



SSpS MISSION

Called by the Spirit • Embracing the World

Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters | USA & Caribbean | AUGUST 2022



*Stirred by the
Life-Giving Spirit*

*We invigorate our passion for God's mission.
We seek to cross multiple borders to encounter people
where they are, especially those who are made
invisible or excluded from our world.*

CONTENTS

- 02** Sr. Dorota Maria Piechaczek, SSps
Join Us in the Trinitarian Dance!
- 04** Sr. Yolette Dorce, SSps
A Grateful Journey My Mission Experience in New York
- 06** Sr. Odete Mendonça, SSps
Angola Region
Working with the Lay Missionaries in Angola
- 07** Sr. Bernalde Lin, SSps
Argentina North Province
“Be Ears and Voice” for Migrants in Ecuador
- 08** Sr. Zélia Cordeiro, SSps
Agostinho Travensolo Junior
Brazil
Mission Without Borders
- 09** Sr. Johan Theresa Yu, SSps
South Korea
Together with the Women Victims of Prostitution
- 10** Sr. Patricia Snider, SSps
HSMA - Directress
Will You Be A Unique Voice For Us?

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Join Us in the Trinitarian Dance!

Sr. Dorota Maria Piechaczek, SSps



In the May 2022 issue of SSps MISSION, we shared with our readership the outcomes of our recent General Chapter: introducing our new Congregational Leadership Team and the Chapter Directions. Among other goals for the future, called Directions, we identified “renewing partnership with our Mission Companions”.

The General Chapter of Religious Congregations, can be compared to a meeting of high-level management in the corporate world. It has two main objectives: election of the LEADERSHIP team and setting the new mission program, DIRECTIONS, for the Congregation. In contrast to the exclusively powerful intellectual work at a company meeting, a Chapter is mainly a spiritual exercise. The members of a Chapter devote themselves to deep listening: to each other, to the realities of the world, and most of all to God’s plan for the Congregation. The thrust of religious life is to participate in the mission of God, in the footsteps of Jesus, led and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

The two factors: knowing the goals - Directions, and having the guidance on how to reach them - Leadership are intertwined. Therefore, it is fundamental that the newly elected Leadership is fully invested in the emerging Directions to provide future guidance to the members. Sisters elected to leadership become the Executive Directors. They have the unique capacity to evaluate and interpret realities and signs of the time in view of the Chapter Directions and so guide what is ours to do. The Directions constitute a written document. Yet the words, the intentions and the expressions of commitment need to take flesh in real life situations.

In order for the mind and heart of each Sister to be permeated by the ideas, a lot of reflection, deepening the understanding, and prayer is required. Therefore, we wish to commit to regular sharing with you our Mission Companions. Moreover, we wish to listen to you, dialog with you, create a space for exchange, and journey together with you.

The document that presented the Directions of the previous Chapter (2014) began with these words: “Our story began in the heart of the Trinity....” The Blessed Trinity continues to be the heart of our being

and of our mission: "Immersed in the Trinity..." Chapter (2022). As a missionary Congregation, we place ourselves with the Disciples of Jesus who were commissioned: "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Mt 28:19). The charism of our Congregation is to announce the Gospel, the Good News of God's love and salvation to all people, to all creation.

No scholar can exhaust the mystery of the one God and three persons. Could this be the Triune God's intent, so that we are always intrigued and attracted to learn, to listen, to bend our knees in awe, to grow in a desire to be illumined, to experience the mystery even for a flitting moment? In the process we might just learn to wait, to know that we will not know until we surrender to the unknowing. This 'getting immersed in God's life' might lead us to reclaiming our deepest identity -being created in the image of God. (Gn 1:27) Our Constitutions express it this way: "Our missionary vocation draws its vitality from our faith in the Holy Triune God dwelling in our hearts." (Prologue) In modern contemplative language we could say that the core of our being is God, inviting us so to live out of this center. Surrendering to the God within us will allow God to take possession of us, to use us according to and for God's purpose. God's life is living itself in me. I am aware of Life living itself in me.

Scottish theologian Richard of St. Victor (1110-1173) reflected this early theology. He taught at great length that for God to be truth, God had to be one; for God to be love, God had to be two; and for God to be joy, God had to be three! (*Richard of St. Victor, Book Three of the Trinity, trans. Grover A. Zinn (Paulist Press: 1979)*)

God is Love. The concept is so simple and so challenging at the same time because in God love becomes a verb. The real and essential point is how the three "persons" relate to one another: infinite outpouring and infinite receiving.

The Mystery of God as Trinity invites us into full participation with God... a flow, a relationship, a waterwheel of outpouring love. God is a verb much more than a noun. Some Christian mystics taught that all of creation is being taken back into this flow of eternal life, almost as if we are a "Fourth Person" of the Trinity, or as Jesus put it, "so that where I am, you also may be" (John 14:3). (*Richard Rohr, The Shape of God: Deepening the Mystery of the Trinity (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2004), CD, DVD, MP3 download.*)

Those who follow this God will be led through transformation to become witnesses of love. Ultimately, we are called to live out of our identity as 'imago Dei', empowered and sent "to make God, One and Triune, known, loved and glorified by all people." (SSpS Constitutions - Prologue). Being absorbed by and habitually returning to the school of the Trinitarian relationship of loving and 'serving the other' will make us fit to be instruments of God's plan for the world, of furthering God's Kingdom of peace, love and justice. Join us in the Trinitarian dance!



A GRATEFUL JOURNEY

MY MISSION EXPERIENCE IN NEW YORK

By: Sr. YOLETTE DORCE, SSps



Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

Last year on a sunny day I left Chicago for my 6 months mission experience which usually happens during the second year of the novitiate. On the 17th of August 2021, at 7:30 a.m. I was on the road to O'Hare airport. I was ready to go to New York even though my head and my heart were full of questions and fears, such as: "What are you going to do over there? What kind of mission is there for you? Will the Sisters appreciate my coming there?" and more of that kind... Despite all these questions mixed with some anxiety, I was excited to go there, to see what it is like, and I even entertained the hope of having a chance to see some of my cousins who live in New York and who I haven't seen for about 16 years.

My mission experience began the first day when I arrived there at about 2:30 pm. As the Sisters who I was going to live with in that community would do every evening; go for a long walk to the famous globe "The UNISPHERE" the shiny symbol of Queens, N.Y. that sits in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. That was a nice introductory visit. To be followed by three major things in our lives there: 1. moving the community to a new house, 2. two community members: Sr. Helen going back to India and Sr. Ancy going to Mexico for some months to study Spanish, and 3. time of registration for the new year of Religious Education, to begin on September 12th. That was a bit unsettling, but in spite of all of this I wasn't afraid because I held on to the thought "God wants me to be here at this moment." As Sister Xaveriana is DRE in two parishes the registration for these classes had to be done in both parishes. Every Sunday she went to RA (Resurrection Ascension) parish while I stayed at OLA (Our Lady of the Angelus) parish for all the three Masses to accommodate the people.

Then the time came to move to the new house. I wouldn't say it was easy, but it wasn't difficult either because we, Sr. Xaveriana and I did the work in stages, as we had time; every afternoon after work we packed anything that could fit into the car brought it to the new place, unpacked it and put it into place. That was hard work, but we did it! Later I remembered a specific day and told the experience again to Sister Xaveriana. We had a good laugh about it then. On the evening when we were to leave the old house for the last time to go to the new house we still needed to take three important things for which we needed real muscle strength in moving them. These treasures were the tabernacle, and the statues of Mary and Joseph. I could have said a prayer for strength, but I just sat in front of them and let them give us strength and help us in this task. That heavy tabernacle only men with good muscles can lift; both of us did it twice: we got it into the car and then from the car into the new house. God is good, I have to say again and again.





When the Religious Education Program was about to start, each of us went to one of the two schools. We set out early because we had to open the rooms for the volunteer catechists who came early in order to prepare something before class. In the beginning, I was a substitute teacher, but soon there was a need for a teacher and I taught my own class. Some of the classes were done via Google Meet, which I had to learn in a few hours; I had never done it before. I also joined the church choir at RA and I loved it.

During my six months in New York I had the chance to visit many places. I also had a chance to see some of my cousins as I had wished. The most important thing, though, that I experienced and never thought I would, was the fact that I was noticed and appreciated by many people of the two parishes by the time I came back to Chicago. I thought of myself as not being important and not being able to do anything that would make strangers there remember me. It was a great surprise to me how a little kindness and attention can be a great gift to people. I also challenged myself to never say "No" to do things for and with others, even if they seem difficult. By the grace of God and the gift of creativity that God gives me, I could do things that even "New Yorkers" could appreciate. I received many cards with words of appreciation that made me very happy and grateful. Those six months of mission experience were a great gift of grace to me. They affirmed my belief that God is always with us. I am most happy that the Holy Spirit guided me through it.

I would like to share with you some photos and some words of appreciation from cards I received from some teachers.

Father Richard writes: Yolette, you will be in my prayers; your enthusiasm and spiritual joy has inspired me... keep well and never lose the happiness that is yours as a handmaid of the Master...

From Heidi: You are a beautiful soul and God loves you... I wish your faith will become even stronger and God's love will keep you going...

From Bill: I am so sad to know you are leaving. It has been a pleasure getting to know you... Your friend forever. Keep smiling always.

From Bee: Beautiful day of your departure (2-22-22), but sad for us whose hearts you have touched..... Thank you Sr. Yolette for always being very helpful to me, guiding my needs every step of the way; I shall never forget...

There were lovely notes from the six sisters (Sisters of Charity of Halifax) who live on the second floor in (RA) and many other people. Unfortunately, I cannot share all of them. When I told my students that I will leave New York in a week and I wouldn't see them anymore, one of them said: "Why do you have to go, you don't love us?" I had to think of a good answer quickly to explain it. I tried it the funny way and everyone agreed with me to have to move.

Father Richard said in one of his homilies, that no one is immune to fears and anxiety when going to a new place. That certainly was my case. Now I am grateful to God, to the members of the PLT who thought to send me there, to the members of my community who introduced me to the people and the mission work there. I am grateful to all the Priests and the staff in both parishes, the catechists and volunteers, the students and their parents. And of course, to Sister Xaveriana and the Sisters on the second floor, and to my cousins and families. In a word, to all the people I met in New York who showed such appreciation, love, and care, and who made my time in New York so memorable and so rich in missionary learning and insight. May God bless all of them abundantly!





WORKING WITH THE LAY MISSIONARIES IN ANGOLA

SR. ODETE MENDONÇA, SSPS
REGION OF ANGOLA

The apostolate with the laity, the Missionary Association of the Holy Spirit (AMES), in Angola, has been a work of patience, searching, care and encouragement, providing a space for listening in the midst of the diversity of cultures.

We have grown a lot together, because we have a common point of view that is Jesus Christ, centered in the Triune God. The accompaniment of the laity has taught me to look for creative ways to hold meetings. I feel that it has been enriching to transmit our charism and spirituality to them.

The first step was to show them how the lay missionaries came into the congregation and what their work was, so that they feel they belong to the group.

We have a group of about 40 members and an annual program of meetings. With the pandemic, we had to suspend our meetings, and online meetings were not successful, as not everyone has access to the Internet. Time passed and the pandemic slowly stopped. Now it is permissible to gather a group of up to 20 people. So the time came to have our long-awaited moment again.

For 2022 I looked for other dynamics to motivate the meetings. I invited Sr. Ana Elidia Neves with the theme: Non-violent Communication and Sister Petronela Boonen with the theme: Restorative Justice. I am thinking of inviting Sisters from other countries to offer different topics online for the group. For me life is made of encounters, nobody lives alone and we need each other to walk.



With creativity, Sr. Odete motivates the group of lay missionaries to return to the meetings after the interruption due to the pandemic.



"Be Ears and Voice"

for Migrants in Ecuador

Sr. Bernalde Lin, SSps – Ecuador / Argentina North Province

For many years, Ecuador has been a receiving country for migrants and refugees, mainly from Colombia, who have left their native country due to violence and guerrilla warfare and, in the last four years, from Venezuela, due to the country's crisis.

I arrived from Indonesia in 2019, to work with migrants and refugees, during the Venezuelan migration wave. Accompanied by Sister Ruth Christian, I visited the Office of the Jesuit Service for Migrants and Refugees, and applied to be a volunteer in one of the shelters in the south of Quito.

Also, I was a volunteer at the "Buen Samaritano" shelter of the Oblate Sisters and Caritas Nacional in the center of Quito. When they asked me about my profession, I replied: "I am a social worker, I want to 'be ears and voice', I offer myself for whatever is needed".

I attended the psycho-social part. Every day the shelter received 250 people who could stay up to a month, after which they had to find their own way in life. To accompany them, I had to stay the night, because during the day they went out looking for work.

I went to the Jesuit reception center three times a week to interview the migrants and find out why they had left their country and whether they had entered legally or illegally. I visited the people who had already left the shelter, living in rented houses nearby, to learn about their material and psychological needs, their rights and dignity as persons.

I thank the Triune God for having fulfilled his dream in me, of being "ears and voice" for my migrant and refugee brothers and sisters.



MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS MISSION

BRAZIL 2021

AGOSTINHO TRAVENSOLO JUNIOR, PROFESSOR & ADVISOR OF BRAZIL N. SSPS COLLEGES
& SR. ZÉLIA CORDEIRO, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR – BRAZIL SOUTH

To evangelize the students through missionary actions, to enlighten them with Trinitarian spirituality, to grow in communion with the global reality and attentive to the needs of the excluded are the objectives of “Mission Without Borders”.

The arrival of the pandemic and the need for social isolation meant that many activities, especially school activities, gained virtual space. The third edition of Mission Without Borders was made possible thanks to the use of the Zoom platform and took place on 25 and 26 June 2021.

With the theme “United in diversity and respect”, the meeting brought together about 100 people including young people, educators, coordinators and directors of the schools. The Colégio Stella Matutina, from Juiz de Fora - MG, was the host school of this edition which crossed the borders to include the students of Brazil South Province and Argentina Misiones.

This helped to unite and connect the students even more with diversity, highlighting the experience of the social projects that the schools carry out with the active support of the students and collaborators. In addition, the young people were called to make a difference, helping those most in need and caring for nature. The Students did their best and as a practical action, in tune with a more sustainable planet, each delegation planted a tree as a sign of commitment to life.

The virtual edition of “Mission Without Borders 2021” responds to our quest to “educate by evangelizing” and “evangelize by educating” the students who pass through our schools. This is an initiative of the Network of Schools run by the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit in the Province of Brazil North which began in 2017.

“Educating and evangelizing are goals to be pursued”

St. Arnold Janssen



Together with the Women Victims of Prostitution

Sr. Johan
Theresa Yu, SSpS
South Korea

From November 2019, Sr. Pacis Kim and I started working for women victims of prostitution through the Women's Human Rights Center called 'Shego', which means 'Resting', in Paju, South Korea.

For women who have survived prostitution and now live alone, support and medical care are what they need most. Even today, many women are suffering and wandering in the scene of prostitution. We need a great courageous act to be with them, look after them and try to help them. The daily programs such as field visits, counseling, legal and medical support, and education are great challenges for us.

We support the victims of prostitution who quit this work to help them become independent in society. Medical support such as obstetrics, gynecology, dentistry, and mental health is given priority.

Periodically we visit places of prostitution, distribute promotional materials, newsletters and contact information about our center 'Shego' where they can get help at any time. I personally meet women and provide psychological and emotional support, especially for victims with extreme stress.

The psychological counseling and other help leads them to a good out-come of self-reliance. They appreciate our help and want to volunteer themselves with a grateful heart. I am grateful for the time I spent with them in this ministry and I pray that these women can find their own lives.



WILL YOU BE A UNIQUE VOICE FOR US?



From the beginning of the Holy Spirit Association in 1957 in Steyl, Holland, it was strongly felt by the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters that the gospel cannot strike roots among a people without the active presence of the laity. Filled with the spirit of Christ, they become a leaven transforming the whole world from within.

Then in 1979, realizing the need for the Association to share in the prayers and the “mission”, the name was changed to the Holy Spirit Missionary Association. It is an Association of Christians who grow into a closer relationship with the Holy Spirit, experience the unity of the living, loving Trinity in today’s world and carry out the mission of the church where they are the bonding with the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters around the world.

From the 2022 General Chapter we were given this directive:

Impelled by the Spirit’s call to the church for a synodal journey, we expand our collaboration, networking and interconnectedness. We listen in a special way to the voices and the rhythms unique to lay people who seek to live the SSpS charism and spirituality as partners/companions in mission.

We want to offer our partners/companions monthly meetings, prayer days . and frequent written communication along with an invitation to join us for special celebrations .This can be by attendance or virtual means. The invitation to join us in our mission outreach is also open to all of our partners/companions.

We hope that some of you will join us in our new program. Please let me know soon so that we can make arrangements with you.

Sr. Pat Snider, SSpS

Holy Spirit Missionary Association, Directress

Congratulations!



St. Kitts
(Holy Spirit Pre-school)
2022 Graduates



Jamaica
(Our Lady of the Assumption
Elementary School)
2022 Graduates



**Holy Spirit
Life Learning Center
Summer Peace Camp
Chicago (Rogers Park, IL)
2022 Campers**

We are happy to celebrate with our 2022 graduates from our schools in St. Kitts (Caribbean) and Jamaica, and our campers in the Holy Spirit Life Learning Center Summer Peace Camp (Chicago). We extend our appreciation to the Sisters, Staffs, and volunteers who collaborate in mission to promote quality Catholic education and support programs for children in our mission programs. We also extend our prayers of appreciation to our donors who support us in mission through their generous financial contributions. Your generous support helps to make these milestones possible. May God bless you!



Join Us in Mission

Meet some of our Sisters and learn about our mission service with "Christ Over Coffee" Through your prayers and generous support, YOU are in mission with us!



 **YouTube** @holy spirit sisters usa

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Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters are an international—intercultural community of 3,000 Catholic, religious women, serving in 48 countries. Missionary activities include pastoral work and catechesis, education, nursing and health care, social work, adult education, and many other services to promote human dignity.



Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

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