**OLC Council of the Union meeting held at the Good Shepherd Generalate**

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity held their annual meeting of the Council of the Union at the Good Shepherd Generalate on February 18-27 this year.

The meeting is the equivalent of an enlarged general council meeting, the members comprising the leaders of each region and province and the central team. For the past three meetings the superior general of the North American Union (NAU) plus a member of her team have also participated, since the decision of NAU to discern the possibility of becoming part of the international Union.

The Council meets to reflect and discern together on issues that concern the whole Union and is a concrete way of living co-responsibility, decision-making process and internationality. The main focus of this year’s meeting was the forthcoming general Chapter that will take place in the NAU general administration house of

(Continued on page 5)
tion, promising to place the new foundation under his jurisdiction and assuring the purchase of a place.

1981 was the hour of God, “Come,” He seemed to say, “set up your tents in this city sanctified by the steps of St. Paul.”

To find a house was not easy but Fr. Paul Sleiman, called us impatiently, “Come and a house will be found.”

Trustingly, Sisters Marie Rose Abou Jaoude, Colette Hourani, and Yvette Maroun went over. Fr. Sleiman invited them to a mass celebrated at the “House of Ananias” where St. Paul had recovered his sight and was baptized. Sr. Yvette Maroun generously agreed to stay with the Little Sisters of Jesus for the first contacts.

While waiting to find our premises, Msgr. Francois, the Greek Catholic Bishop offered a temporary house. Sr. Yvette and Sr. Alice Aoun came to live there on Feb. 2, 1982. Many things were lacking, especially in the kitchen: rickety chairs, a box of tomatoes for a table and some plates and silverware given by a friend were the only conveniences. But every beginning has its discomforts as well as its humor.

On June 26, 1981, a house was finally found in Bab Touma and the deed of sale was signed on the feast of the Sacred Heart. Bab Touma is an area populated by mostly poor people.

On Feb. 8, 1982, the house was inaugurated with a mass celebrated by Bishop Abou Mokh. Present were Sr. Rose Abou Jaoude, Provincial, sisters who came from Lebanon, as well as religious, friends and neighbors in Damascus.

After many difficulties and thanks to the courage of the sisters forming the community, an apostolate conformed to our charism began to shape up. Many girls and women seek refuge with us as they search the solution to their problems. Soon the place became too small and there was need to enlarge. On Jan. 13, 1988, the General Council gave permission and financial aid to purchase an adjoining house. A first Mass was celebrated in the new Oratory on April 30, 1990. The new house became the Sisters’ residence while the original house was retained for the apostolate.

Silver Jubilee Celebration
A quarter of a century has passed since the Provincial Council named Sr. M. Alice Aoun (died Feb. 27, 1995) and Sr. M. Yvette Maroun to cross the threshold of the house provided us by the Greek Catholic Patriarchate. It was a very simple arrival, in a small van with a few things, under a soft rain.

And since that Feb. 2nd of 1982, the house has welcomed so many assaulted women, women seeking refuge with their children, young girls in danger, the marginalized. We are also involved in visiting the women’s prison.

This 2nd of February 2007 was very special. Joy radiated from the hearts of all the sisters who had worked in this apostolate. But the greatest joy was that felt by the sisters who are still running the center at present: Sisters Etienne Karam, Therese Moussallem, Lolita Hussein and Claude Naddaf. Day 1 – “Open house” for all our collaborators in social services: UNICEF, UNHCR, Organization of Syrian Women who fight for the rights of women and children, representatives and heads of the prison. It was a homogeneous mélangé of Moslem and Christians concerned with human well-being. An atmosphere of peace and serenity filled all hearts. Simple and familiar encounters took place in every corner of the house and one can hear words of praise and gratitude to the Lord for all the good done in the house.

Day 2 – an extraordinary sharing during our prayer: the office of St. Mary Euphrasia in Arabic. Our Moslem women collaborators made intentions composed after reciting the Koran. It was very deep and prayerful.
Day 3 – the apotheosis. A solemn mass in the Melkite rite was celebrated by His Beatitude, Patriarch Gregoire Laham in the Patriarchal Church. About 30 sisters came from Lebanon, headed by Sr. Souhaila Bou Samra, our Provincial. Many priests, religious men and women, laity and government officials participated in the Eucharist.

In his homily, the Patriarch stressed the work accomplished by the sisters in the past 25 years. It is like the grain of wheat which dies in order to bring forth much fruit, he said.

At the closing Sr. Souhaila thanked the Lord for the 25 years, for the efforts of our sisters in favor of the insecure of this world. She thanked all those who had been involved in the foundation and those who are still actually helping: the church, the Congregation, lay people and our sisters, those present as well as the absent.

To our great joy, a message of Sr. Brigid Lawlor, our Congregational Leader was read to us. In it we felt her benevolence and encouragement for this part of the Good Shepherd mission in Syria and we thank her with all our heart.

A “vin d’honneur” ended this beautiful day and after the salutations, it was departure time, especially for our sisters of Lebanon who have a long trip back home!

Ad Multos Annos!

SILVER JUBILEE ...
(Continued from page 2)
Workshop for Provincial Treasurers held in Rome

Three Good Shepherd Sisters participated in this year’s workshop for Provincial Treasurers organized by the Association of English and French Speaking General Treasurers in Rome from March 13-30.

Srs. Jayantha Meepala of Sri Lanka/Pakistan, Amani John Koudi of Sudan and Louise Horgan of East Asia joined the course held at Marist Brothers Generalate in Piazzale Marcelino Champagnat, 2 in EUR.

Fifty-one (51) treasurers from 27 religious congregations of men and women joined this activity; they work in 28 countries in the different continents.

The three-week workshop included morning and afternoon sessions. Morning sessions about Accounting were conducted by Br. Yvon Bedard. The afternoon sessions were devoted to various conferences including: Stewardship and Spirituality of the Treasurer, by Fr. Kevin Mowbray and Sr. Helena Coskeran; Role and Responsibility of the Treasurer, Fr. Tom O’Brien; Applying for Aid and Grants, Br. Peter Campbell; Juridical Questions: Civil, Canonical and Patrimony, Sr. Sharon Holland; Investing, Br. Yvon Bedard; Financial Reporting, Sr. Susan Welsby; and Managing the Office.

The workshop also featured Accounting with computers and tutorials for those participants who would like extra help with accounting. Round table discussions on the Relationships of the Treasurers, and Finance Commissions were also held.

The association has organized several workshops for treasurers during the past 10 years. This year’s workshop was conducted in English.

Sr. Helen Anne Sand, general treasurer of the Good Shepherd congregation, and past president of the Association of English and French Speaking General Treasurers, said that the group launched last year the third edition of the Manual for General Treasurers in three different languages- English, French, Italian. (RK)

AWARD...
(Continued from page 3)

tress. The center is located in Bab Touma.

The Human Rights Prize, granted by the Prime Minister is awarded every year by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights. It was created in 1988.
Carrollton, Ohio, from 1 – 19 July. There was also shared reflection and conversations on other issues of importance to the Congregation:

Sister Victoria Gz de Castejon rscj, general secretary of UISG, who has facilitated OLC central leadership teams and international meetings and Chapters for 12 years shared her understanding of Confidentiality and also the challenges facing international religious congregations today.

Evelyn Fergus, rgs, helped us reflect and share experiences on the whole area of good professional practice in our ministries and the importance of having clear policies and guidelines at general level for the Congregation and the necessity for each region and province to develop ones specific to their reality.

On the first evening of the meeting, Brigid Lawlor, Evelyn Fergus and Armelle Dehennault joined the group and with OLC central team shared the experience of the historic meeting of December 18 which led to our dream for a re-establishing of our Congregations into one single Congregation. There was then a sharing by everybody of the responses from the sisters to the invitation issued: the tremendous joy and sense of the Spirit working strongly in this invitation, as well as the fears and wonderings as to how this might come about. Brigid and Armelle also shared a little of the life and mission of RGS in China and Vietnam and were assured of special prayers as they prepared to set off the following day for a visit to both countries.

On Monday, February 26, the bursars, (treasurers) or financial advisors of the provinces and regions joined the group as we reflected on how to ensure the best international management of the shared patrimony of the Congregation. Sr. Helen Anne Sand, treasurer general of the Good shepherd sisters attended the day’s meeting.

The meeting was facilitated by Janice Rushman, rgs (from the province of Mid North America) who will facilitate the general Chapter and Ethna McDermott collaborated as secretary to the meeting.

It was a wonderful experience of living together for the 10 days. In the evaluation each participant expressed the conviction that the welcome, availability and sensitivity of the general community and the different exchanges and sharing - Eucharist, mealtimes etc. – contributed greatly to the success of the meeting and the sense of being one family and at home.

Sr. Angela Fahy OLC Congregational Leader
Ecumenical prayer highlights condition of women in Paraguay

Sisters from different congregations joined Good Shepherd Sisters and staff of the Generalate during the World Day of Prayer on March 2.

World Day of Prayer is an annual activity, organized by women from various ecumenical groups worldwide.

This year’s prayers, with the theme, “United Under God’s Tent”, were prepared by the women of Paraguay.

During the prayers, stories of six Paraguayan women representing different walks of life—small farmers, academics, artists, women of other ethnic groups, emphasized the condition of women in the country. Many women are affected by discrimination and violence, there are more and more teenage pregnancies. Women’s organizations respond by trying to improve access to education especially for women and girls. Most of the women in Paraguay are occupied with ensuring the survival of their families.

A Ñanduti lace was at the center of the prayer. The typical Paraguayan craft resulted from a creative marriage of indigenous and European culture. The various patterns correspond to the rich natural world of Paraguay and are joined by a single thread. The circular shape of the Ñanduti lace symbolizes the perpetual presence of God.

During the sharing, Alessandra Baldi, lay administrative assistant at the Good Shepherd Generalate, and volunteer of Sharing Fair reported her experiences of helping women in Paraguay who make Ñanduti lace. The Ñanduti lace that the women make are sold through Sharing Fair.

Part of the prayer is an act of solidarity with the women and a collection was a sign that people live in this world as sisters and brothers sharing the same problems, supporting each other by prayer and trying to share material goods with each other. The amount collected would be for the projects of the women in Paraguay.

The sisters who joined the celebrations were the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SND), the Missionary Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception (MFIC), the Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux (SFB) and the Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing (OSB).

Several of the sisters and staff during prayer, and snacks.
Visit to the Generalate

His Eminence Gaudencio B. Cardinal Rosales, archbishop of Manila, visited the Generalate on March 8, international women's day. He met Sr. Brigid Lawlor, congregational leader and the sisters of the Generalate.

Cardinal Rosales was in Rome to attend the meeting of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. After his elevation as Cardinal in March 2006, Cardinal Rosales visited the Generalate. At that time, Sr. Brigid and the congregational leadership team were visiting the units. As a young boy, Rosales studied at St. Bridget's College in Batangas City, Philippines.

March 8 is International Women’s Day

Since its observance in the 1900s, this celebration gains global recognition across developed and developing nations. The United Nations designated 1975 as International Women’s Year. International Women’s Day is a reminder of the need for continued vigilance and action to ensure that women’s equality is gained and maintained in all aspects of life.

Province of Australia/Aotearoa/New Zealand

An Award for dedicated service to the Good Shepherd

Mr John Date, a lawyer and friend of Good Shepherd in the Province of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, received an Australia Day honour in the 2007 Honours List.

Australia Day, 26th January, is marked with special celebrations around the country and Honours are bestowed on citizens for their commitment and dedication to society and community.

John received the Medal of the Order of Australia for “service to the community through providing assistance and support for the programs of a range of Catholic religious orders.” He will be officially presented with the OAM by the Governor General later this year.

John has worked with many different religious congregations. He has provided legal and financial help and advice in an honorary capacity to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd for more than 40 years.

- Sr. Caroline Price
Province of Belo Horizonte

Fraternity and the Amazon

Green will be the sign of hope
In the Amazon “corner” of the alliance
Without the evil born of greed
With Christ who renews all things
We shall see a new earth,
A new earth where justice reigns

(Hymn, CF -Campaign of Fraternity-- 2007)

The Amazon will be the focus of the CAMPAIGN OF FRA-TERNITY, 2007 with the theme “Life and Mission in this land.”

In 2002, the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (NCBB) created an Episcopal Commission on the Amazon. Its objective was to help the Church of Brazil turn its eyes to the Amazon and become aware of the great challenges for evangelization in this region. The choice of the theme “Fraternity and the Amazon” is an expression of the episcopate’s pastoral preoccupation with the region. CF2007 (Campaign of Fraternity 2007) could be a privileged occasion so that all of Brazil get a deeper awareness of the complex problems of the Amazon and turn to it with more effective initiatives and policies.

When we speak of the Amazon, what comes to mind immediately is the environmental question: the great rivers, the immense forests, the devastation of green plants, and the menace to the rich biodiversity. We follow apprehensively the occupation, very often predatory, of Amazon territory, that its complex and delicate ecosystem will be respected. The egoism and profit in the exploitation of its riches, neglect and imprudence, seriously threaten this natural patrimony which is not only for Brazilians. The devastation of the Amazon will be a loss and a threat for all humanity.

The Amazon also brings to mind social and anthropological questions: the indigenous peoples, their life and culture disturbed and assaulted, the emptying of areas which are still sparsely populated; the chaotic growth of urban centers; the use of vast tracts of land for cattle raising; conflicts on occupying and degradation of the land.

The impact of urbanization, of globalized economy and culture on the local population generate the problem of migration with its social, cultural and religious uprooting. In the heart of the Amazon and not only in the area of Manaus, are found the social problems typical of metropolitan and industrial areas of Central and Southern parts of the country; the lack of infrastructure and public services in the new towns and the explosive urban realities like unemployment, violence and the degradation of traditional customs.

Moreover, the Amazon represents for the Church an ensemble of new challenges to her evangelizing action. The migrations will bring to the Amazon hundreds of millions of people from all parts of Brazil. This will lead to the creation of new towns/cities which will require help for their religious life and structures for ecclesial life. The dioceses and prelatures in that region were generally helped in the past by foreign missionar ies. They served the church with human and material resources that came from outside the country.

Today, these resources are drastically reduced and the churches of the Amazon still cannot face alone the immense task of evangelization. How then care adequately for the catholic communities dispersed in this vast territory? The intense action of non-Catholic religious groups is seriously questioning the capacity and

(Continued on page 12)
Province of Mid-North America

Appreciative Inquiry Process.

A Directive

One of the strong directives we set at our Province Chapter in 2006 was to “develop a province-wide plan for communities and ministries and maximize the use of our resources” – a daunting task, to be sure. How could we go about this project in a way that would involve all our Contemplative and Apostolic Sisters as well as all our Good Shepherd People?

We were blessed with an answer to our dilemma when a member of our Inter-Province Visioning Commission (a gentleman from Canada who has been a co-worker with Good Shepherd for many years) introduced us to the Appreciative Inquiry Process.

This process seemed to offer promise. A second blessing came our way when we discovered that there would be a training program for Appreciative Inquiry offered just a few weeks later in Taos, New Mexico. The four members of the Apostolic Leadership Team were free to go, but regretfully, the members of the Major Council had other commitments. Well, those who went would share what they learned.

Learnings

What have we learned about Appreciative Inquiry? It is a process for helping organizations effect positive change, for bringing about whole system transformation. While not denying that problems and challenges exist, nevertheless the approach is from a positive perspective. The process seeks to “create an alignment of strengths in such a way that weaknesses become irrelevant.” According to Appreciative Inquiry, as we speak, so

4-D Model

The framework for Appreciative Inquiry is the 4-D Model. The 4 Ds are Discovery, Dream, Design, Destiny. The first step is to identify the focus or topics to be studied and to state them in an affirmative manner. A questionnaire is then crafted to guide the Discovery phase. The key to success of the entire project rests on a compelling question directly related to each topic to be discussed.

For the purposes of the Province of Mid-North America, during Discovery, everyone in the province will be interviewed, Sisters and Good Shepherd people, as well as other stakeholders such as Board members, clients, benefactors, etc. The interviews will be conducted, whenever possible, in improbable pairs, that is persons who do not know each other or rarely have the opportunity to interact. The purpose is both to build relationships and to discover the wisdom, common values and creative thinking of everyone in the province because all have something to contribute.

From the sharing of the interviews, we will discover our tangible and intangible assets – the values and other elements and factors that contribute to our success. We will identify our positive core, who and how we are when we are at our best.

Also through the interview process, we will hear one another’s hopes and dreams for our shared future. This leads to the Dream phase wherein we will name many possibilities for what could be and state them in a bold and compelling way, as if they had already happened.

In the third step, Design, we look at all the possibilities of what could be and decide what should be at this moment in our history and going forward. We also determine all the factors and resources that will be necessary to make the design a reality.

Finally, we enter the Destiny phase of which the object is to ensure exceptional execution of the priorities and directions that have been agreed upon. Interested persons volunteer, or are assigned, to innovation teams who work on particular projects that will put the various design

(Continued on page 10)
elements into action.

**Introducing the Process to other communities**

Following the training in New Mexico, the Contemplative and Apostolic Leadership Teams designed a mini-process to introduce Appreciative Inquiry to each community and to the leaders of our ministries. The Apostolic Team divided into pairs and visited each apostolic community.

The Contemplative Major Council decided that their full Team would visit each Contemplative community. The ministry leaders came to the Province Center for a retreat. We are pleased to say that the Appreciative Inquiry Process was very well received by Sisters and lay co-workers alike.

Encouraged by this response, the two Leadership Teams – Contemplative and Apostolic – participated together in an advanced training in Appreciative Inquiry. The more we learn and experience this method for effecting positive change, the more encouraged and confident we feel about entering into our own province-wide planning, and engaging in it with a process that is truly a “Good Shepherd” way of proceeding.

**Sr. Janice Rushman**

---

**Profession de vows in India /Nepal**

From left to right, Srs. Hnas. Lourdumary Gnanapragasam, Arockia Mary Savarimuthu, Olivia Xalxo and Alphy Joseph.

Four sisters from the Province of India /Nepal are making their final profession of vows on March 25 and 29 in India. Srs. Alphy Joseph, Lourdu Mary Gnanapragasan and Arockia Mary Savarimuthu will pronounce their vows during a Eucharistic celebration to be held at the St. Anthony’s Boy’s Hall in Bangalore, India. On the other hand, the ceremonies for Sr. Olivia Xalxo, will be held in Garratola, Madhya Pradesh.

Sr. Bridget Paily, provincial, and the Good Shepherd Sisters of India/Nepal shares this news to us with joy and gratitude.

---

**MID NORTH AMERICA...**

*(Continued from page 9)*

Sr. Janice facilitates the meeting of the Our Lady of Charity in Rome.

From left to right, Srs. Hnas. Lourdumary Gnanapragasam, Arockia Mary Savarimuthu, Olivia Xalxo and Alphy Joseph.
On January 9, 2007, we, Srs. Gabrielle Rossard and Marie Theresa Nicolas of Our Lady of Charity in Caen as well as Srs. Marie Ange Correia and Maggy de Vaugiraud, of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Angers pitched their tent in Roubaix, (a city North of France and so close to the Belgian border), in the old rectory of Saint Michel. It was a little adventure!

Our objective is to build a community that welcomes young women of foreign origin. Roubaix has a huge population of immigrants, in particular single women with their little children. We hope to help the women as they look for work and eventually find a place to stay.

The indispensable and necessary work to begin a community has not yet begun. However, we wanted to come, discreetly, to get to know the people, and gradually get acquainted with this city.

However much to our surprise, since the first day, we received a most cordial welcome, and little by little began to discover a warm acceptance from the parish, the Christians and the neighbors. Upon our arrival a magnificent bouquet of flowers awaited us... it was only the beginning! Children of the catechism class brought an azalea, Christmas roses since we arrived at Christmas time, a family brought a pie and a card with these words: « welcome to you sisters, we will try to do whatever we can to help you in your new foundation.»

And, all along this first month contacts with the people continued... « we don’t want to disturb you, but we will come to see you... ». On February 8, we received a floral arrangement and in the middle of which was a small sheep (the person did that not know that it was for us a feastday) ! Recently, following a neighbor’s visit, a cyclamen with these words: « Thank you for the time and the welcome that you have given me ! »

In front of the house is a small piece of land, some of us had to have a heart to do a serious cleaning of the small garden... but we have made enough contacts, several of the passersby offered a helping hand...

On our part, we have made contacts with the office for migrants; we have been invited to installation of the mayor of the city, and participated in an ecumenical meeting. Our community took the name of « Rose Virginie »!

May Mary, Mother of Mercy, St. John Eudes and Saint May Euphrasia help this new seedling to grow and bear fruit : fruit of love and tenderness of the Jesus Christ to those in need.

Good Shepherd Sisters and Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, Roubaix

New community in Roubaix

Visit our website
www.buonpastoreint.org
Good Shepherd News

While each unit is encouraged to send articles anytime during the year, we have planned that there are specific issues when each unit is asked to submit an article so that at the end of the year all the units have been part of Good Shepherd News. Please send articles on or before the 5th of each month.

Here is the suggested schedule:

January
Commissions, CLT. Other news

February
China District, Argentina/Uruguay, France/Belgium, Kenya

March
Mid North, Spain, Belo Horizonte, Bogota

April
East Asia, Bolivia, Germany

May
Chile, Great Britain, Lebanon/Syria

June
Austria/Switzerland/ Czech Republic, Egypt/Sudan, Ecuador, Japan

July
India/Nepal, New York, Central America, Hungary

August
Indonesia, Medellin, Senegal, Ireland/Ethiopia

September
Philippines, Mexico, The Netherlands, South Africa

October
Singapore/Malaysia, Peru, Italy/Malta, Portugal/Angola, Canada

November
Sri Lanka/Pakistan, Recife, Paraguay, Spain, The Isles

December
CLT, Australia/Aotearoa/New Zealand, Mozambique, Venezuela

Invitation
Please send articles, photos with captions for Good Shepherd News to:
REGINA KUIZON
Casa Generalizia,
Suore del Buon Pastore
Via Raffaello Sandiello 20
00165 Roma, Italia
Email: ginargs@buonpastoreint.org

― Sr. Maria das Vitorias Freitas Silva and the Good Shepherd Sisters of Belo Horizonte

Join us in our ministry of communication.

Good Shepherd News is in need of translators

English to Spanish  English to French  Spanish to French

Contact: Sr. Regina Kuizon
ginargs@buonpastoreint.org

Good Shepherd News

Special thanks to the following for the translation:
Srs. Karla Bernabé, Evelina Coronel, Magdalena Franciscus, Gisele Lalonde, Adriana Perez, Digna Maria Rivas, Delia Rodriguez, Ana Lucia Sanabria, Mary James Wilson, Ms. Claire Alessandri and Mr. Michel Ferrer Bonneville