

Volume 4

The Associates Newsletter

Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition

April Edition 2009



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

St Emílie de Vialar

Sister Jeanette writes



MAY THE GRACES AND BLESSINGS
OF THE RISEN LORD
BE WITH US ALL

Dear All

Welcome to this our first edition of the Associate Newsletter for 2009.

On the Local Scene

With the year 2009 already well under way the *Associate Committee* members, Sister Jeanette, Sister Alma, Germaine Matison and Wendy Cronin held their first meeting for this year in March, and were delighted to welcome on to the Committee Sister Gemma, who has joined the team and will be responsible for the formation and direction of SJA Associates in Australia. We also welcome Glen Stevens on board this year. The committee will be planning Associate gatherings and meetings during the year, with plans already under way for celebrating together the Feast of St Emilie.

On the International Scene

Sister Gemma has been appointed to the international Associate Commission for the Congregation and headed for Rome on 29 April 2009 to attend the Commission meeting taking place in May. Please keep Sister and this meeting in your prayers. We look forward to receiving Sr Gemma's report upon her return from Rome.

The Month of March

The 19 March was a day of celebration for the feast of our Patron, St Joseph. Thank you to Wendy Cronin for her article '*Why St Joseph of the Apparition*' included in this edition of the Newsletter.

On the 23 March, we were all saddened by the death of Sister Emmanuel Salomone, after many years of devoted service in the Congregation here in WA. We thank Patricia Gibson (Porteous) for sharing with us her Eulogy on Sister, which in itself, speaks of the fond memories of Sister Emmanuel held by her many close friends and past students. Sister will be sadly missed by all.

Feast of St Emilie deVialar

A special Mass and light luncheon is being organised jointly by the Sisters and Associates to celebrate together St Emilie's Feast. We hope you will be able to join us again this year for this celebration. For further details please see the '*Invitation*' on the back cover of this Newsletter.

Thank you

Last but by no means least, a big thank you for the many Christmas greetings received. A special thanks also for the generous contributions towards our overseas Missions and to the publication of the Associate Newsletter. We also include in this edition interesting and informative extracts from Christmas greetings received from our Sisters in Ethiopia.

The Eulogy on Sister Emmanuel was presented by Patricia Porteous drawing together the fond memories of a group of past students who remained very close and loyal friends of Sr Emmanuel over many years.

Sister Emmanuel

One of the greater gifts which God bestowed on this part of His world, was an Order of nuns founded by St Emilie de Vialar, the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition. Today our attention is focused upon one of these remarkable Sisters, Sister Emmanuel – our teacher, our friend.



Her influence, carried deeply within each one of us, is not easily put into words, regardless of which era we belong. Our group started the journey around 1944 and ended last Monday March 23 2009. I asked each one how they would describe our dear Sister. Not surprisingly we all had similar but personal feelings.

Sister Alma: “She was meticulous, very precise. There was also a very compassionate heart for those in need”.

Lois: “We felt she regarded us as her family and we were very proud of our photo in her room. She was always interested in us and our extended families as they grew over the years. She was a beautiful person who gave us guidance and support especially when in need. One always had a feeling of peace after visiting”.

Carmel: “She was dignified, a listener, a mentor, a confidant interested in us and never judgmental. Very understanding of various situations and tolerant of other views. As a teacher, very fair – never superior. She had the ability to understand the changes in this modern world. It was a privilege to have her solid guidance”.

Diane: “A peaceful and fair teacher. We felt comfortable and never ill at ease in her presence. When she came visiting and the children were young, her calm and interested manner felt like a Grandparent. She had the most wonderful long fingers – never needed a pointer for the blackboard or if she was singling you out for some misdemeanour”.

Glen: “My great love of her is as an inspiring teacher, a constant and true friend. She had high standards, and was able to expect and to bring out the best in those around her”.

Tricia: “For those of us fortunate enough to know Sr Emmanuel as a friend, including my little sister Jeanie before she died, it is difficult indeed to sum up in a few words just what that has meant over the last 60 plus years. I knew my mother for 20 years and Sr Emmanuel for 64 years. The encouragement, the sympathy, the love or the unwavering support of her dignified presence, given to all who knew her made each one of us feel special. Her sewing, crocheting and knitting abilities were outstanding. (Remember the bonnets) even her business acumen when called upon to run the cellar tuck-shop years ago. The plum ice-blocks were a huge success. Her interest in a wide variety of subjects was just amazing, from world affairs to the latest recipe or daily prayer on line when Sister Damian discovered the Internet. Just a few weeks ago Sister Emmanuel had cut out from the newspapers all the details of the Victorian bushfires and sent them to Malta.

Her inspiration to each of us has its own special meaning. She was, in my eyes an uncomplicated perfectionist, a loving friend, a mentor whose opinions and approval I valued. She had a unique presence from which flowed love and the calm re-assurance, that all was, or would be with God’s help, well. St Emilie’s motto “*Devotedness Unto Death*” surely applies to this true servant of God and friends to so many.

Finally – Paul’s Letter 1 Thess. 1:2

***“You have strengthened us with your prayers,
Blessed us with your love,
Encouraged us with your hope.
“We give thanks to God always for you”.***

HELP WANTED

Dear Associates

With the time involved in preparing the Newsletter for the mail out we are seeking some help with the folding of the Newsletter itself and inserting them into the envelopes, and of course putting on the labels.

If you are able to offer some time please contact Sr Jeanette who will be able to give you more details of the process, or myself. Newsletters are issued no more than four times a year.

Thank you in anticipation for your generosity.

Regina (Editor)

Extracts from Christmas greetings received from the SJA Community in Ethiopia.

7 December 2008

28th Tahasas, 2001

Dear Sisters, Relatives and Friends,

This is the first Christmas that our SJA community will be spending in Ethiopia. For two of us it will be almost the end of our first year here. Incidentally, according to the Ethiopian Julian Calendar, January 7th will be our official Christmas Day. The festivities will end with the Feast of Timket (Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord) on the 18 and 19 January. Advent will start on the 14th December

Following a different liturgical rite, timings, calendar and climate has been quite a challenge apart from the very difficult language Amharic we have been trying to master. ... As for speaking fluently, that is still “wishful thinking”.

Sister Malliga joined our community from 23 August this year. Sister is a young Indian Sister professed only last year. She is courageous to start her missionary experience so early on in religious life. Like us, Sister Malliga is a teacher. The three of us got our work permit through one of the Catholic schools here. We have very different commitments there, Nirmala following the Junior school teachers with methodology, Malliga teaching spoken English to Standards I and II, and myself teaching 11th English literature and creative writing. I have only 10 hours a week, but teaching 325 students in five sections of overcrowded classrooms is a big challenge, even if I enjoy it. I also teach English to first year seminarians at St. Francis Theological College, twice a week.

We were able to host for some days at a time, two groups of heart patient children and their parents on their way to and from a Hospital in Khartoum, Sudan where an Italian heart specialist had arranged for open heart surgery. The first group all returned safely and healthy after successful operations. The second group is still in hospital. We also welcomed family groups of ‘Comunione Liberazione’, for their retreat one Sunday. These are small apostolic activities but they make us aware of the need to be open to the day to day calls that the Lord sends us.

During the summer and unfortunately during the rainy season, whilst Sister Nirmala was on home holidays, Sister Angela Ridout joined me. We both gave some of our time doing voluntary work in the Missionaries of Charity compound. This compound had over 1000 sick, handicapped adults and children.

Every type of disease is there, AIDS, TB, mental retardation to name a few. Sister Angela helped with the feeding and clothing of small children while I went with the very severely physically handicapped youth. It is a challenge to care for these people, literally spoon or hand feed them. But I found it spiritually uplifting and I am sorry that teaching and learning Amharic consumes my time and energies and that I cannot possibly continue to give time to this activity.

Every other month we have the opportunity to follow a retreat with the larger Comboni community of Sisters and Fathers and Brothers. It is very good of them to continue treating us as one of the family! We shall always remain grateful to the Comboni Sisters who hosted us for a full month and who are allowing us to rent this beautiful bungalow in the heart of the city.

We are also grateful to the Lord that we did not find ourselves complete strangers in this big previously unknown country. The Indian community, both lay and religious is quite numerous and welcoming; there are some Maltese Franciscan Sisters and a Maltese Jesuit. Some of the local religious I had met with Sister Rosita a couple of years ago, prove to be good friends as well. All this makes us feel at home. The religious communities invite us to all their activities. Our neighbours greet us and are friendly.

What has sustained us most was the support of Sister Dorothy, our Superior General and her Council. They took a great interest in what was happening to us, to listen to our cares and concern, to visit us as early as February to help us settle in this country. Our families and friends have phoned, written and kept us in their prayers. We too, feel close to you all this Christmas and New Year and send you our warmest wishes.

With all our love, prayers and wishes,

(Sisters) Nirmala, Carmen, Malliga

ANY NEWS OR ITEMS OF INTEREST?

If you have some news or items of interest you think may be suitable for inclusion in the Associates Newsletters and would like to share them with us, please send them to me via email to rbarnett@corpus.wa.edu.au

Associates who would like to assist in the mail out of the Newsletter are also asked to contact Sr Jeanette or you may email me your name/s and I will pass them on. (See page 5 for more details).

Many thanks.

Regina Barnett - Editor

Why Saint Joseph of the Apparition?

In 1834 Emilie submitted her first rule of the house at Gaillac to her bishop for recognition. It stated: ‘The house of charity established at Gaillac is placed under the protection of Saint Joseph and bears his name.

Having admired a painting of the apparition of the Angel Gabriel to the sleeping Joseph at the Museum in Toulouse, Emile had a copy made which she hung in the chapel.



She reflected on the mystery of the incarnation and saw Joseph’s part in it. His “Yes” following the apparition of

the angel completed Mary’s “Yes” of the annunciation. He allowed it to happen through his surrender to God, his love, quiet strength, wisdom and humility. Not by words but by actions.

Joseph remained in the background, as a provider and a protector. Emilie saw he would be a protector and a model of unassuming charity for her sisters also. They would be known as ‘The Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition’ and they would make the mystery of the incarnation known in the town of Gaillac and later in mission lands. They would become a living votive offering, an *ex voto* of the mystery of the incarnation through their lives of charity.

In 1880, Camille, daughter of Maximin (Emilie’s brother) wrote: ‘I don’t know if you have any knowledge of the apparition of St Joseph to my Aunt. She never spoke of it, but my mother (Rosine de Bermond) in whom she confided, told me that at the outset of her vocation, absolutely desperate, because of her father’s opposition, she fell to her knees and was praying with all her heart, when St Joseph appeared to her and said: - ‘Do not be discouraged my daughter, you will meet many obstacles, you will have much to suffer, you will be overcome with grief. Trials will be everywhere, but you will prosper ‘

(Mme Brusley, in reply to enquiries by Fr Brunet 1880)

There is no mention of this story in Emilie’s Account of Graces. Nor any reference in her numerous letters. From the book of Emilie de Vialar Foundress by Sr Agnes Cavasino SJA, translated by Sr Zoe Milne SJA

St Joseph’s life is a model for us to follow too. Quiet action, faith, love, trust and humility before God.

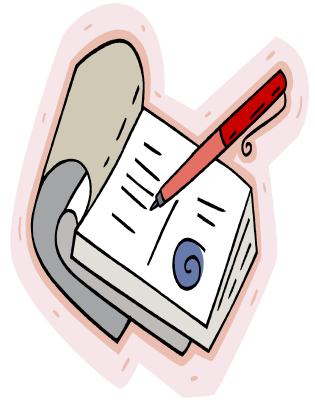
from Wendy Cronin

Our Associates Write ...

Dear Sisters

Just a small donation for the printing of your booklet. I have diminished sight but my daughter reads for me. Kind regards.

Marcella Cusack (nee Stokes)



To The Sisters, Sister Jeanette and Helpers

'Goodwill to all this Christmas and my very best wishes for the New Year.' Thank you for all the good work you do with the Newsletter. I always look forward to receiving it.

It has been good to catch up with the news of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition. St Emilie said that "We will be a remnant", but is this remnant that is keeping the Spirit of St Emilie which in turn, is the Spirit of Jesus i.e. "Love God and love your neighbour as you love yourself". This speaks volumes and demands all kinds of reactions.

Connie and family

Dear Sisters

May the peace, the joy, and love and friendship of God be yours this Christmas. With very best wishes. Best wishes to Sister Irene.

Bernice Bernard

To the dear Sisters and Associates

'Christmas Blessings and best wishes for a joyous and peaceful New Year'. Thank you very much for the newsletter; I appreciate your kindness. Also wishing you all a very happy peaceful and blessed Christmas and may the New Year be successful; peaceful and healthy is the sincere wish and prayer of Sister Celestine (England).

Dear Sister Jeanette and Regina

I hope you had a peaceful Christmas. Thank you for the Associate Newsletter in December. It was interesting to read about the events in Haiti. I am interested to learn more of the international congregation and the newsletter is a great way to widen our awareness of the legacy, indeed the shared legacy of St Emilie's life. It was also a perfect reminder of how we are all connected – something that may seem remote was brought home and made real to us. Similarly, Wendy Cronin's article 'Why remember Emilie on Christmas Day?', made an event remote in time relevant to us at this time of the year. I hope you have a happy and healthy 2009. Please find enclosed a donation towards the cost of the Newsletter and please keep our family in your prayers.

With best wishes for the continued success of the newsletter and the Associates movement.

Eileen (Sexton) - (Victoria)

Dear Sr Jeanette

Both my husband and I wish you and the whole community of Sisters a Holy and Joyful Christmas and a Peaceful and Healthy New Year. We thank you and your team for your labour in producing the newsletter and wish you a successful 2009. May God bless you and fill you with zeal to carry out your ministry. We enclose a cheque to help defray the costs of the Newsletter. Love and prayers

Joe & Marlene (D'Esposito)

To Jeanette and all the Sisters

May the joy and peace of Christmas be with you throughout the year.

Our Best Wishes and Thanks. Take care. Regards

Maureen (James) and Ian Stubbs

Dear Regina

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on taking over the publication of our Associates Newsletter.

You have done a marvellous job as the last two Newsletters have been great and full of news, especially the memories of our loved Sister Damien and Sister Colette, who we will all miss.

Again my best wishes and look forward to our next issue, a great way for the Associates to keep in touch.

Yours sincerely

Bernadette McKie (Roberts)

**Our deceased Sisters, Associates,
Relatives and Friends**

“Eternal Rest Grant to them O Lord”

Sr Emmanuel Salomone

Mary Abreu

John Rattigan

Brother of Sr Juliana

Peter Whitely

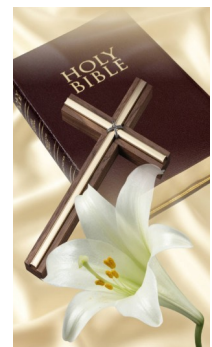
Brother of Sr Aemelia

Peter Vagg

Brother of Sr Joseph

Colin Farley

Husband of Pat Farley



***We pray for all our sick Sisters, Associates, relatives and friends,
and for all who have asked our prayers at this time,
especially Lina Strangio (nee Angelina Ruggera), Associate from Victoria***

Dear Sisters, Associates and friends

Thought I'd share a reflection I presented at our weekly Tuesday morning Prayer Group at my workplace prior to Easter.



From the Editor

A Communion Meditation

If God gave us only one day of life, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only springtime or one autumn, one summer or one winter, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one day of laughter, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one beautiful meal, beautifully served in a secure home, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one friend to share the journey of time, He would have been generous.

If God gave us only one year of married love, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one child – sound in mind and body, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one storm that left us unharmed, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one day of a good time with friends, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one talent for creating beauty, it would have been generous.

If God let us laugh only once in the face of calamity, it would have been generous.

If God gave us only one moment's pride in the success of those we love, it would have been generous.

But, He has given us life and time, joy and sorrow,
Sunshine and storms, laughter and tears,
Gifts to share and days to remember.
He has given us friends and lovers,
Children and parents, you and me,
And Himself as well.

It is God who gives us life,
Who tells us ever after, to choose life.
God who is our Resurrection and our Hope,
Who dwells within our hearts as the Spirit of Life,
The vanquisher of death
And the Comforter of the faithful.

The Sisters and Associates

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

Feast of St Emilie de Vialar

on

Sunday 21 June 2009

at 11.30 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 : Friday 5 June 2009

Telephone: (08) 9335 1639 (Germaine Matison)

Email: germaine.m@optusnet.com.au

Mail: Sister Jeanette

SJA Associates

St Joseph's Convent

96 Campbell Road, Canning Vale WA 6155