

Volume 7

The Associates Newsletter

Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition

May Edition 2010



*“Go, and with what you have
do all the good you can”*

St Emílie de Vialar

Invitation

The Sisters and Associates

*are invited to attend a special Mass
to celebrate together the*

Feast of St Emilie de Vialar

on

Sunday 20th June

at 11.00 am

in

Our Lady of Fatima Church

8 Foss Street

Palmyra WA

(Corner of Foss and Hammad Streets)

*Enter Foss Street from Canning Highway opposite 'McDonalds'
(Parking available off Hammad Street)*

*This celebration is being jointly organised by the
Sisters and Associates*

*Following the Eucharist you are all invited to
share in a 'finger food' lunch in the Parish Centre
(Please bring a plate to share)*

We look forward to seeing you all there

RSVP: *by Friday 4th June 2010*

Telephone: (08) 9335 1639 (Germaine Matison)

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SJA Associates

St Joseph's Convent

96 Campbell, Road, Canning Vale WA 6155

Mary's House

reflections from Sister Alma Carey

Some years ago whilst visiting Gaillac with a group of our Sisters from Australia (Sisters Cecilia, Marietta and Kathleen), I met Sister Helena Flynn. She was part of the English-speaking group which consisted of Sisters from Australia, England and the Philippines gathered for a special retreat and visit to the birthplace of St Emilie.

Sister Helena offered me a book to read which had been written by her niece's husband, Donald Carroll. My reading of this book marked the beginning for me of a very strong interest in Ephesus and an even stronger interest in the extraordinary story behind the discovery of the house where the Virgin Mary lived and died. The story of "Mary's House" by Donald Carroll.

For years the archeological findings (in 1881) about this place were kept secret because nobody at the Vatican believed that an obscure French priest, following the visions of an equally obscure German nun and mystic, could possibly have found the actual house where the Virgin Mary had spent her last years. Yet by the end of the century the evidence had been so compelling that scholars had pronounced the discovery authentic and Pope Leo XIII had declared the site a place of pilgrimage.

Today it is one of the holiest shrines in the world, revered by Christians and Muslims alike and as Donald Carroll says: *'There is something miraculous which can be associated with Mary's House: its very existence. Despite being repeatedly broken on the rack of time, and eaten away by centuries of neglect, it stands today not only as a shrine to all those who refused to let it crumble back into the earth - the house itself is the miracle.'* (Mary's House p 89).

And for myself, the visit to Ephesus with Sister Bernadette en route back to Australia from Rome last December was somewhat of a miracle. I had long since given up hope of such a visit. God is good! We loved everything about Turkey, the friendly and helpful people, the beautiful countryside, the splendid cities, the excellent tour guides and of course - Ephesus! What a wonderful experience. So interesting and rich with relics of ancient eras which are so well preserved and available to the public along with excellent commentary from the guides. The latter's knowledge of our scriptures was amazing, particularly regarding the teachings of Saints John and Paul. However, the summit of our visit was Mary's House. Due to some years spent in Israel where there are many such places of pilgrimage, my mind had pictured a site surrounded by a fair degree of rubble. Not so! We were driven up a very steep hilltop, beautifully covered in graceful trees depicting delicate autumn tints. From the top you can look down over a series of hilltops similarly decked. Quite a beautiful scene - no rubble!

At first, the place itself appears no different from other popular tourist attractions. The entrance is lined with a number of shops and stalls selling souvenirs. But once inside the site, the atmosphere changes immediately. You become surrounded by holiness and the silence and peace of the place envelopes you. Within the walls there is a great stillness and calm. You sense- *Our God is near-(and His Mother isn't far away either).*

We were fortunate to be there alone and our guide had given us as much time as we wished to pray. So we spent some precious moments remembering all in our hearts and a special mention in gratitude for those who had made the visit possible.

For those interested in travelling I strongly recommend a visit to Ephesus.



Mary's House, Ephesus

From Sister Jeanette Hevron

Welcome to this our first edition of the Associates Newsletter for 2010. This edition contains some very informative and interesting articles and notice of upcoming special events.

Please don't forget to mark these events in your diaries. I very much look forward to meeting up with you at these special celebrations.

God bless.

Dear All

The year is certainly going by very quickly and although Easter was celebrated a couple of months ago, the message and promise of hope and New Life that comes with the Risen Jesus is still very much at the fore in my mind.

From the Editor

It also brings about new challenges for each of us, and one that I invite you to take up is an active participation, no matter how small, or large, in the special project the Associates have agreed to become involved in which will be launched on 15 August 2010 in the Parish Hall at the rear of Christ the King Church in Beaconsfield.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask that we join in prayer for all the Sisters, Associates, family and friends who may be unwell, no matter how close or far away they may live. May they be comforted knowing they are close in our hearts and may the Healing Hand of Jesus touch them.

Finally, special thank you to Sister Janet Arrowsmith for her very interesting article on pages 12-14 which just shows the strength there is in the power of prayer. Thanks also to Sisters Alma, Gemma, Margaret Anne, Wendy Cronin and Betty Tulloch for their contributions to this newsletter, the first for 2010.

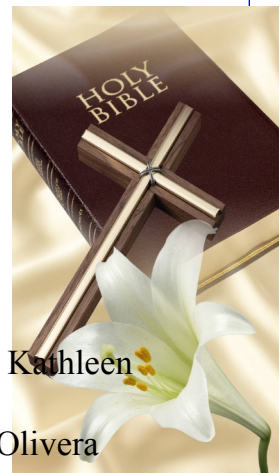
Regina Barnett

Our deceased Sisters, Associates, Relatives and Friends

“Eternal Rest Grant to them O Lord”

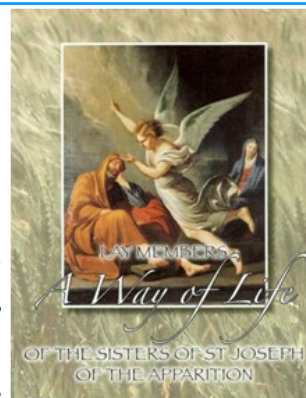
Raymond Hevron	Brother of Sister Jeanette
Thomas Downes	Husband of Rona and brother of Sister Kathleen
Min Toohey	Wife of Jack (dec) and sister of Sister Olivera
John and Myrtle Rattigan	Brother and sister-in-law of Sister Juliana
Agnes Virgin	Sister of Sister Liguori
Laurine Manning	Wife of George (dec) sister of Rita (dec), Bernice (dec) Leo, Alan, Irene & Patricia (Croll)

***We pray for all our sick Sisters, Associates, relatives and friends,
and for all who have asked our prayers at this time.***



“Lay Spirituality will take its particular character from the circumstances of one’s state in life and from one’s professional and social activity.”

This article is the beginning of a series of articles which will appear in future newsletters. They are extracts taken from the booklet “A Way of Life” prepared for Associates of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition and published in 2009. This article focuses on the place of Lay Associates in our Congregation.



By Sister Gemma Grant

INTRODUCTION

During the past twenty years, Christians in increasing numbers are turning to Religious Congregations for help to deepen their Christian life; in doing so, they are discovering a spiritual and community experience. This can be traced back in the tradition of the Church. Over the centuries and today, within these Congregations, Christians have found support for the better living out of the gospel in the various aspects of their lives.

The Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition was founded by St Emilie de Vialar who lived the gospel in a particular way, according to her own spirituality.

“A Way of Life” is meant for everybody attracted to this spirituality.

Whether we are lay people, religious or priests, we all form a spiritual family which is recognised by this way of living the Gospel.

The aim of this booklet is specifically to explain more precisely how Lay Members can follow Christ in the footsteps of St Emilie.

THE LAY MEMBERS

For several years now, in the different parts of the world where the Congregation is present, the lay members: friends, collaborators in our works, former pupils, accompanied by Sisters have formed groups in order to :-

- Deepen their knowledge of St Emilie and the Congregation
- Increase their personal Christian commitment
- Share in the mission of the Sisters and other works of charity.

As early as 1989, in agreement with the General Chapter of the Congregation, groups began to be formed in certain Provinces: Australia, England and Malta. Then other countries began to explore the possibilities. In August 1997, a meeting of English-speaking Lay Members was organised in Gaillac. The serious work of sharing and reflection resulted in a preliminary statute for the Associates.

At the 2001 Chapter, for the first time in our history, three lay persons took part. They explained how their belonging to these groups had strengthened them in their faith and its practice, on the level of family and society. The Sisters who were present became aware that, in reality, the Charism of St Emilie was already giving life to Lay Members as well as to the Sisters and leading them to take up some forms of apostolate.

In September of the same year there was a second international meeting of Lay Members. On this occasion there were more delegates from many different parts of the world .

In September 2004, in Rome, the commission invited delegates from the different groups and Sisters involved in the Lay Movement for an International Conference. This experience profoundly touched all the participants. The Sisters became aware that truly St Emilie's charism is able to inspire and motivate for the mission, not only the Sisters but also Lay Members.

The time has come to make things more precise and to outline for the Lay Members guidelines which are proper to our Congregation.

From our Albany Associates

Betty Tulloch
Coordinator Albany Associates

We have had a very busy time in our parish these few months and of course the Associates have been involved.

It is very different this year. As you are probably aware the Convent is now closed and the Sisters have gone to various locations. Peripatetic Sister Pat, now in Thailand though landing back in Australia to Perth, Brisbane and back to Thailand, is very busy and apparently enjoying every minute. She sends her love to all. Sister Mary is in Perth – we miss her very much and think of her often and send her our very best wishes. Sister Krystyna is the last Sister standing in Albany. Sister carries on with her work with SVDP and her various activities, so fortunately we still have contact.

During these months, the Albany Associates here have been involved in various Parish activities. On 27 January a presentation on St. Emilie was given to new staff at St Joseph's College as part of their induction day programme. The Houses for the College are Ozanam (SVDP), McCormack (Sister Irene from Peru), Cunningham (Monsignor Cunningham) and of course, De Vialar (St Emilie).

The life and background of these patrons were presented. I left copies of St Emilie's biography and vocational pamphlets. The presentation display has now grown to six large laminated cardboard sheets, which I left on display for a few days.

At the end of the year, the graduating male students were given a badge/pin of Edmund Rice, Founder of the Christian Brothers, and this year a badge similar to the Associate badge with the SJA logo on a blue enamel background will be presented to the female graduands. The Principal, Mr Brad Hall, was impressed with the Associates badge and had the same design copied on a blue background, which looks very impressive. These badges recognise the amalgamation of the two schools, the Christian Brothers College and Ave Maria College to the present, St Josephs College, adding to the richness of Catholic education in Western Australia.

The new Early Learning Centre has progressed well and on completion will be named after Mother Julie Cabagniol. This was announced at the Graduation Ceremony. Needless to say, everyone was delighted, as it is a fitting memorial to our pioneer Sisters.

A group of Associates took part in the Wollongong Lenten Programme. Different members were invited to prepare and present each week's programme. It was a really special time. The different settings relating to the weekly theme were very meaningful and added greatly to the Lenten experience.

A beautiful College Mass was held in Holy Family Church for St Joseph's Day. School Representatives Badges were presented to the various elected students, Head Girl and Head Boy, and Counsellors.

We are now looking forward to the Albany Associate meeting with Sister Gemma on the 30 May 2010.

WATCH THE PARISH NEWSLETTER FOR FURTHER DETAILS

From Sister Margaret Anne Beech

Late in 2009 Sisters Jo, Elizabeth Rose and myself visited our Sisters in Thailand. In Bangkok we met up with Sister Pat and this bustling city was explored by three Sisters in a “Tut Tut”! On our last evening in Bangkok Sister Anna took us to a spectacular cultural show “*Siam Niramit*”. It was a journey through the cultural and faith heritage of the early civilisation of the country.

The following day we travelled to Ubon in the North East where the Sisters conduct a school. From there we drove about 150 km towards the Cambodian Border to Surin. Surin is a city of around 30,000 people with three Sisters, one priest and about 25 Catholics. The Sisters live next door to the school which they opened six years ago. One Sister works with a project for the parents and children of the nearby villages. This project is sponsored by a Japanese group and focuses on assisting the village children with educational opportunities. It is conducted from a very old wooden building, but with plenty of space. It certainly is an insertion with the poorest of the poor.

We also had the opportunity of visiting a local village famous for making Thai Silk - a very labour intensive process. One can only wonder what will happen to this cottage industry and the jobs of the people as Thailand develops large industries and modern methods.

Back in Ubon, preparations for New Year were underway. There were great celebrations in a nearby park which went for three nights...finishing around 2.00am.. Sleep was difficult for some. On New Year’s Eve we had a special meal in the undercroft of the school, followed by Thai dancing. On New Year’s Day, Mass was celebrated in the Parish Church. Later in the day we prepared for the Session we were to present to the Sisters. Following these Sessions with the Sisters we had a Thai style barbecue ...pizza was purchased for us. Again the meal was followed by Karaoke and Games. Needless to say there was much laughter and the evening was enjoyed by all.

In March/April of this year two Thai Sisters, Martina and Loangdow stayed with the Beaconsfield and Canning Vale communities. Both Sisters are Principals of schools and spent several days at Christ the King School in Beaconsfield and St Emilie’s in Canning Vale. They appreciated the opportunity to learn about child centred learning approaches as well as observing different models and associated skills necessary for school administration. They returned to Thailand with many ideas to help their teachers and students in the educational mission entrusted to them on behalf of the Congregation.

Some pictures of the activities and celebrations in Ubon . . .



New Years Day in the Church in Ubon



Sisters Elizabeth and Pat with Sister Chalermssi and teachers at the Surin School



Session in Ubon Jan 2010



A Session in Ubon



Sisters with Bishop of Ubon on New Years Day 2010



Sisters and Teachers at Surin School



THE MIRACULOUS CURE AT BOWDON IN 1946

As accounted by Sister Patricia Chawke,
Provincial of England and Ireland 1982-
1987



One evening in January 1946, Sister Theresa Moran felt pains in her feet after walking from the Convent, here in Bowdon, to the bus terminal where she would catch a bus to take her to Withington Hospital. The previous October Sister has started training there to be a State Registered Nurse. By the following morning Sister was unable to do her ward duty and the Matron kindly admitted her to the nurse training sick bay in the hospital. The doctors thought that the pains might be rheumatism or perhaps, fallen arches.



After several days Sister Theresa's condition was causing real concern and so Mother Hilda Smith, our Superior at the time, decided to bring her home to the convent to continue investigations. Several doctors and specialists were consulted in early February as Sister's condition was deteriorating rapidly. By the end of the month a neuro-surgeon diagnosed 'Disseminated Sclerosis' of a very, very severe and crippling nature. Periods of remission were known to be very rare. How right he was! By early March many of the symptoms of the disease had appeared.





During Sister's illness, a Postulant, who was a trained nurse, and who was one of those who was caring for her. This young lady approached Mother Hilda and told her that she felt that if we were all to pray to Mother Emilie for Sister's cure, a miracle might be granted which would further the Cause for the Canonisation of our Blessed Mother. This girl went to the Superior three times to make her request.

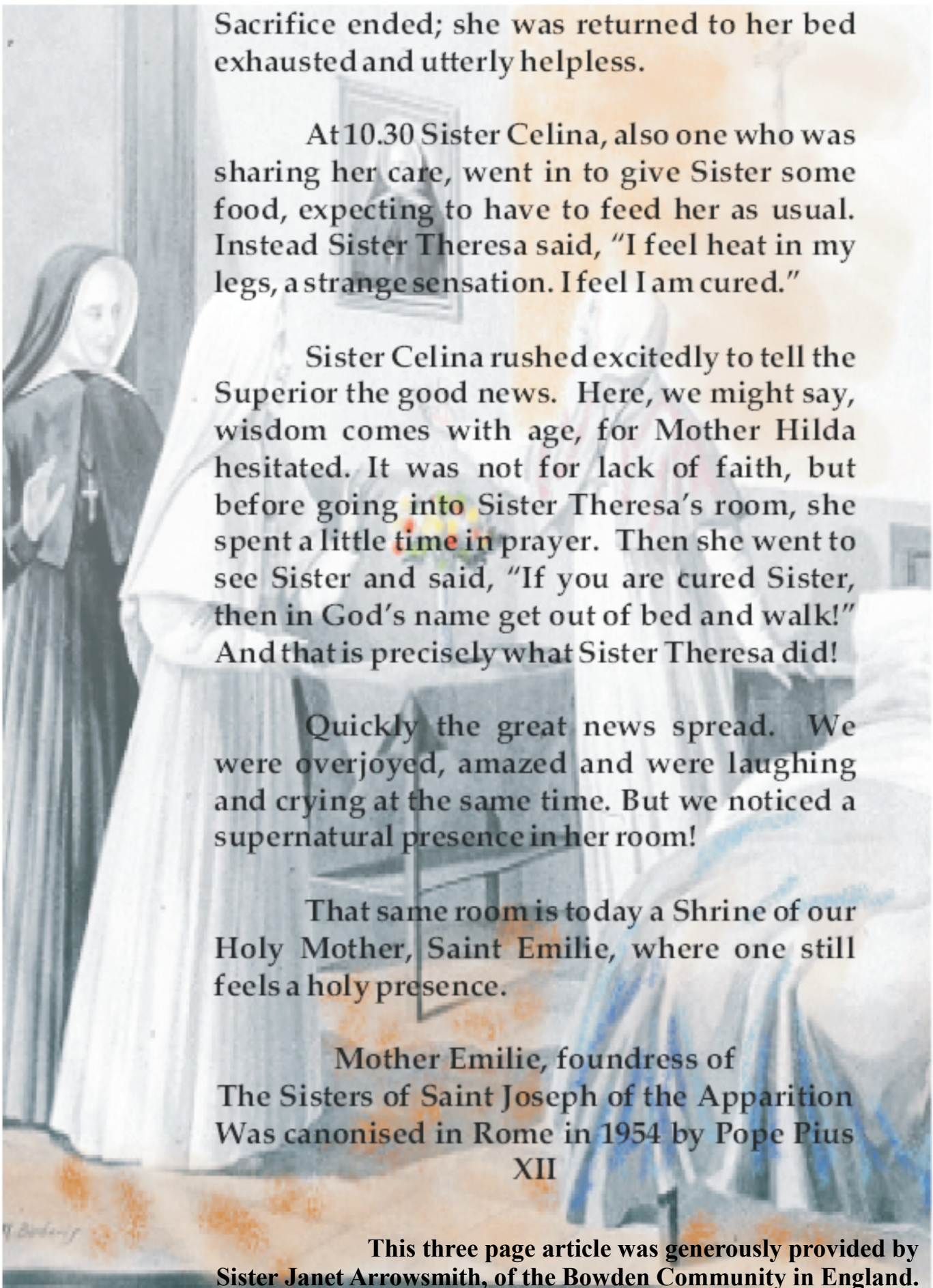


Finally, Mother Hilda gathered the community together in Sister Theresa's room, gave us the full details of the disease, explained the Postulant's request and the miracles that were needed for the Canonisation of our Blessed Mother Emilie, if God willed it.



We decided to start a Novena of Night Vigils. Two members of the Community would stay up each night and pray. The Novena started in the evening of Friday the 8th. March 1946 and it was fitting that it opened with the forty hours of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. On Sunday Morning the 10th of March, Sister Theresa was very ill, in pain almost completely paralysed.

By now she was unable to do anything for herself and four Sisters carried her to Mass in a chair. As soon as the Holy



Sacrifice ended; she was returned to her bed exhausted and utterly helpless.

At 10.30 Sister Celina, also one who was sharing her care, went in to give Sister some food, expecting to have to feed her as usual. Instead Sister Theresa said, "I feel heat in my legs, a strange sensation. I feel I am cured."

Sister Celina rushed excitedly to tell the Superior the good news. Here, we might say, wisdom comes with age, for Mother Hilda hesitated. It was not for lack of faith, but before going into Sister Theresa's room, she spent a little time in prayer. Then she went to see Sister and said, "If you are cured Sister, then in God's name get out of bed and walk!" And that is precisely what Sister Theresa did!

Quickly the great news spread. We were overjoyed, amazed and were laughing and crying at the same time. But we noticed a supernatural presence in her room!

That same room is today a Shrine of our Holy Mother, Saint Emilie, where one still feels a holy presence.

Mother Emilie, foundress of
The Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition
Was canonised in Rome in 1954 by Pope Pius
XII

This three page article was generously provided by
Sister Janet Arrowsmith, of the Bowden Community in England.

AUGUST the 15th 2010

Note this date on your calendar!

**The Associates of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition
will celebrate our 20th Anniversary**



We will share afternoon tea with the Sisters and each other and take time to reflect on how the Associates have developed.

We will be introduced to an exciting future with more involvement in the work of the Sisters than we have previously had.

The details will be unveiled and the project will be launched.

Do come along and hear about it.

Last year the Associates Planning Committee asked the Sisters for a project we could undertake to mark our 20th Birthday celebration.

In the meantime:

Watch your letterbox for final details regarding 15 August.

Start saving your spare change in a jar.

