

Associate Newsletter
March 2006
Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition

Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the death of St Emilie

24th August 2006



As we move into this year of 2006 I take the opportunity to wish you all *Peace* and may you receive *many blessings* during the year

This year we are celebrating the 150th anniversary of the death of St Emilie, our Foundress, and we give thanks to God for the legacy she has left in carrying on the work she began all those years ago.

For us also, 2006 is a special time as we prepare for our Provincial Chapter which will take place in October. We ask you, all our Associates, to join us in prayer for this Chapter, asking the Holy Spirit to guide and enlighten us, that we may respond to the needs of our future in a positive way. A Chapter is held every six years and it is a very important part of our lives as Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition.

As part of the celebrations for the anniversary of St Emilie's death, four Sisters from Australia have been chosen to join Sisters from other provinces throughout the world in a special time of prayer and reflection on the life of St Emilie. The first session will be held in Rome from 18th - 27th April. *Sister Mary Steele* and *Sister Noelline Haung Yan* will attend this session and *Sister Krystyna Dzialosz* and *Sister Patrick Bottriell* will be present at the second one from 12th - 27th June. They will also visit the first house of our

Congregation in Gaillac (France) and will have the opportunity to visit Lourdes. This will be a time of great grace for the Sisters, and we ask you once again to join in prayer with all of us for this special intention

Sister Angela Basile (Provincial Superior)

A Reflection
On the 150th Anniversary of
Emilie de Vialar's Death

To believe does not mean primarily to accept something as being true. Rather, it means to trust, to entrust oneself, to find one's security in...

The true nature of a person lies in the way that person listens to God and is prepared to respond by wanting the things God wants. Here lies the basis of true love. Emilie believed, she loved, she trusted...The real victory of faith is trusting God in the dark. Emilie once commented that there are moments in life that are so critical that one can only stand firm by calling to mind certain texts of scripture, the example of our Saviour and that of the saints. (1852)

We are touched by Emilie's 'matter-of-fact' statement that she cured some sick people the doctors had given up on. No preamble, no surprise on her part. She knew that God worked through her. That she only had to accomplish his will, trust his love.

We can see how, early in her life, she was not perfect or completely taken up with God. For example as a young teenager, she had got into the habit of telling lies to avoid getting into trouble. A little older, she forgot about the special graces He had given her and even gave up receiving the sacraments. But God was leading her, and his response was to draw her into ever-close intimacy with himself, granting further special favours and a deeper relationship in which she was able to trust implicitly in all that was asked of her.

During the lengthy period that elapsed between God's initial call and the founding of the congregation in 1832, God was quietly working away in her heart, inspiring, leading, providing the right environment

and experiences that would lead to the accomplishment of his will – and she allowed God to work in her. By her trust in her God and the circumstances that evolved she was able to recognize when the time was right for the foundation.

In the early days of her congregation, she had great power in drawing young women to join her. She didn't use any special strategy or exceptional theology. It was the power that God had created within her through their mutual trust and from the conviction of her own commitment.

She was able to attract others because of her deep personal rootedness in God. She had first surrendered herself to God's care and this was her security. She had experienced suffering and self-sacrifice, and the joy of being chosen, which enabled her to draw others to a life of devotedness.

At Emilie's untimely death the sisters were convinced that she was in heaven: *Pray for the repose of her soul, we are fully confident that she already enjoys eternal rest and that she is crowned as much with joy as with the good works that she carried on throughout the course of her life. (Sr Baptistine)*

Following St Emilie means walking along side her, in the context of our own time in history, being profoundly influenced by her while still retaining our own identity and personality. Staying near enough to be influenced by her life and spirituality, yet far enough away to have perspective on how we can be influenced by them in our own times.



Sister Zoe Milne

In the year of the anniversary of St Emilie's death we give thanks to God for gracing our lives with her example. May we continue to be inspired and enlightened by her generous spirit, her indomitable courage, her deep and abiding prayer, and above all, her unwavering trust in the Lord!

Thanks be to God



Emilie de Vialar Scholarship Award

The award was presented at Seton College this year

To

Emma Andrews and Ashley Smith

Our Congratulations to these students

OUR ASSOCIATES WRITE

Many thanks for all the newsletters I have received this year. It was great,
Georgie and Robert Bruce-Smith



Happy Christmas to all. Thank you for continuing to send me the Associate Newsletters. I do look forward to reading them.

Maureen Stubbs (James)

Dear Associates. Thank you for your newsletters. I loved Australia and I appreciate all news of it. I have a sister (Sister Cecilia) and many friends in Australia. Thank you once again.

Sister Nora Meagher – Liverpool.

To all the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition I wish you all God's blessings in this Holy Season with my prayers and love. Thank you for the Associate Newsletters – so very welcome.

Vee Appleton

Many thanks for your prayers to help mend my broken bone! Have a great 2006

Joan Perham

Both Joe and I send our very best wishes to all the Sisters for a Holy Christmas and a Happy healthy and successful New Year. Thank you very much for the Newsletter. Both my husband and I look forward to reading it. It's a great way of keeping in touch. We congratulate you on the good work of the Sisters. We felt very special being present at the Celebration of your 150 years in W.A. It was an unforgettable day. Thank you again for the invitation. With Season's Greetings and all good wishes for the New Year. Best regards and prayers.

Joe and Marlene (D'Eposito)

To all the Associates. May your Christmas be one of many graces and blessings from the Divine Child of Bethlehem, and may the New Year be blessed with good health and every success, love, peace and joy.

Sister Celestine Murphy (England)

My love to all the Sisters.

Anne Partlon (Feeney)

Our Deceased Sisters, Associates Relatives and Friends

Eternal Rest Grant to them O Lord

Looking forward to another year of your newsletters. Many thanks. Wishing you happiness at Christmas and every day of the New Year

Love

Lucy Blake (Solomon)

Sadly we received news recently that Lucy had died quite suddenly. She, and all her family have been friends of the Sisters for many years and had attended our schools from very early days. We extend our sympathy to all the family. May they be assured of our prayers for them

Father John Walsh

Brother of Sister Kathleen Walsh

Graham Reeves

Husband of Margaret

Lucy Blake

Sister of Ida Cant

Bill Rattigan

Brother of Sister Juliana

George Good

Cousin of Sister Elizabeth Rose

Harry Walker

Husband of Ita: Brother-in-Law
of Sister Monica

Len Gimblett

Husband of Amy : Brother of Sisters Thomas
and Colette



*The stars shine joyfully at their set times;
when he calls them they answer, 'Here we are';
they gladly shine for their Creator* (Baruch 3: 34-36)



Life in the Philippines

I arrived in the Philippines on the 25th March 2004. It was nearing midnight so my first impressions of the surroundings were somewhat limited. Sisters Assumpta and Magdalen were there to greet me and it was quite a good feeling to recognize someone amongst the waiting crowds. I was soon on my way to SJA Formation House – about an hour's drive. I could hear a fair bit of discussion about the route and at one instance I heard the remark: "We have passed here before"; my answer being "I thought so."

Sister Thaiyawan was there to welcome me; the other sisters had gone to bed as it was well after midnight. After a bit of chit chat I was shown to my room, and needless to say I was glad to get to bed. Next morning, I was introduced to the rest of the community – five Thai novices who welcomed me with song and the usual floral welcome, typical of Thai culture. They made me feel very much at home. As the day proceeded I got my bearings and unpacked. It was holiday time here, so I had a week before I commenced teaching English, which was the reason for my coming here. This week was the last chance for the novices to have an outing so Sister Assumpta had booked a chalet at a recreation place called Laguna so we headed off there three days after my arrival. This recreation centre had a number of swimming pools and it wasn't long until I found out how popular they were, as all the family spent most of the time in the pools. I watched the activities as I was still getting my land legs.

To go on an outing in the Philippines you are up at an ungodly hour in the hope of beating peak hour traffic which commences at six or before. Getting out of Manila can be a great hassle, with everyone fighting for their share of the road. Even at the ungodly hours you can meet plenty of traffic so always allow yourself plenty of time if you have an appointment to keep. Our usual mode of travel is the jeepney or tricycle but for long rides we usually take the house van. Travelling in the jeepney is a bit like low flying, as you go like the wind. Each jeepney has a different name. One I traveled on was called "The Aussie Star," so I thought there must be a few Aussies around Manila. Besides bearing a name there is usually a phrase such as: "In God we trust!" or "Jesus is Lord," to name but a few scripture quotes that grace the sides of vehicles. And if you happen to be in the vehicle you may well have your own set of phrases or ejaculations and believe me, you need them, excepting that you happen to be a fearless character.

The cost of living is high, even for the ordinary commodities, you pay well. It makes one wonder how the poor people survive. There are many poor people around. Even here in this village there is the "Settlers area" where the poor live in the poorest of housing. I have visited some of these. I don't believe we would call them houses in Australia.

The people in the Philippines, besides being welcoming and hospitable love their music and most seem gifted, especially the clergy, with good voices. There seems to be little choir groups who take turns singing at the daily morning Masses.

There is some beautiful scenery in this country, but you have to go out of Manila to see it. For our annual retreat last year we went to a place called San Filipe. The retreat house was run by the Benedictines and about a five minute walk from it was a beach. Then there is a beautiful spot Subie Bay. The name is possibly known to you, as it was an American Base for some time. The Americans have set up a Marine World there, overlooking the wonderful scenery, and I noticed it was all Philipinos who managed it. But the most beautiful place I have seen here is the "Hundred Islands," far away from here, but worth seeing as it has a special beauty about it. The whole community here, plus a few more Sisters came on this outing. It was a perfect day to have a forty minute trip to one of the islands.

Our Sisters here in the Philippines have undertaken two interesting projects. One, the construction of "St Emilie Learning Centre" and the second the involvement of two of our sisters in pastoral work in another province.

The Learning Centre hopes to be in operation at the beginning of the school year, June of this year, and is catering for children as young as three years old. Sister Marie Goretti is putting in place the many things that involve school life. There seems to be numerous permissions and permits to be had before you set up a place of education, so Sister Christopher, as leader of the Delegation is very busy also.

The school is set on a block at the back of the Formation House and it looks quite impressive. There are numerous children around so it should not be hard to get pupils.



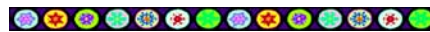
Sister
Bernadette's
Birthday

The two Sisters were invited to work in another province. Pangasianan, about six months ago, The invitation was given by the Bishop of that Province. So far the arrangements are working out well.

The Sisters move around from parish to parish and are involved with sacramental programs and the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) They return to their communities for a few days on a monthly basis. it could be that in the future an SJA community will be set up there.

By the time this letter is published I will be back in W.A., as I leave her after a term of sixteen months on the 11th March.

Sister Bernadette Casey



An Item of Interest to all of us.

Last year a suggestion came from the "Emilie Group" that it would be a good idea to have the names of the first four sisters who arrived in Australia inscribed on a plaque on the outside wall at the Fremantle Maritime Museum which has been set up for the purpose of acknowledging the arrival in Fremantle of persons from other countries who had come here to live. Our thanks are due especially to Wendy Cronin who attended to the formalities so that when we next visit the Museum we may stop and remember the Sisters who arrived in Fremantle on 24th May 1855.:

Sister Julie Cabagniol

Sister Emilie Petit

Sister Zoe de Chamouin

Sister Lucie Fieuzet

"Our sole ambition was to make Him known"

(St Emilie de Vialar 1842)



We offer our prayers: Quite often during these days we receive requests for special prayers for our relatives and Associates who do not keep good health. We would like you to know that we do respond to these requests and we ask you all to join us for the many people who rely on us to pray for them. Very often we receive a positive response from people which confirms that our prayers are answered. Thank you all for being part of this exercise with us



"Emilie" Group Meetings 2006

Sister Helen Giles

7.30 pm Willetton Meeting



1. Wednesday 29th March "God is Love"
Pope Benedict XVI
2. Wednesday 31st May 150th Anniversary
Death of Emilie de Vialar
3. Wednesday 26th July Youth and Young at Heart
4. Wednesday 27th September Life and Times of St Emilie
5. Wednesday 6th December SJA Foundation Day

SJA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Willetton 20th August 2006 2pm-4pm
Saints John and Paul Centre.

Albany To be arranged
Melbourne To be arranged



At the end of December last year Sisters Helen, Marietta and Jeanette visited our sisters in the following countries. Sister Helen gives an account of the visit .



MYANMAR, MANILA AND BACK

2005 - 2006 saw many changes in the Myanmar Province. Sister Emilia's term as Provincial Superior terminated and on the same day that Sister Marietta, Sister Jeanette and I left Yangon for Manila, she left for France. Sister Marie had been appointed to succeed Sister Emilia as the next Provincial.

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What was noteworthy upon arrival in Yangon was being the first guests to be received into the new building completed on the original block in Sanchaung. On the second day, 30th December, we set off for Mandalay. The idea was that we get to work at once, then return to Yangon to run a session intended to be given by Brother Bo Bo who had become very ill. Next day we set off for the orphanage in Zawgyi where we were greeted by some traditional songs and dances given by the children. Sister Mary Win expressed her thanks to Lilian, Barry Brown and all the parishioners of Willetton for their generous donations.



While there, I was requested to introduce the Associate Movement to the villagers who gathered quickly into the pavilion. Sr Rosarie did the translating and the people expressed their enthusiasm by a dance and much hand shaking.

After New Year's Day we set off for Pyin-Oo-Lwin, formerly Maymyo, where Sister Marietta had formerly spent four years teaching English to the novices. I had a very happy visit with the Associates there. Sister Rosy, Sister Rita and Sister Catherine shared notes on the meeting held in 2005.

We returned to Mandalay for the next gathering of Associates and Sisters there and from Amarapura. The latter community is in difficulties from leaking roofs and white-anted walls – they need help.

On the 8th January we returned to Yangon. For the next two days I was engaged in the Pastoral Planning Session with the Sisters-in-charge of communities. This was very stimulating. Group work was active and informative. I learned a lot. This was followed by a last meeting with Associates from Yangon central and Ahlone.

From there we set off for Manila. This was my third trip to the Philippines. It was a great pleasure to spend time with Sister Christopher, Sister Bernadette (from the Australian Province) Sister Assumpta and all the other dear Sisters and Associates.

We returned home on the 27th January. Things that stay in my mind: a request for a wheel-chair for a villager in Zawgyi, a refrigerator for the postulancy in Yangon and house repairs in Amarapura. Help, please help.

Children
with
the Sisters
in the
Orphanage
Swagyi





Pre-Postulants - Mandalay



Sisters in Manila



St Joseph



*Not much is known of Joseph
He was husband, Father, Provider - everyday.*

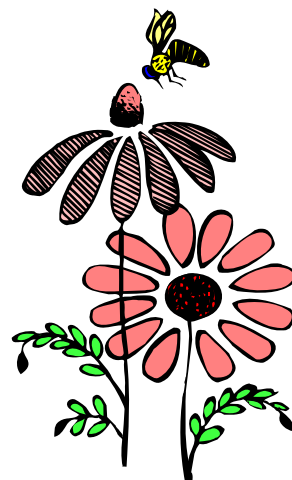
And he had Dreams

What more can be said?

- Joseph became aware that he was involved in events much bigger than himself.
- St Joseph was put in charge of Jesus and Mary.
- We too, are given our tasks to perform. It is valuable in the great plan of God, a plan much bigger than our plans and much more important too.
- Let us at this time pray for each other. May we do our tasks well and be people in touch with God.
-

Joseph was a man who had dreams and he was often puzzled by what happened. But he stayed with these experiences and did not lose trust in God. Therefore he is a model for us who also are often mixed up by what happens in our lives.

*A Happy Feast Day to all our Associates
St Joseph Pray for us.*



Sunday 19th March 2006

Feast Day of St Joseph