmai, View of a part of the building, 1950



8. AGUUR, Collection Souvenirs of the missions, Chiang Mai class, [1935-36]

In 1955 a request was made for a third mission house to be opened in Bangkok. The response to the supplication is positive and authorisation was granted on **9 May 1955**.³ The school that was created from this mission is called the **Vasudevi School, or Regina Mundi (figg. 9-10)**. Initially, the school could only accommodate 17 boarders, but the high demand meant that the building was renovated and extended in 1958. Since then, the Institute has welcomed a large number of students and is still today a reference point for education in the capital.

In 1978, there is a new foundation in **Chiang-Mai: Seven Fountains Student Centre**,⁴ now a spiritual retreat centre run by the Jesuits.



9. AGUUR, Rn. THA.03/3.11, Regina Mundi, Bangkok, [1960]



10. AGUUR, Collection Souvenirs of the missions, Regina Mundi, Bangkok 1957

The sisters still carry out their apostolate today through the institutes:

- **Mater Dei School**
- **Regina Coeli College**
- **Vasu Devi School (Regina Mundi)**
- **Piyamart School**
- **Ban Petchsamran (Retreat House)**

The Ursuline mission gives special attention to **formation** and **education** and does so in various forms, promoting in particular:

- **Didactic work**
- **Formal education**

³ Cf. AGUUR, Fa, *Thaïlande*, 16, *Vasudevi School*, supplication no. 95/55, ff. n.n.

⁴ Founded on 29 March 1978: cf. AGUUR, Fa, *Thaïlande*, 18, *Chiang-Mai Seven Fountains*, act no. 142/78, ff. n.n.

- The **promotion of justice and peace** and the development of human potential to raise awareness of respect for all creation
- Various forms of **basic education**
- **Pastoral work**

Thank you for continuing your hard work in the footsteps of Saint Angela! Happy Centenary Province of Thailand!

Italy

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF SR. MARIA PILLA'S FIRST PROFESSION, COMMUNITY OF ITALY

A community thanksgiving in Capriolo, Italy.

Wednesday, October 30, 2024, was a wonderful day in Capriolo: we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the religious profession of our dearest Sr. Maria Pilla, in the presence of our Superior, Sr. Angela Poggi, and some Sisters who came from Milan and Desenzano del Garda.

Everything was prepared with simplicity and finesse: the white anthuriums made the altar festive and joyful.

At 10 am the Eucharistic Celebration began with the song: "Great things has the Lord done for us", which immersed us in an atmosphere full of joy and gratitude.

The celebrant was Father Rodolfo, a Carmelite religious. In his simple, direct and affectionate homily, Father Rodolfo invited Sr. Maria Pilla and all of us to think back on the numerous graces received by Sr. Maria and, consequently, by our religious family, in 75 years of service to the Lord - that Lord who made her feel from a young age that He was the One who deserved her full attention and her limitless affection throughout her life, through prayer and charity.

To enter into a religious family is always a grace and a risk: you have to accept very different people, lend yourself without limits, accept, obey, be sensitive to the needs of others and, above all, give yourself for others in a smiling, patient, discreet and ready way.

Sr. Maria was very moved and radiant. She was very quiet during the festive lunch and the afternoon celebration: but she did not stop thanking and, from time to time, she intoned with a confident and joyful voice: "How beautiful it is, Lord, to be together, and to love each other as You love: here is God, Alleluia!"



Insieme Region, community of England

FEAST OF ST URSULA CELEBRATION

Thank you to our sisters in England for sharing this historical moment with us.

On the 21st October 2024, we gathered as a Province to celebrate the feast of St Ursula, our patron.

This day also marked the start of an exciting new chapter for the Roman Union Ursuline sisters in England. We became part of the Insieme Region with the Ursuline sisters in the Czech Republic. With the sad reality of dwindling numbers and an ageing community, the English Province, after 101 years, has come to an end. As St Angela told us “If, according to times and circumstances, the need arises to make new rules or do something differently, do it prudently and with good advice”. It is with the spirit and charisma of St Angela that we embrace our future and look forward to being part of this new region.

The day began with Mass in the community room at Forest Gate. Fr Yusef, a Franciscan priest from St Francis of Assisi parish in Stratford, celebrated the liturgy for us and we were joined by two talented musicians, Lydia Elderfield and Pietro Lacopini (see the photo below) who greatly enriched our singing. The readings and hymns reflected our trust in God for what the future brings and also our gratitude for all that has been. Mass was live streamed so that our sisters who were unable to be present could still participate.

After Mass, we were treated to a roast dinner, prepared by our amazing staff who also walk this journey with us.



Sr Vianney Connolly

Despite our change of status, we continue to live in harmony, always united together.



From left to right: Sr Colette Traveller, Sr Katharine Glencross, et Sr Alice Montgomery



From left to right: Sr Jenefer Glencross, Sr Dorothy Perrot et Sr Una McCreesh





*From left to right: Sr Vianney Connolly,
Sr Jayne Horswill*



*From left to right: Sr Beatrice Garnett, Sr
Colette Traveller et Sr Theresa Canty*

NEXT INTER-URSULINE BULLETIN

As usual, the next issue of the Inter-Ursuline bulletin will welcome all your experiences to be shared around the world. Please send short articles, with or without photos, to the secretariat by **4th April 2025**. With thanks!