



# Esperança

## NEWSLETTER

Nº 3 - 2026

### REFLECTION!

#### Peace: An Urgent Commitment to Life

In the last Esperança Newsletter, we invited our communities of sisters and associates to set aside time for reflection on a theme that is so urgent and necessary for our times: building peace amid the realities of conflict, violence, and injustice that we encounter in the world and around us.

Based on this invitation, four questions were proposed to guide our reflection and sharing:

- How have I been responding to situations of conflict and violence in the world and around me?
- How can I be a peacemaker in my daily relationships?
- What concrete actions can I take to value and defend life?
- How can we, as a community, contribute to a culture of peace and justice?

The responses received reveal a deep sensitivity to human suffering, but also great hope and commitment. Our communities recognize that peace is not merely a distant aspiration, but a path that begins with small, everyday actions: **listening, dialogue, respect, the defense of human dignity, and care for life.**

The reflections that follow invite us to listen to different voices along our journey and to realize how, in different realities, we are called to be a presence of mercy, justice, and peace.

**For Silvânia, an associate member,** the reaction to violence is marked by “sadness and indignation, but also by taking a stand and a commitment to peace.” She emphasizes that we cannot remain indifferent, but are called to get involved—through listening, paying attention to injustices, and taking concrete actions that promote peace in our relationships and in the spaces where we are present.

Among the concrete actions we can take, Silvânia highlights the importance of participating in deliberative or consultative councils within the institutions to which we belong, remaining attentive to situations of conflict and injustice, and carrying out actions that promote human dignity and love for our neighbors. She also invites us to exercise our responsibility as citizens by seeking to learn about and elect political representatives committed to life, justice, and initiatives that contribute to the common good.

When reflecting on the community’s contribution to a culture of peace, Silvânia reinforces the importance of being attentive to situations of violence around us, promoting opportunities for education and dialogue, and engaging people in the pursuit of peace and justice. She also reminds us that civil

participation is essential, since our choices are part of the decisions that influence people's lives; electing good politicians is part of our contribution to promoting peace.

**Maria José, an associate member**, expressed her outrage at injustices and reinforced the call to “join hands and fight for human dignity.” For her, promoting peace means loving, evangelizing, showing mercy, and helping people understand their rights and duties in society and before God.

**Janaína, an associate member**, invites us to realize that peace begins with small, everyday actions. She emphasizes that choosing not to spread fear or hatred, listening attentively, welcoming others, and practicing acts of solidarity are concrete ways to build peace. For her, when we gather as associates and as the Movement of Mercy, we create an “oasis”—a space where justice and peace can become ways of living together.

**Sister Júlia, from the Philippines**, shared that news about wars, violence, and injustices stirs up feelings of fear, sadness, concern, and compassion for those who suffer. She reminds us that we can be peacemakers in our daily relationships through attentive listening, empathy, respectful dialogue, forgiveness, and the search for solutions rather than blame.

**The Bayeux community, made up of Paula and Jessica**, shares their sadness in the face of violence in the world and in their local reality. They highlight the importance of prayer, support for families affected by violence, and, above all, education for peace. In their work with children and families, they seek to teach that violence does not solve problems and that dialogue, listening, and respect are paths to reconciliation.

**The Heitel community, made up of Dalva, Lusinete, and Joérica**, shares feelings of fear and insecurity in the face of violence close to their daily lives, especially regarding young people and situations of conflict. They emphasize the importance of prayer, care, listening, and creating environments of trust where everyone can feel welcomed. They also remind us that our actions speak louder than words: small gestures of respect, kindness, and care can transform realities.

These different testimonies show us that, although we live in diverse realities, we share the same desire: **to defend life, promote human dignity, and bear witness to peace**. We are called to cultivate peace within ourselves, strengthen our relationship with God, and recognize His presence in every person.

May our communities continue to be spaces of welcome, dialogue, and hope, where peace is not merely an ideal, but a daily choice lived out through concrete actions.

# BRAZIL

## Policy on the Protection of Children, Adolescents, and Vulnerable Persons

*By: Sr. Kardenea and Silvânia Tereza (associate)*

The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of Mercy, is recognized for its evangelical spirituality, its witness of sharing, its preferential option for the impoverished and excluded, its life of engagement, and its social struggles in defense of life.



As a concrete initiative, the team in Brazil responsible for the Policy on the Protection of Children, Adolescents, and Vulnerable Persons presented and discussed the Protection Policy document with educators from the Dom Helder Câmara Foundation, which comprises four sectors. This initiative took place over two

meetings, through an educational lecture, with the aim of presenting the principles, commitments, definitions, and guidelines necessary for the policy's implementation.

During the sessions, we emphasized the importance of preventing violence, sexual abuse, and the abuse of power and trust within institutions, reflecting on how to respond to possible suspicions or behaviors that may indicate risky situations.

We also emphasize the importance of promoting and protecting the rights of children, adolescents, and vulnerable individuals, outlining the procedures that all educators must follow to prevent harm to their physical, psychological, and moral well-being, as well as to respond appropriately to any suspected violations of these rights.

We also presented the listening space and available contact channels, with the goal of fostering safe, healthy, and welcoming environments in the spaces where social projects are carried out.



The meeting with the educators was very well received and garnered positive feedback. We observed an excellent level of receptiveness, attention, and commitment to the policy's objectives. Through their remarks and contributions, many participants expressed their gratitude, appreciation for the proposal, and willingness to collaborate in building a culture of protection. The implementation of a Protection Policy demonstrates the institution's ethical and social commitment to the holistic care of the human

person, contributing to healthy development and the promotion of human rights, as well as the building of relationships grounded in respect, trust, and justice.

The International Province's protection team consists of the following individuals:

- **Sr. Julia Bantian** - team coordinator
- **Sr. Kardenea Matias Luiz** - psychologist
- **Mrs. Silvânia Tereza Batista Monteiro Lima** - Pedagogue

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Protecting children, adolescents, and vulnerable people is not only a legal obligation but a moral duty of society as a whole. When protection becomes a collective responsibility, we strengthen the creation of safer, more humane environments that foster the growth and well-being of everyone.

## Santa Rita: Between the Pain of the Flood and the Power of Solidarity



The year 2026 will be etched in the memory of the people of Santa Rita as a time of great challenges. The overflowing of the Paraíba River caused one of the worst floods the city has experienced in recent years, primarily affecting families living in low-lying areas, especially those near the river. In all, about 21,100 people were affected by the rain, and approximately 900 families were left homeless, facing moments of fear, insecurity, and significant material losses.

Our sisters live in the city of Santa Rita, in the Heitel Santiago neighborhood. Although the neighborhood is located in a higher part of the city and was not directly hit by the floodwaters, the sisters followed the situation faced by so many families affected by the flood with close attention and solidarity.

The situation experienced in 2026 reminds us of the great flood that occurred in Santa Rita in 1985, an event that also left deep marks on the city's history. Comparing these two moments invites us to reflect on the signs of climate change, which have contributed to the occurrence of extreme events with greater frequency and intensity, affecting primarily the most vulnerable populations.



Faced with the force of the floodwater, many families were forced to leave their homes. Some displaced people were taken in by the Santa Rita Center for Art and Culture, while others sought shelter at the homes of relatives, waiting for safe conditions to return to their homes and begin the process of reconstruction.



But amid the pain, fear, and uncertainty, a powerful testament to hope also emerged: **solidarity**. The community came together to form a support network to help those most affected by the rain. Many people mobilized to collect food, water, cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene items, offering tangible assistance to families who had lost practically everything.

The City Government also carried out initiatives to support affected families by distributing “New Start Kits,” containing essential items for those who lost furniture and appliances in the floods, such as stoves, refrigerators, beds, televisions, and fans. The initiative aims to ensure basic conditions so that residents can rebuild their lives with greater dignity following the damage caused by the rains.

According to city officials, the priority has been to provide assistance to affected families since the rain began, offering support so they can start over safely, with dignity, and with hope. Teams from Civil Defense, Social Services, and Health remain mobilized, monitoring high-risk areas and providing support to those who are homeless or displaced.



The flooding in Santa Rita reminds us that, in the face of human frailties and the challenges posed by nature, solidarity is a force capable of transforming realities. When a community unites to care for its own, God’s presence is revealed through concrete gestures of love, sharing, and mercy.

May this experience strengthen in all of us the awareness of caring for our **Common Home** and the commitment to building a more fraternal society, where no one is forgotten and where hope can flourish even in the midst of difficulties.

## The National Pre-Congress of New Generations (Northeast Region)



From May 22 to 24, 2026, the pre-congress of the New Generations from the Northeast region of Brazil (Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte, and Sergipe) took place in our community in Cabedelo, Paraíba, bringing together young men and women religious from different congregations for a meaningful time of encounter, listening, spirituality, and fraternal communion.

Inspired by the theme “**Walking toward Jesus in a time of transition**” and by the Gospel passage “**Born of water and the Spirit**” (John 3:5), the gathering provided moments of reflection, sharing, and encouragement for the vocational and missionary journey of the new generations of consecrated religious life.



The meeting was attended by the national president of the **Conference of Religious of Brazil (CRB)**, **Sister Maria do Disterro Rocha Santos**, and the national advisor for new generations, **Father Flávio José**, who closely followed this important moment of formation, dialogue, and hope for the religious youth of the Northeast region.



May the fruits of this gathering continue to inspire our new generations to live out God's call with joy and courage during these times of transition.

## Festa Junina

June is an extremely important month in Brazil, as it is the month of the June Festival. It is the country's second-largest national celebration. The month honors three important Catholic saints: Saint Anthony (June 13), Saint John the Baptist (June 24), and Saint Peter (June 29). These dates are celebrated with large street festivals, bonfires, and the Quadrilha (traditional Brazilian folk dance performed during the June Festivals).



On June 20, we celebrated the traditional June Festival at our schools; many people took part in the celebration, the children performed the traditional dance, and the venue was filled with music, dancing, food, colors, wonder, and joy.



# PHILIPPINES

## The Moving-up Ceremony

On April 13, the SCMM Daycare and Learning Center held its 13th Moving-up Ceremony. This moment marks a very significant milestone in the children's lives, celebrating their growth, their achievements, what they've learned, and the confidence they've developed along the way.



It's hard to believe how quickly this year has flown by!

When these children first arrived at our doors, they brought large backpacks and even greater curiosity. Today, they move on to a new stage as more confident readers, enthusiastic storytellers, and friends capable of building relationships based on affection, respect, and friendship.





Throughout this year, we didn't just learn the alphabet and basic math concepts. We also learned essential values: **sharing, being kind, caring for one another, and celebrating our classmates' achievements.**

To our graduates, we want to say: you are smart, brave, and ready to start first grade. Never stop believing in yourselves and never lose that sparkle that makes each of you so special.

This ceremony marks the end of an important stage of early childhood and paves the way for a new journey of discovery, learning, and growth.



Congratulations to the kindergarten graduates! May this new stage be filled with joy, dreams, and many achievements!

## Sister Melin's 25 Years of Religious Life

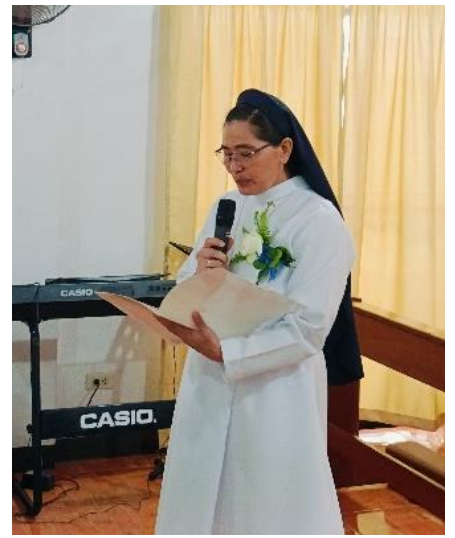


With hearts full of gratitude, we celebrated Sister Melin's 25th anniversary of religious life on May 30. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Father Paul P. Silva and attended by the Sisters, family members, and friends, who came together to thank God for the gift of her vocation and for her journey of dedication and service.

"These have been twenty-five years of faithful service, generous dedication, and a loving witness to God's call. May the Lord continue to bless her with strength, joy, and abundant

graces as she carries on her mission of faith, love, and compassion."

**Congratulations, Sr. Melin, on your Silver Jubilee!** May your life continue to be a sign of God's presence and an inspiration to many.



# UNITED STATES

## U.S. Community Gathering



During the summer break, the sisters and associates in the United States had the joy of gathering once again. Each gathering is always a special occasion for fellowship, joy, and the renewal of the bonds that unite them all. It is a time when they share life as it is: with its blessings, joys, challenges, and the difficulties that are part of the journey.

At this gathering, the sisters also had a meaningful moment of reflection and sharing about how they wish to prepare for their own funerals—a profound theme that invites contemplation of life, the mission

they have fulfilled, and hope.

Everyone's presence is always deeply meaningful and appreciated. At this gathering, we felt the absence of Barbara Connell, Pauline, and Paula, who were remembered with great affection by the entire community. Barbara is recovering from femur surgery and received the sisterly support of everyone through prayers, affection, and wishes for a speedy and full recovery. Paula and Pauline were also remembered with affection.

The gathering was also marked by the celebration of **the 70th jubilee of religious life** for Sisters **Janice and Alice**. With gratitude, the community celebrated their long journeys of faithfulness, love, and service.



Among the words, wishes, and blessings offered to them were: **joy, love, grace, enthusiasm, understanding, and serenity; a cheerful and exuberant spirit; a calm, kind, and compassionate spirit; a continuous connection with nature;** and, of course, **moments of joy with ice cream sundaes drizzled with hot chocolate sauce!** They also wished **peace** and a deep **spirit of mysticism**.

May the lives and testimonies of Sisters Janice and Alice continue to be a blessing to all, inspiring others with their presence, wisdom, and dedication.