

... that ALL may know You...^{John 17,3}

Salvatorian Women – Apostles of Our Time



Dear Sisters, Novices and Candidates,

Every day the media gives us news about world events that could easily fill us with fear and helplessness. We are aware of many things, formerly certain and secure, which are now rapidly breaking down. Moreover, in your daily work, whether in Africa, Asia, America or Europe, you meet suffering that is largely ignored by the media: the exploitation of women and children and the violation of entire regions and continents for consumption and profit by the few, the emptiness of the young and the old who see no purpose or sense for their lives and the life-threatening poverty of the people in the always faster-growing slums of the mega-cities.....

Confidence – our mission today

For Father Jordan, experiences of fear, helplessness and uncertainty were always new impulses to **anchor his trust completely in God**. In our daily discernment, we might ask ourselves whether the experience of powerlessness and fears (of all kinds) in our personal lives, in our community and in the unit leads us into discouragement, pessimism/negativity and resignation or whether we make space for courage, joy, love, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, gifts named by Saint Paul as the mark of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22).

The world needs a confident, fearless people trusting in God and the gifts of Holy Spirit at just this very time. This is an important mission that we have as Salvatorians today anywhere in the world to whom we are sent, to peoples and places where each of us lives in trust.

Our history is full of evidence of Salvatorian trust. **The passion for the mission, that ALL know and love Him**, enabled Salvatorian women and men of every age to not be captured by the temptations to stop and just discuss ideas or to focus on the difficulties and see nothing else. Being deepened by their Salvatorian vocation to follow Jesus helped them to overcome these temptations over and over again.

125 Years Mission in Northeast-India



In 1890, two years after the founding of the Congregation, there were a total of seven Salvatorian Sisters. From this small initial group, 125 years ago, Maria of the Apostles sent the first three sisters, who had just made their perpetual professions, into an area that was rejected by other missionary orders because of the harsh living conditions. On December 12, 1890, Sisters Laurentia Heilmeyer, Benedikta Ruderich and Scholastika Hopfenmüller, together with four Salvatorian men, began their boat trip to Assam in Northeast India into a completely uncertain future. From their letters and chronicle notes, we get insight into the extraordinary experiences of these first years.¹ On January 17th of the same year, Father Francis Jordan had already sent the first two Fathers and two Brothers to India, including the

¹ *STUDIA DE HISTORIA SALVATORIANA, Salvatorian Sisters in Northeast India (Assam), SHS 9/1; This SHS volume is available in English, Italian, Swahili and German.*

Photo: Salvatorian Sisters in India at the tomb of the first sisters in Assam, Northeast-India

most important missionary, P. Otto Hopfenmüller, who died six months later in Assam.

Salvatorian Missionary Year

We want to give special time and space to the memory of this extremely bold decision of our Founders to place complete trust in God. The Generalate of the Society took the event of the sending of the first missionaries as an opportunity to proclaim a "Salvatorian Missionary Year."² As a Congregation, we are happy to accept the invitation to celebrate this commemorative year from **January 17, 2015 to December 8, 2015** together as a Salvatorian Family and to encourage all, in the places where there are several branches of the Salvatorian Family, to be inspired by common activities for our mission today.

The missionary vision of Father Jordan and Mary of the Apostles, *that ALL may know Him*, is carried out today by the expansion of Salvatorian presence throughout the world. Due to their universal character, Salvatorian communities combine diverse nations, ethnic groups, cultures, languages and ways of thinking to work together in common **to be in solidarity with the suffering world, so that all may experience the fullness of life.**³ In this way, Salvatorian life is also a model for the world community of nations so that they too may see that cultural diversity is an asset and not a threat.

Year of Consecrated Life

Many of you have already planned how you will make use of the "Year of Consecrated Life," proclaimed by Pope Francis from the **First Sunday of Advent 2014 to February 2, 2016.**

On the one hand we are invited to internal renewal and, on the other hand, to look for creative ways to make Salvatorian religious life tangible to all who are in contact with us. The concurrent Salvatorian Missionary Year encourages us to revitalize our Salvatorian identity by deepening and reflecting inward while, at the same time, presenting ourselves outward to all.

We want to experience the Salvatorian Missionary Year and the Year of Consecrated Life as God-sent gifts through which He shows us his loving concern. The awareness of this grace-filled time will help us to make a new beginning every day as apostles of our time to announce Jesus as the Savior to ALL.

In communion with you,

Sr. Edith Praunberger
Sr. Maria Janeth Krumm
Sr. Lilly Keiser
Sr. Marion Eysel
S. Yerson Schloechl
Sr. Marta Gloria Mesa Garcia

Rome, October 11, 2014

² Internet: www.sds.org under: Apostleship – Missionary Year 2015

³ Enactments of the XX General Chapter of the Sisters of the Divine Savior, October 1 – 31, 2012