The warm welcome in Poland enabled each of us to settle very quickly into working with each other. Each directress shared: a. from her own perspective as a formator, the reality of formation in her own province b. what she would like to see happening to bring about the formation she perceived necessary for today, c. how this could be concretely realised in Europe and d. what she believed could block or stop us moving in this direction.

Our unity and diversity was experienced as the group struggled together to understand our different realities. But overall was the Unity experienced by each sister in her desire to be open to the guidance of the Spirit within us. A short report was drawn up to be shared with European Provincials and the General Council. Time was then taken by the novice directresses to arrange their pilgrimage to Assisi with the Novices next year.

Not all was work as one morning we went to Mass at the church of St. Stansilaw Kostka where we managed to visit the museum portraying the short life and brutal death of Fr. Jerry Popieluszko. We learned the story of his martyrdom and his courage to face “hatred with love,- lies with truth”. His short life was a lamp for our path offering us the courage to be who we profess to be, living “Veritas et Caritas”. The final day we went to Czestochowa to the shrine of the Black Madonna. Both of these visits and our sharing together brought the novice directresses together with greater understanding and fmm bonding of love.

Janina Tuszkowska and Margaret Taylor, fmm

Reunion - Ephphata Group

From the 14th to the 16th of January 2011, I had the joy of bringing together the Ephphata group to the youth camp in the Plane des Cafres. The objective of the camp: to experience the situation of the WYD (World Youth Day) and to reflect more deeply on the pope’s letter. We were about fifty to experience this wonderful weekend, in the cold.

Friday saw the set-up, welcome, prayer, sharing the meal. In the evening, we had a game to get to know one another better. On Saturday. From 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. we walked in small groups of six, with our little book containing the Pope’s letter and a questionnaire, a list of endemic plants that we had to find on our way, a plan so as not to be lost and a time of prayer together. Besides that, each group had to prepare a mime, a song or a sketch to introduce the evening, on what he/she had discovered during the day, with three words: hydrangea, WYD, and rooted. From 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. we had a time for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament when the young people had the opportunity for a personal re-reading of what the Pope had addressed to them as a message: a moment that was much appreciated by all of us, to question ourselves in the presence of the Lord! At 9 p.m., after the festive dinner, was a time

Janina Tuszkowska and Margaret Taylor, fmm
when each group could express in song, mime, etc., what it had discovered during the day. On Sunday morning, the young people reflected as a group to prepare the Eucharist, with intentions based on the Covenant prayer: pardon, intercession and thanks. And we, the animators, made our evaluation and tried to see together how to help these young people to continue to grow in faith. On the whole we felt a real team spirit which had come upon us, and we were happy with this weekend. At the final sending at the Eucharist, each one received a light to tell us: let us be a light for others wherever we are.

In fact, to learn how to know one another, to pray in different ways, to sing, to discover our talents, to sleep in a tent or on the floor in rooms, to walk eleven kilometres, to shower in just 3 minutes, etc.: was a rich and worthwhile moment of our weekend.

I leave you the impressions of the young people:
What was difficult was the night and the cold: to sleep on the floor, the walk, the shower in such a short time, mingling with and turning towards each other.

What they liked: the songs, Compline, the evening prayer in the chapel, Adoration, the whole atmosphere, the meals, the mixing in the group, meeting new people, mutual help, good humour, respect for each one, the festive evening on Saturday, sleeping in the tent … A very good understanding between the youth and the animators, a well-organised weekend, with discussions on the Pope’s letter during the shared walk.

Daniela Andy, fmm

Quito, Ecuador – Meeting at the Interprovincial Novitiate, "Franciscan Corner"

The interprovincial novitiate house ‘Franciscan Corner’ in Quito, from the 27th to 31st of January 2011 welcomed the meeting of provincials from Colombia-Ecuador, México, Paraguay, Southern Brazil and Northern Brazil. The meeting’s objective was to evaluate the lived experience of the two years of the novitiate, especially the formation process for second year novices, to reaffirm our commitment to this Project and to elaborate some suggestions for the future.

We experienced a rich time of community and personal dialogues, interchanges, and very international and intercultural living together in prayer, work, community activities, recreation, meals, etc. The day set aside for an outing we took the opportunity to get to know the Shrines of Our Lady of the Rocks (Colombia) and Our Lady of Peace (Ecuador).

We perceived God's grace accompanying us in this process of searching and experiencing new paths for initial formation on the Continent. The interprovincial novitiate experience helps us concretely to live out sending and receiving, such a significant element of our charism. We wish to be open so that our collaboration in the interprovincial novitiate Project is "at the service of the Reign of God, and of Life and Mission for today and tomorrow". (CD 2008, D-1.)

Bozena Stencel, fmm
“Female Face of Migration”

held in Saly, Senegal from November 30 to December 2 was organized by Caritas International. Millions of women are leaving their homes to escape poverty and oppression. They embark on risky journeys in search of a better life. To better support and empower migrant women, Caritas wants to focus on “the feminisation of migration” and create an in-depth understanding of it. Some of the topics dealt with in the conference were: Globalisation of migration, Migrant women contribution to communities and society, Network between the countries of origin, transition and destination, and Migration policies, etc.

Over 100 representatives from Caritas and other international organizations from 50 countries attended the conference. Noriko Hosobuchi FMM, representing Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees and People on the Move, from Japan had the opportunity to attend the conference.

At the end of the conference, the participants agreed that they should:
- Take up the challenge to accompany and protect migrant women and incorporate the migrant women as a group in the work of Caritas.
- Build the potential network and increase the cooperation between Caritas in countries of origin, transit and destination, throughout the migratory process and offer for the empowerment of migrant women.
- Lobby governments to uphold international law in the protection of migrants.
- Raise awareness among Church authorities and Christian communities about the migration or women.
- Promote policies which prioritize the protection of transnational families in countries of origin and destination. (cf “The final statement”)

As I attended the conference, I was convinced that the migrant phenomenon, especially female migration, is a great challenge for us, as the 2008 General Chapter says, “The phenomenon of migration presents us with the great affliction and insecurity of people in this circumstance. Being with the migrants, we can discover how God is present among them, and together with them, build a new culture. The presence and vibrant faith of many migrants are changing the face of our churches...” (CG 2008 C3 pg 10)

Maria Cecilia Noriko HOSOBUCHI, fmm

Senegal - “Female Face of Migration”
It was my first experience of being out of the country to attend a conference. From India we were 100 participants including 20 priests who are the advisors of Catholic Nurses Guild of India. It was a gathering of 500 participants from 22 Asian countries at Singapore. Mr. George Yeo, the minister of Health Affairs, Singapore declared the programme open.

The main Theme of the conference was, "Embracing holistic care through practice, education and research". Each day one of the sub-themes was dealt with such as: Spirituality in Nursing Profession, Nursing Education for 21St Century and Nursing Research and Ethical Issues for Carers.

Sr. Mary Elizabeth BL Lim, said that Nurses are becoming more aware that patients/ persons have very deep yet perhaps unconscious Spiritual needs. The majority of those in this caring profession feel inadequate to respond to these needs. Nurses learn through their personal experiences that "being present" to patients, listening to the oft unspoken words, communicating to patients in a variety of ways and concretely offering "nurturing touches". These affect and effect health and wholeness. The nursing profession stands on holy grounds: Nursing exists in the aura of love and life. Spirit is the breath of life in all beings. Spirituality in the nursing profession is the very ground of Being and 'Being-ness'.

We discussed various topics such as- Hospice, Pain and Palliative care, Mental Health, Community Geriatric Care, care of infants and children and care of the terminally ill patients.

The second day was devoted to "Nursing Education for the 21st Century".

The keynote address delivered by Professor Sally Wai-Chi-Chan said that Nurses and Midwives are essential members of the health care team and have the potential to make a significant contribution in the global arena and thus nursing is a well-reputed profession with sound systems of education and accreditation. The scope of nursing practice has been expanded to meet the challenges.

On the third day Dr. Christopher Lien spoke on "Nursing Research and Ethical issues for healthcare workers". He said that people of all ages seek and aspire to meaningful life beyond the routine. For some people this is borne out by expressions in religious practices, for others it is expressed in their personal interests, adventures, relationships in bringing comfort to others, or in sharing their stories. All these aspects are part of their journey in faith, and beliefs.

On the Final day all the participants of the 22 countries explained the functioning of the Catholic Nurses Guild in their counties and the problems they were encountered.

It was announced that the next (11th) Conference for the year 2014 will be in India, Kerala.

Georgina Thomas Valiaparambil, fmm (Chennai Province, India)
This year has been declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Year of Youth. As more than half of our students are Catholics, we decided to organize a Youth Convention titled “Tune in to Jesus” on 4 December 2010. This coming together of young Catholic students from various Colleges in the city was intended to encourage in them a resurgence of Gospel values and Biblical ideals which would serve as a springboard for future action. The convention was a forum for students to exchange ideas, discuss issues that confront them, and become witnesses of Christ, imbued with Gospel values, based on revitalized faith and belief. About 600 students including some from five city colleges participated.

The main resource person Fr. Joe Andrew sdb, led the participants through a session on “Youth and Holiness”. He observed that holiness was not something to be feared. Holiness was something to be enjoyed, as it emanated from the love of Christ. He cited examples of young people who were models of holiness for the youth and exhorted the participants to live by these models. He pointed out that the foundation of sanctity was the relationship with Jesus Christ. He invited young people to establish a close relationship with Christ, and added that they should spend time in prayer. He identified seven habits that youth should acquire: personal prayer, living in God’s presence, observance of the Way of the Cross, the word of God, participation in the Eucharist, the praying of the Rosary, and the examination of conscience. He suggested a formula for holiness in the acronym ACTSS – adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, supplication, surrender. A PowerPoint “My Dear Boys, Be Saints”, based on the message of St. Don Bosco, drove home the point clearly. A team of young professionals who were members of a gospel-band, assisted in the “Praise and Worship” session through gospel songs and music.

There were other activities, video presentation on a young American, Vick Vijuick, who had no limbs, but was content with life; role play by actors presenting the touch of the Divine in their lives, and students’ sharing. This was followed by the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by the Most Reverend Dr. A.M. Chinnappa, sdb, Archbishop of Madras – Mylapore.

Students felt that the convention was a relevant and timely intervention in their busy academic lives. They felt greatly motivated and inspired by the message presented to them. The depth of God’s love came to them with greater clarity and greatly appreciative of the music played by Gospel Band A to Z. The Bible Quiz was a great motivating factor for students to read the Holy Bible more closely with greater love, zeal and enthusiasm and to live the Word of God.

Maria Sundari Innaya Kadasani, fmm
This is how one of the participants at Woodstock approached me. This was not an exception, for we are constantly being called upon, invited to speak. To the question “Would you like to speak to us about Jesus?” the usual answer is “YES”.

“ARREST JESUS”? Tens of thousands of young people, dressed in lively colours and with strange hair styles, gathered together at Woodstock. In front of this scene, some hundreds of people participated in the concerts, the rest coming and going, watching something here, nibbling something there, making new acquaintances. The dust was visible from far, because it was rising a few metres. It was thus that days passed in Kostrzyn on the Oder. It is precisely there that we wanted to set out with the Good News.

The “Jesus’ Arrest” was quite visible, thanks to a tall cross. Beneath the cross, one could pray, rest and chat. Not far from there was our scene and the tent where we would show some films at night. Many people were interested and stopped by. Priests heard confessions while voluntary evangelisers were engaged in conversation. Moreover, the majority of us were walking two by two in the Square of Woodstock.

- Have you come to convert? Shouted someone behind us.
- No. We want to share our meeting with Jesus. Thus began some beautiful meetings.

NOT TO BELIEVE? WHAT IS THAT?

What surprised me most was a great openness, a great desire to listen to the Gospel, a deep hunger for God. A young girl, tall, beautiful, with a lot of make-up, dressed fully in black, approached me:

- Sister, are you a real sister?

Invited with two other F.M.M. to witness to our faith at the presentation of “Jesus’ Arrest” in Kostrzyn, in Poland, Sr. Marta Naumczyk shares with us her experience with the youth...

“"I would like to tell you my story"
- Yes.
- Do you really believe in God?
- Yes.
- Then, believe; at least you, believe in God.
- But why?
- Because it is a terrible feeling not to believe.
- What is it?
- It is as if someone has rubbed me down with sandpaper.

I asked if this sandpaper could be caressed; Yes! I thought she would never leave me. She repeated this request several times: “You at least, believe”. She was only 15!

**JESUS – STRENGTH OF THE WEAK**

For this presentation of the “Jesus’ Arrest”, more than 200 lay evangelisers, 150 seminarians, 60 priests, 24 religious (2 F.M.M.: Sr. Aldona Dyczewska and I, Marta Naumczyk), were involved.

We were supported by the prayer of many people of different communities the world over. During this presentation, there was adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the church of Kostrzyn. I think it is thanks to that, that the road to hearts was opened. Once during adoration, I thought: “Jesus! When I go through this day, perhaps I will speak with three or four people and perhaps some during the night. Only that, it is too little while there are thousands here. And while I am here, this prayer must help all the evangelisers. Perhaps you can touch thousands of hearts with your love!”

Nevertheless ... what wisdom in our charism: Jesus adored sends us to our brothers and sisters and then our brothers and sisters for whom we feel powerless and poor, send us back, in turn, to Him who is our All and our Good, so as not to fall into activism and self-promotion. Everything must be around Jesus and for Jesus. Do not remain in any one place so as not to remain for self!

How have we proclaimed Jesus? As each one can. God surprised us in using everything, even the absence of borrowed words, timidity, weakness. I have experienced that Jesus truly comes and acts precisely by “the folly of the proclamation of the Word”. Our incapacity is not an obstacle to grace.

**WHO EVANGELISES WHOM?**

A boy came towards me saying: “I want to tell you my story” and he utterly surprised me: You know, when I was small I had to wear glasses. I was ashamed in front of my school mates. I appeared to be ugly and I felt bad. One day, outside, I held out my hands (he showed me the gesture of stretching out his hands towards heaven) and I said: ‘I am ashamed of wearing spectacles and I feel bad; please grant that I may not need to wear them any more’. That was all. Imagine, that same week, my mother called me to ask me if I would not like to wear contact lenses! The time had not yet come when they had become popular, but were very costly and needing care. But you know what? Since then, I know that (he showed the sky above us) there is One who cares for me and we will be better off up there one day.

- And do you not expect anything here?
- You know ... No. Alcohol does not give me happiness, I am here because something is happening, but ... very simply, I know that it will be much better up there. I have narrated my story, because perhaps you are here to convince others that God exists. So you can narrate my story.

I do so with joy. GOD EXISTS. He acts through everything, by everything and in spite of everything.

**Marta Naumczyk, fmm (Pologne)**
The first FMM foundation in China was in Chefoo in 1886. The novitiate and the boarding school were situated on a beautiful spot on the beach. Who would have thought that after more than a century St. Francis School is sought here in Taipei in Nov. 2010?

“The Sisters were Mother to me” stirred up the search. Mrs. Nancy Chang Ing, a well known personality, publisher of many books and Vice-president of International PEN, wrote of her childhood days in China and titled that part “The Sisters were Mother to me”.

At the age of 8, her American mother, before leaving for the States after her divorce, placed her in the boarding school of St. Francis, which faced the FMM’s convent in Chefoo. Her first days were heart-rending and tear-filled. She yearned for consolation to be wrapped in the Sisters’ arms for mothering warmth. But what she got was only a light tap on the shoulder now and then. She had not realized that the Sisters at that time were not allowed to embrace people or even cuddle little children. She was greatly depressed. Pranks and mischief revealed her strong belligerent character. But the Sisters forgave her with understanding love. Gradually she became fond of them. She was taught about God and how to pray and how God would always answer prayers.

She longed for her mother’s return but learned that it would be impossible. So when she was 12 years old she wanted to be baptized and to make the convent her home. She wrote this decision to her father in the States. Immediately he came to take her away from school and

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