



Esperança Newsletter

Nº 4 - 2025

REFLECTION!

For this issue of our Newsletter, our reflection focuses on God's Call. Sr. Josephine Walsh, D.H.S. wrote a book called "God's Whistle," in which she describes God's continuous call in our lives. This time, we are invited to reflect on God's Call to be.

A CALL TO BEING



Our first call is a call to being by God, our merciful Father/Mother. God called us before we were in our mother's

womb. "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you". (Jeremiah 1:5).

Lord, I thank You that You delight in me, and that You are always with me. I thank You that I am an original, that there is no other like me (many would say 'Thank God') and that there is only one thumb like mine in the whole world.

You comfort me even when I am old. "You who have been carried since birth, Whom I have carried since the time you were born, In your old age, I shall still be the same. When your hair is grey, I shall still support you, I have already done so, I have carried you, I shall still support and deliver you." (Isaiah 46:3-4).

Can anyone compare with our God? "You are precious to me" God says "and I honor and love you." (Isaiah 43:4)

Because God loves us, it makes us lovable. We must therefore love ourselves; it is a duty. Liking yourself and being 'at home' in your own skin is what God desires for you. We have

a command to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This is very difficult sometimes as our own self-image can be so poor that our love for ourselves is non-existent. How therefore can we fulfil the commandment to love others as we love ourselves? To be a healthy, fully alive Christian, you must cultivate a great love for yourself. This means giving yourself the essentials of a healthy life and most of all trying to accept yourself as you are and being grateful to God for creating you. Enjoy His gifts of music, art, drama, literature, science, technology, medicine, etc.

I've heard of a famous Jesuit, John Powell, who decided he was going to love himself and so when anyone gave him a compliment, he would write it in a book. He experienced a transformation in his own self-awareness, and attitude to life, as he began to react positively to himself and to words of praise. He decided to accept and acknowledge his gifts and qualities as part of God's blessing upon him. He made a list of every good thing about himself, from the color of his eyes to his love for music, to his sensitivity to others. He simply began to thank God for everything and gave God the glory for any praise he might receive.

Denying God's gifts in you is hardly humility. Use your gifts, acknowledge them, develop them and thank God for today, especially those who have loved you into life.

I belong to God's Family and so have many brothers and sisters. We have only one God. I am never alone. I am somebody because I am loved by my God. I am special because He / She desires me.

Solo or Group Exercise

Close your eyes now and be still before your merciful Father / Mother. Think of a time when

you felt deeply loved. How was that love shown to you? In gestures, looks, words, a letter, phone call etc. Stay with the scene as long as you can, as long as you feel something of the love that was yours when the event took place. Seek and find the presence of God in this scene. Give thanks.

Source: WALSH, Sr. J. God's Whistle. Great Britain: New life, 1999.

BRAZIL

THE SCMM PILGRIMAGE 2025

"Visiting the roots... how it all began" The general council organized a pilgrimage last July 5-15, 2025 and it was participated by 20 sisters from different parts of the congregation; Indonesia, Timor Leste and International Province. The 10 days pilgrimage led the sisters closely to the congregation history with the helped of the workshops from different facilitators and they also had the opportunity to visit different places in the Netherlands and Belgium where the congregation was first established. *(The details about the pilgrimage can be read at Misericordia magazine, special edition).*



ANNUAL RETREAT



The year 2025 is being celebrated as a Jubilee Year by the Catholic Church, themed "Pilgrims of Hope". In connection with this year's jubilee, we also got into deeper reflection about HOPE in our annual retreat last July 22-27, 2025, with the theme: "É NECESSÁRIO MANTER VIVA A ESPERANÇA." The retreat was facilitated by Br. Glaudemir.



THE GENERAL COUNCIL'S WORKING VISIT IN BRAZIL



The general council; Sr. Sofiani and Sr. Elisângela had their working visit in Brazil from August 7-14, 2025. The sisters arrived in João Pessoa airport at dawn of August 7 and were heartily welcomed in the community of Heitel Santiago, Santa Rita.

It was a great opportunity for Sr. Sofiani to know the works and the mission of the sisters here in Brazil as it was her first time.

The general council visited the schools in Bayeux (Escola Mãe de Misericórdia and Centro Educacional Madre Michelle).



The Cabedelo community and they had encountered the movement of mercy; they gathered in prayer and had dinner together.



They also got the chance to visit some places/sceneries around the city like; the dike in Cabedelo, Forte Velho, and the coast of João Pessoa.



And the next day they visited the Elderly community center, where they met the seniors in the community who are attending regular activities in the morning and also the volunteer workers of the community center.



And in the afternoon, they visited the Dom Helder Center and the children welcomed them with great enthusiasm as they showcased their talents in music and dance.



And we also had a moment together with the associate members, we gathered in a prayer, sharing about life and had dinner together and for Sr. Sofiani to meet the members personally.



The working visit was a great opportunity for the general council to see the current situation in the country (being discussed and explained), to have an idea about the reality in the work and mission of the sisters and also for us (sisters) a chance to voiced out and being listened to through our personal conversation.

UNITED STATES

INTENSIVE ENGLISH LEARNING



As part of the project of the International Province, the sisters were obliged to learn the English language, aside from having class with Sr. Janice and other English teachers. The Brazilian sisters were given an opportunity to have their intensive English learning in the United States for three months. Last July 29, 2025, Sr. Kardenea was sent to the United States to have her English proficiency course.

Sister Mary Ellen (Mel) Ryley and Associate Dana Sullivan were happy to welcome Sr. Kardenea Matias Luiz to Chicago on July 31. Kardenea began her 11 weeks English course at Kaplan Institute in the center of the city August 4. She studies for 4 hours Monday to Friday in a group of international students from many continents.

While Mel and Dana visit with her recreationally, she is being hosted by the Benedictines and Holy Spirit Missionaries and the Benedictines in order to have more opportunities to speak English. Kardenea and Dana are happy to explore some of the area's sites on an evening or weekend.



SR. BARBARA'S NEW RESIDENCE



Sister Barbara Connell made a move to another residence. The "Connecticut Team" of Sisters Barbara Ann and Janice and Associate Mary Swaykus and a friend were instrumental in helping her. Many thanks to them and to other visitors and friends who keep in touch.

THE BASKETBALL CHAMPANIONSHIP GAME



Associate Paula Passarelo helped her Senior Basketball Team win the national championship in the last seconds. Here they are in the moment crying for joy!

PHILIPPINES



In the Philippines, Buwan ng wika (National Language Month) is celebrated annually in August in schools to promote the importance of Philippine languages, and this year our children also participated in this event. Sisters Josephine, Cathy, Amelita and Annie were in charge of the decorations. The native house—the national kubo (modern)—was prepared by members of the PTA (parent-teacher association). This was one of the activities for the 2025-2026 school year, which is one of the important events in school activities.

To promote patriotism and give importance to different national languages or dialects.



Parents also participated in all activities. Collaboration between parents, teachers, and sisters is very important. This is also the first time we have had a PTA, which all schools have.

The leaves in the background, which look like lilies, are our national flower, called sampaguita. These sampaguita leaves were brought by Sister Cathy from our garden in Lupao. The sisters helped decorate the stage so that parents could see the different national symbols. This way, next year, they will be able to do it themselves.

