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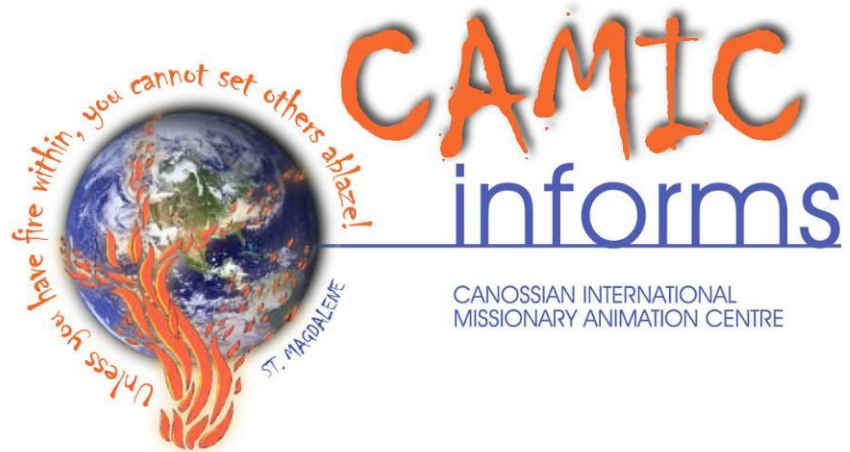
It is a monthly publication, aiming
to pass on information about the
missions and between the Canossian
Missionary Centre and the Provinces.

**We invite the Canossian Sisters
to collaborate in sharing news
and Information about
their missionary activities.**

We would like to receive the said news
not later than the 20th of each month
at the address below. Thank you!

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CANOSSIAN INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONARY ANIMATION CENTRE

**missionary
church
events**



2ND FEBRUARY 2016



**WORLD DAY
for CONSECRATED LIFE**

*Consecrated life is a great gift to the Church and for the
Church. In our time, too, and especially in our today, with
its charisms, Christian life is a specific witness of faith and
the charity of Christ, in order to be servants of the Lord
and of our brothers and sisters. We must proclaim the beau-
ty of following of Christ by means of our daily life in frater-
nity and service.*

7th February 2016

**38th National Day for life:
"Mercy makes life bloom"**



*"We are God's dream who, as a true lover, wants
to change our live."* With these words Pope

Francis invited us to open our hearts to the Fa-
ther's tenderness *"who in his great mercy has given us a new birth (1Pt 1:3)* and
made our lives bloom.

Life is change: mercy, indeed, changes our outlook, extends our hearts
and transforms our lives into gifts: thus, God's dream is realized.

Life is growth: real growth in humanity takes place, first of all,
thanks to maternal and paternal love: "a good and family education is the
backbone of humanism." "A society becomes strong, grows in goodness,
beauty and in healthy if it builds itself on the foundation of the family."
Taking care of the other person – in the family as well as in school – offers a
horizon of meaning to life and makes society become fully human.
(Permanent Episcopal Council)



news flash from the missionary centre CAMIC

CURRENT NEWS

Recently a small group of Sisters, coming from various countries, has arrived at our Missionary Centre to follow a two-month-Charismatic course (**1st January – 29th February**). **The theme is: “Magdalene and her companions: joyful and prophetic witnesses”.**



The sisters are: **Sr. Kadi Marie Stella** – Congo - , **Sr. Borges Tavares Maria de Fatima** - San Tomè -, **Sr. Fundulo Manuela Beatriz** – Angola -, **Sr. Duje Ana** – Argentina - , **Sr. Roblero Figueroa Andrea** – Argentina - , **Sr. Bodei Maria Grazia** - Italia - (Iseo).

They have come with a lot of enthusiasm in their hearts and a great wish to know better our Mother, **St. Magdalene** and to experience serene and true relationships in our community life. Already in these first weeks they have tried to create, both in the group and in our Community of St. Michael, a relaxing and serene atmosphere, giving all their contribution. To create even more union and solidarity among the Sisters, has contributed even the sorrowful loss that has hit one of the Sisters.

In fact, after only a week from her arrival, Sr. Fatima’s mother passed away. **In that circumstance, the love and prayer of all of us have made Sr. Fatima feel the support that she needed in a moment of so deep a suffering.** It is sad to receive the news of the death of a dear person when we are too far and cannot do anything, either for her or for the other members of the family... **but all is in the hands of God...**

Sr. Fatima did not leave, because, anyway she would not have reached in time for the funeral. We prayed together and a special Mass has been celebrated by a Canossian Father. **This has been a great consolation for the Sister.**

Certainly this formation period, marked by suffering from the very beginning, shall bear abundant fruits in the hearts of each Sister, fruits that each Sister will share once back in her Province and in her Community.

But they will share with us as well, in these pages, the richness of their experience and we thank them in advance. Meanwhile we wish them a good formative journey, a rich experience of Community life and a deep encounter with Magdalene, especially during the Pilgrimage to the places where she lived and gave birth to our Institute.

INFORMATION

IMPORTANT DATES, EVENTS AND CONFERENCES



04.02.2016 World Cancer Day – Every year a tumour is diagnosed in more than **12 million people** and **7.6 million die because of this illness**. If concrete initiatives are not taken, there will be **26 million new cases**, UICC (Union International Cancer Control) affirms – and **17 million people will die** by 2030, especially in the developing Countries. **Prevention**, the main institutional task of LILT (Lega Italiana per la Lotta contro Tumori), is the most efficacious means in order to fight tumours, to live well and longer; there are daily and simple rules: **stop smoking and the negative effects of passive smoking, limit the use of alcohol, follow a healthy diet, sporting activities, avoiding too much exposure to the sun.**



06.02. International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation – Female genital mutilation (MGF), is a traditional practice carried out in mainly in 28 countries of Sub-Saharan Africa for reasons which are not therapeutic. **Such practices strongly damage the psychological and physical health of young girls and women who undergo this abuse.**

The World Health Organisation has estimated that already **130 million women in the world**, have been subjected to this practice and **3 million young girls risk this mutilation every year**. For this reason, on **6th February**, **throughout the world**, the **International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation is celebrated.**

11.02 . XXIV World Day of the Sick – Entrusting oneself to the Merciful Jesus like Mary: «Do whatever he tells you» (Jn 2:5) ...On this World Day of the Sick let us ask Jesus in his mercy, through the intercession of Mary, his Mother and ours, **to grant to all of us this same readiness to be serve those in need**, and, in particular, our infirm brothers and sisters. At times **this service can be tiring and burdensome**, yet we are certain that the **Lord will surely turn our human efforts into something divine**. We too can be **hands, arms and hearts which help God to perform his miracles, so often hidden**. We too, whether healthy or sick, can offer up our toil and sufferings like the water which filled the jars at the wedding feast of Cana and was turned into the finest wine... Even though the experience of suffering will always remain a mystery, **Jesus helps us to reveal its meaning**. (From the Message of Pope Francis for the XXIV World Day of the Sick 2016)



13.02. World Radio Day – This day celebrates the radio as a **means to improve international cooperation** among all the stations of the world and **to encourage the main networks and radio stations so that they may promote free access to information, freedom of expression and respect of other cultures.**

It has been a long up-hill journey, **lasting 117 YEARS**, since the invention of the Radio, before the Academia Espanola de la Radio, which **had launched this request to UNESCO**, obtained the long awaited recognition for the celebration of the **“World Radio Day”** on the day the first radio transmission from the headquarters of the United Nations took place, **13th February 1946**. **46 Radio stations** sustained this initiative because they understood the important role that Radio carries out today since it is the most widely diffused **<means>** of communication in the world.

20. 02. World Day of Social Justice - Social justice for every individual is at the centre of the global mission that the **United Nations** carried out to promote human development and dignity. The **20th February** is the day **chosen to remind world public opinion that it is necessary to double the efforts of all member States so as to ensure a more just and fair world for everyone**. “Celebrating the World Day of Social Justice helps us to see that in many places **the opportunities have increased only for a few people while inequalities have increased for many others.**”

Increasing inequalities threaten the work of the international community in its efforts to **free millions of people from poverty** and to build a fairer world. Weaknesses are visible in the fall of salaries for women and young people and limited access to education, health services and satisfying employment. We need to strengthen and set up institutions and develop policies that promote inclusive development. By adopting the Millennium Objectives for Development, world leaders have committed themselves to create a more just and fair world. Great progress has been made in creating opportunities for more satisfying jobs, to enhance social security and improve public services ... **but a thousand million people still depend desperately on our determination and efforts.”**



8th February

St. Bakhita



NO to human trafficking!

The Second International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

Every year, **on 8th February, the Feast of St. Bakhita**, this day has been chosen to remember this fact because this saint, during her life, passed from slavery and suffering, due to Human trafficking, to freedom. We have **a consecrated woman as a friend** in this journey and this **reminds us of the importance of being and acting in God**, though we notice that human trafficking, unfortunately, is not eradicated...

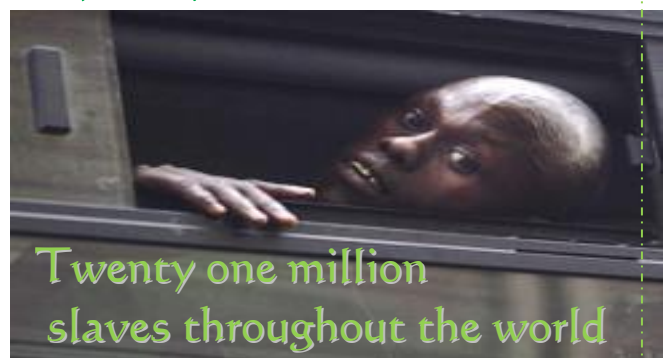
The best way for everyone to celebrate this day is that of praying:

- to understand better the path to walk together towards freedom for everyone and not only for a few lucky ones
- to light up the darkness caused by everything that exploits life for profit, while restoring hope to those who still live the tragedy of human trafficking, so that they may realise they are not alone
- to transform our minds and hearts so that we may overcome the tendency of superficiality and indifference which prevents us recognizing in the other person a brother or a sister
- to find strength once again so as to fight altogether
- to recognize and remove the causes which sustain human trafficking in all its modalities throughout the world
- to maintain our efforts in favour of human freedom and dignity
- to live the mystique and prophecy of God's action in history.

May St. Bakhita be close to all those who suffer since she suffered too and sustain the commitment of everyone in fighting for freedom and fraternity which are made accessible to everyone.



Where is your brother
who is a slave and rejected ?



Charism Corner

The Canossian Charism

And our Style of Service

STYLE OF SERVICE

Our concrete sphere of action, of our life, is placed between the fundamental values of Christ's cross and the reality of the poor to whom we must go. The main source is the cross which reveals love to us and inspires us to love. There is a particular style of love which we are called to live in the Canossian spirit and it is the style of service: **humility in charity and charity in humility.**

Service, according in the Biblical sense, is a term which goes back to the figure of the servant of Yahweh.

This is an aspect of the Messiah which is less understood, but which Christ realized better and with greater force, to the point that He confounded those who were expecting Him to be a king. The prophetic aspect of the servant is that which He expressed very strongly from the beginning, from His birth until to the cross, **where most fully and efficaciously, Christ revealed Himself as the servant of Yahweh.**

The four songs of the servant of Yahweh of Isaiah are intentionally very inspiring.

In the New Testament, instead, Paul described this concept so well in Philippians 2:5-11. Also Magdalene (U.R. p. 120) speaks about this with great conviction; it is a biblical term which certainly Magdalene had meditated upon in depth. This passage (Phil. 2) is the only one built on a theological theme; there are six verses, three of these describe Christ abasement of self. **Christ is not jealous of His being equal to God and this brings Him to our human level, that is, he takes on the condition of a servant.**

Service is already Christ's attitude in accepting to be brought to our human level. In the Old Testament, God uses a way of presenting Himself where He has to safeguard His greatness, His otherness, so that He may be recognized as the only one God.

He continually reveals Himself as the One who is greater and stronger than man. When this truth of otherness and greatness is accepted by God's people, **God can present the other aspect of His identity and presents Himself in His intimacy as God-Love.**

Thus He may show that His love can bring Him to become like man: **the incarnation.** God's new style is no more that of saving man from on high, but He becomes like man. This is the servant's style: He emptied Himself, from His appearance of God (not from His reality) and assumes the condition of the servant, becoming like us.

Yet, not being pleased by this, He humbled Himself to a state that was lower than a servant's condition, becoming obedient, even to accepting death and death on the cross.



*"The Spirit
of my Institute,
has for its foundation
charity alone,
and it does not want,
or rather,
I do not want
to have any other Spirit
than sweetness
and Charity."*

(To Marquis Alessandro Carloti)

Christ is the servant because He accomplished salvation through this journey of descent: it is no longer salvation that comes from on high, from Christ the Lord, **but is lived in the style of a servant.** This must become a method of life for every Christian. In the personal experience of our Foundress her journey shows an aspect of great similarity.

Magdalene was born into a rich family, it was in God's plan.

At a certain point of her life, **she chose to become a servant.** More than half of her life was lived in the world and she demonstrated a great commitment of charity to the poor, but this was the charity of a noble lady who gave from her high rank.

Then Magdalene understood that the Lord was calling her to follow the example of Jesus Crucified who humbled Himself in becoming poor. **Magdalene loved so much the name "servant of the poor" that at certain time she signed her letters simply: "servant of the poor",** leaving aside for a sometime *the name of Daughter of Charity*; later she will continue to use both names because it was important to be daughters of this Love and servants of the same Love. Magdalene affirmed that living the Rule meant living the virtues of the Crucified One. In the Unabridged Rule there are three virtues to be privileged.

OUTLINE OF THE RULES

1. **CHARITY TOWARDS GOD**
2. **OBBEDIENCE, VIRTUE OF THE CRUCIFIED ONE**
3. **HUMILITY**
4. **POVERTY**
5. **CHARITY TOWARDS NEIGHBOURS**

@A servant is the one who obeys.

@A servant is a person of humble origin – humility

@A servant is poor to the point that he does not have the right to possess.

This characterizes the figure of the servant in Magdalene's understanding. She described the true spirit which is needed to serve:

- **" ... In this Work the Sisters must really keep in mind what Our Saviour said and did when he appeared visibly on this earth for our Salvation. Even though he was Omnipotent and God most High he stated that he had come to serve and not to be served.** (UR p. 148-149)
- **"The only thing they are forbidden is to accept any charge, even an internal one since, as we have already said, we must serve and not be served"**(UR p. 151)

- **" You know so well, my dear friend, how the Lord, so many years ago, favoured me with the gift of a vocation to serve the poor and how I always desired to carry it out by establishing an Institution of charity according to the spirit of the Institute of the Daughters of Charity. "** (Ep. I, p.434)

Thus, the term "*servants*" is not to be taken lightly.

Magdalene said: **"If you want to be like Christ the servant, you must live these virtues in a practical way. Being servants is important because it is the way which Christ taught and was actually lived by Him and, above all, because it is the best way of manifesting love."** There is always a risk of abusing the conscience of others, approaching others with a kind of chauvinist or materialistic power.

Every kind of love which appears to subdue another person, is not a way of saving the person! **Magdalene says that we not only are the servants of the poor but also that the poor are our masters.**

It is clear that the style of service is a journey; we are not born as servant and we do not easily become servants; **it is a constant struggle.**

Sons and servants repeat the deep meaning of "INSPICE et FAC." I am a son because I live, I take on, I meditate on, I receive the Father's love. I am a servant because I live according to this love.

The style of service is proposed and re-proposed by Magdalene in every sphere, especially in the apostolate. **Magdalene desires a great and universal love,** but always to be lived in an attitude of service; relationships with people of her time reveal it clearly. (Rosmini, Noudet)

The passage of Mt 20:17-20, and its parallels, reveal to us the way pointed out by Christ: the washing of the feet (Jn Ch. 13).

In the history of the Canossian Fathers, it is very significant that the Institute struggled to develop itself. **It is not easy for us priests to be servants.** It is more normal for us to be leaders than servants. This happens too with Diocesan priests who also should be at the service of others; **it is an aspect which is neglected ...** Magdalene tried to develop this particular aspect of service in the priests she dealt with. **And yet Magdalene did not find priests open to follow her in this charism.**

When Magdalene died, there was no one to carry on her charism because, even Luzzo had passed away and for **100 years** there were no priests in the Congregation. There were many boys who frequented the Oratorio, many religious brothers who became priests, but not Canossian Fathers. **Certainly, the Lord foresaw the difficulty to be faced in order to grasp the spirit of service by priests.**



MISSION:

RECOUNTING GOD'S MERCY

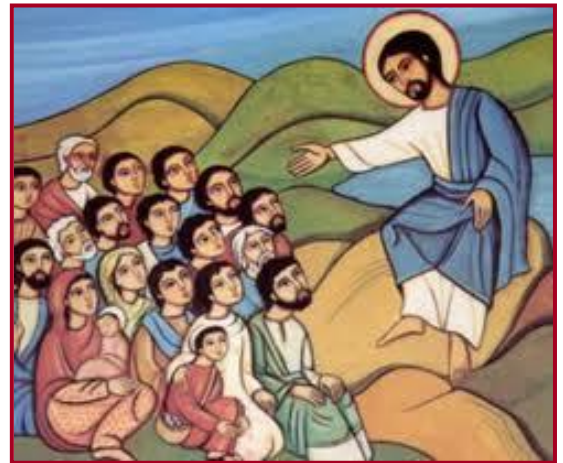
by Giampietro Casiraghi

The evangelists often use a very meaningful verb to point out God's mercy towards us: **«to be moved to one's depths»**, to feel a struggle like that of a mother who carries her baby in her womb. Mercy is like the maternal dimension of love. This term was used by the evangelists in order to describe **Jesus' actions which proclaim His mission.**

Some examples follow: **«So as he stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and he took pity on them because they were sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length.»** (Mk 6:34; cf. Mt 14:14). Matthew uses an expression which summarizes Jesus' mystery: **«And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd.»** (Mt 9:36)

Jesus acts like the God of mercy described in the Old Testament, whose heart trembled while seeing His people oppressed by sins and their slavery in Egypt.

Thus Jesus appears without defence facing human misery and suffering; He is God's incarnated mercy. The parable of the Prodigal Son, or better, the good and merciful Father, a Father with maternal love, is a clear testimony. The whole history of the Old Testament is recalled in it. The younger son (just like Israel), goes away from his father (from God) and experiences sin, poverty and hunger. He remembers the time of abundance and, like the spouse of Hosea, says: **«I will leave this place and go to my father»**. His father is waiting for him and, when his son is still far away, he sees him, is moved with pity, runs to him and kisses him. **The Scribes and Pharisees are bewildered by this behaviour.**



God's mercy extends to all people. Paul particularly underlines this: **«The reason Christ became the servant of circumcised Jews was not only so that God could faithfully carry out the promises made to the patriarchs, it was also to get the pagans to give glory to God for His mercy.»** (Rm 15:8-9). Pagans and Jews, all are equal before God, because everyone sinned and **everyone absolutely needed God's mercy.** This is the theology contained in the Letter to the Romans, summarized with incisiveness and force in Eph 2:4-7: **«But God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus. This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace.»** God saves us because of his mercy. The key word of all human history in relation to God is, thus, mercy.

One of the essential aspects of God's mercy is his gratuitousness. The moment God decided to draw close to humanity and make himself known, he had already decided to forgive them. God's encounter with every human being is always in view of forgiveness, peace and reconciliation.

Salvation history is none other than the story of this encounter which becomes complete and definite in the person of Christ Jesus. **«But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of re-**

birth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our Saviour, he did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.» (Tt 3:4-7). Precisely because it is completely gratuitous, without anything on the part of man who is a sinner, **mercy has to be accepted and believed in**. The Lord is always close to each one of us to grant us his mercy.

Saying God is mercy is saying something unheard of concerning the intimate life of God. Thus it means not only saying that God reconciles us to Himself but even that He reveals Himself as being merciful. This is a mystery which goes beyond our capacity of understanding God in His true reality. It is a mystery the excess of God's gift and mercy, to the point that Paul exclaims: **«God has imprisoned all men in their own disobedience only to show mercy to all mankind [...]. How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – And how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? [...] Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him. To him be glory forever. Amen.»** (Rm 11:32-36)

Therefore the mercy of God is not a secondary attribute of God; it is the same love of God for us. For this reason **God will never repent of being merciful**. Mercy pledges the infinite and eternal love that is God: **«God is love»**, the evangelist John wrote. This is the kind of mercy which totally wipes out sin. **Mercy, which manifests itself through the person of Christ, is never arrogant, but it is that of a kind servant with a humble heart. It does not come from on high, it does not keep distances, it is simple and is at hand.** It is not sentimentalism. God's mercy really wipes out sin. **Its first result is to forgive, to lift up and to guide.**

Sometimes people say that the insistence of Christianity on sin has abnormally obsessed humanity. A certain way to present Christian truths could favour such an interpretation, as well as finding ourselves in front of certain confessors. **It is always important to remember that we can never separate sin from God's forgiveness and mercy.** Mercy is the ability to re-awaken the sinner: **«Though I have fallen, I shall arise; though I live in darkness the Lord is my light.»** (Micah 7:8-9)

Thus mercy is the beginning and end of our faith. Difficulties and the trials of life, for those who accept the word of God, take on a different and new meaning. The world, in its concrete reality of good and evil, seems to be more acceptable. **Together with the trials of life, the believer discovers the maternal and paternal mercy of God.** Only from this perspective one may understand the meaning of events of life and of human history. This is the disconcerting revelation when facing human tragedies: **«You are my witnesses whom I have chosen so that you may know me and believe in me and understand who I am.»** **The one who believes dares to interpret events according to the logic of God's mercy, love and goodness for us, and so acquires the capacity to illumine the harshness of human existence and human history.** Psalm 103:8 reminds us: **«God is tender and compassionate, slow to anger; most loving.»**; these words are taken up by the evangelist Matthew and become a Beatitude: **«Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.»** (Mt 5:7).



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