



TYBURN MISSION NEWSLETTER

Christmas 2024

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Dear Friends,



Another year is coming to an end and once again we have the privilege of accompanying our Lady in spirit as she prepares for the birth of her holy Child.

Unexpectedly, she had to make a journey, by a long and difficult route. It is likely that this census caught her by surprise. Perhaps she had expected to bear her Child at home with friends and family around her. Or again, she may have hoped that relatives or friends would give them lodging in Bethlehem. Yet she found herself in a strange town with no lodging but a stable and that is where the King of all Creation willed to be born. St John Paul II said of her: "From Mary we learn to surrender to God's will in all things. From Mary we learn to trust even when all hope seems gone. From Mary we learn to love Christ her Son and the Son of God." With Mary's help we can prepare our hearts for Jesus to be spiritually born anew in us this Christmas.

GENERAL CHAPTER 2024



This year representatives from all our houses were able to gather for the General Chapter. Due to Covid we had not been able to travel in 2020 for the usual four yearly General Chapter. So it had been eight years since we had last held a Chapter and it was wonderful to see our Mothers from across the globe assembled in the Motherhouse. We were able to hear at first hand the blessings and challenges faced by each monastery during these years. One primary blessing for which we thank God was not having lost any of our members, in any part of the world, during the Covid outbreak. This was also due to the guidance of our Superior General, V.R.Mother Marilla. We thank God that she has been reelected this year to continue leading the Congregation for the next four years.

NEWS FROM OUR MISSION FOUNDATIONS

Monasterio Puerta del Cielo Vicabamba, Ecuador



The country of Ecuador has been passing through difficulties over the last couple of years, so it was a particular blessing that the 53rd International Eucharistic Congress was held in this country from September 8 to 15 2024. Msgr Ignacio Munilla from Spain spoke at the conference, noting that Ecuador was both the first nation to consecrate itself to the Sacred Heart of Jesus 150 years ago, and the first country in the world to organize a National Eucharistic Congress in 1866, a milestone in the Eucharistic history of the country and the world. He also stressed that, “the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is very closely linked to the Eucharist” ... “From the Heart of Jesus flows the Eucharist and communion transforms our heart of

stone into a heart similar to that of the Lord," so that "frequent communion and Eucharistic adoration will ... make the miracle of interior transformation that we need".

The little town of Vilcabamba is one part of Ecuador that needs this transformation. It might be remembered that our monastery is situated in an area renowned for its beauty as well as for its health and longevity benefits. Called the Valley of Longevity, the mineral rich water of the river is said to be the key to the villager's long life and good health. Since the 1970's, when it became known, there has been a major influx of foreigners to the area, including the rich and famous, and it is now sadly being titled 'Paradise Lost' where crime is on the rise, along with New Age and occult practices and use of drugs. Perhaps this is the reason that the Bishop of Loja, back in 2002, sought religious to establish a house in this



particular area. On the practical side, with the increase of crime there is a need for proper enclosure walls, doors and gates. We have had

good vocations from Ecuador and two of them were participating for the first time in our General Chapter. With more foreigners and less native people, the Sisters have seen a decline in Mass attendance over the years. Yet there are still many who come from Loja for retreats.



The Sisters at Ecuador write "We have had the joy of a gift of a washing machine from a benefactor, may God ... bless her and her family. Mrs. Laura and her husband and Mrs. Lleni are also harvesting the coffee. There were retreat guests such as the Franciscan Friars and the Oblate Sisters. All of them were very happy. We had the harvest of oranges, sapotes, limes, lemons, etc...With God's blessing, the rainwater is for all the lands so that there is no shortage of grass for the animals. Our rabbit Felpa has given birth to many bunnies and they are very pretty...We have sold some of our sheep, now there are 4 sheep and 11 goats and Mother Eucaris is taking care of them with great affection. The celebration for the centenary of the passover of our Mother Foundress

took place on Saturday, June 22 at 11:00 am. Father Luis gave us a



beautiful and touching homily. There was also a program of dances and music. There were about 180 people. Everyone ate and were grateful and so were we.

Monasterio del Paraclito Divino **Guatape, Colombia**



Although the present government in Colombia may not be the best to say the least, yet in the quiet area of Antioquia, within which our monastery is situated, much has changed over the years. When we first arrived the terrorist groups were still very active in that area, and reports of attacks and killing were daily heard. Every family in the nearby town of Guatape had lost

at least one of their relatives to these terrorist attacks and the fear and suspicion could be felt. While we were never targeted, thanks be to God, the nearby monks were once held at gun point while their monastery was robbed of supplies. We had gone to Colombia primarily to pray for peace and now give thanks to God that this mission has been fulfilled as regards external peace. The terrorist groups are now largely disbanded and Guatape, with its stunning blue lakes has become a popular tourist resort – something that is almost unbelievable to those who lived there in the earlier troubled times!

One interesting and topical event which took place recently was the visit of the pilgrim statue of our Lady Queen of Peace (from Medjugorje) to Guatape and to the monastery. The Sisters and some of the friends of the monastery attest that this visit of the statue brought much spiritual healing to the township. The monastery too seemed to be blessed in a special way with peace and joy. This event almost seemed to herald the recent Vatican approval of the Medjugorje devotion!



Thanks to donations from all our Mission benefactors, the monastery

is in quite good condition now. The roof has been successfully repaired and so the dampness in parts of the interior is improving.



There remains however, much needed repairs to the small retreat house nearby.

An exciting venture for the future has been proposed by our oblate neighbour who owns some property adjacent to ours. She would like to use her land as a place for education and retreat for a Catholic group, and plans to install a



large Cross and Statue of our Lady on the top of the nearby hill. It was agreed that it would be a good idea to start the Stations of the

Cross near our shrine of our Lady of Hope and ending at her Cross.

However, we ask your prayers for vocations which have been slow to come in this country.

Tyburn Monastere du Coeur Eucharistique de Jesus, St Loup, France

This is our most recent foundation but perhaps the oldest monastery. It is also the most challenging country in which to maintain a community. Surprisingly, the 1901 anti-clerical laws that originally drove our Foundress and her newly established community out of France remain partially in force and the taxes are astronomical.

However, as the birth place of our Mother Foundress and our



Congregation, it is considered important to maintain a presence there and there can be no doubt that France needs prayers for a new re-evangelisation. In the little town of St Loup there are no practicing Catholics and the people are on whole not very friendly. In the words of one Mother: *The Tour de France – (a cycling race) was passing right past our Monastery and it is considered once in a lifetime experience.....none of us here knew much about the Tour de France but we had heard of it. The locals were*

going all crazy excited about it and for us I thought it would be an opportunity to witness and show the locals that we existed. Unfortunately many of the people here never understood our Contemplative way of life, They were very much used to the previous communities that lived here who were active Sisters and joined local events etc, so they did not understand our enclosed contemplative life and



there was a sort of an invisible but tangible wall. To try and break this invisible wall I asked VRM if we could “show our faces during the Tour de France” when the cyclists passed and she said yes. So on the 7th July there was much excitement – children running around everywhere, all roads closed off etc.....When we stepped out onto the sidewalk at 3.30pm there was loud applause!! At first I did not realise it was for us, but

then we heard the loud speaker announce:

“The Benedictine Sisters have arrived!! hooray!! ”

Then another round of loud applause from the crowds standing in the streets!! It was a nice surprise and at last people were happy to see us.....and a few ladies came up and spoke with Mother Narcissa because they saw her on television! So there is still hope and we continue to pray for the people here.

The Sisters are grateful that they have been able to start work on the roof that the angels were holding up. The angels may now relax for a time! Next, they need to repair one of the stained glass windows, part of which was broken as well as major cracks in the old walls. There is still work to be done too, on the roof of Marie Adele’s house in Grancey.



Monasterio del Sagrado Corazon, Sechura, Peru.



It is with sadness that we share with you the decision of the General Chapter to relocate our monastery in Peru which involves closing the one in Sechura. In a recent visitation the monastery was found in very poor condition. The monastery is built in cement for a desert environment, but Sechura is becoming more humid and there is light rain at times. In times of El Nino, there is an abundance of rain and even flooding. This is causing the foundations of the monastery, composed of sand and building debris) to wash away and the cement to gradually dissolve. The rusty iron supports within the cement columns are partially exposed and it is likely that the roof of the chapel will collapse sooner or later. There are other problems such as excessive noise, now that the town has grown so much all around the monastery. Perhaps also due to the size of the

town there is not enough water to keep the orchard alive and some of the trees are dying. The water sent is not clean, so the sisters have had to begin buying water to drink.

The last concern which involves nearly the whole of Latin America, and the Caribbean is that of Dengue fever which has surpassed historical records in several nations with a combined total of 9.3 million cases so far. It can be a serious malady and sometimes causes death. Last year the whole community had this fever. It seems that unusual weather patterns has caused the increase in a particular type of mosquito that transmits the fever. Let us pray for all these peoples that God in His mercy will soon grant a remedy to this situation.

All these difficulties combined proved to be unsurmountable and





the best solution found was to relocate the monastery. It will remain in the Piura diocese, and a property will be sought in the highlands.

As with Colombia where our mission was to pray for peace, the former Bishop of Piura had a particular reason for asking us to come. That was to pray for priests and priestly vocations. Happily, the number of seminarians soon increased thanks to the goodness of God. At the present time there are about 35 but like the rest of the world, vocations are in a decline so we must continue to pray for this intention.

The community has many friends in Sechura and its surroundings and has been there since 1976, so as can be imagined, it is very difficult to say goodbye. Yet as the Scriptures remind us, in this world we have no lasting city and must attach ourselves only to the things that endure forever. There is also the consolation that we are

not leaving the area entirely, only moving further away.



THANKYOU for your generous support of these mission monasteries! May the good Lord reward you a hundredfold and bless your families and loved ones also. You and your intentions are remembered in the daily prayers of these monasteries and a monthly Mass is celebrated for the souls of all our departed benefactors.

May you have a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. May our the Divine Child Jesus, with His Mother and St Joseph keep the joy of Christmas ever in our hearts.

With our affectionate greetings,
The Tyburn Nuns