Dear Sisters,

As I write this year-end message, my thoughts are drawn towards our patron Saint Paul whose activities had inspired deep reflection and renewal in the early days of the Church. He wrote straight from the heart which is evident in his epistles. He made use of every occasion to give thanks to God and invited his readers to do the same.

Today, Paul himself speaks to us and he invites us too, to give thanks to God for the marvels that His love has wrought and continues to accomplish each day, for the Church, for the world, for each one of us, and most especially this year, for our Congregation’s General Chapter.

“I am continually thanking God about you, for the grace of God which you have been given in Christ Jesus; in him you have been richly endowed in every kind of utterance and knowledge.”

Aren’t these riches likewise the fruits of the Holy Spirit that the Father has deigned to grant us through his Son Jesus Christ during the General Chapter? Weren’t these the very gifts that our Sister Capitulars carried back with them to be shared with you in the Provinces, Districts and Regions?

Likewise a part of this grace is the announcement of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI of the special Jubilee Year dedicated to Saint Paul to be celebrated from June 28, 2008 to June 29, 2009 on the occasion of the 2nd millennial anniversary of his birth.

It is a great joy and our pride as Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres to honor our Patron in a special way. He was given to us as our patron from the early days of our foundation. We call him our Father and our model, but do we really know him?

The Jubilee year will surely afford us this opportunity to draw up for ourselves, a clearer portrait of Saint Paul which will be closer to his personality, allowing us to

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1 Corinthians 1:4-5
deepen and understand better the impact of his writings. Thus we can truly follow him on the road to missionary evangelization, open ourselves to the universal dimension and be imbued with his missionary daring.

We can be very sure of this: this year, a great wind of inspiration is blowing to bring newness to our Congregation. It will be for us a year of grace, a year of conversion, a year of hope and apostolic renewal if we strive to be attentive to the Word of God and allow ourselves to be lead along new paths by the Holy Spirit.

“The word of God is something alive and active: it cuts more incisively than any two-edged sword.”

God’s Word is effective because it became a reality in the life of the chosen people and through Jesus Christ, the Word of God who became flesh “and dwelt among us,” it continues to be accomplished today as it proclaims the Kingdom of God through his Church.

 Truly, God’s Word cuts incisively, enlightening man’s life like a lamp that lights his way and leads him on to the right path until he reaches the end of his pilgrimage on earth.

Thus the Word of God is the primary source of Christian spirituality. It nurtures our personal relationship with the living God, making us attuned to His saving will that sanctifies us. This Word must be made known, listened to, loved and deeply imbibed in the Church so that it can reach all men of our time.

As we move further into the 21st century, we, the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres who are women of the future, must be ready to work, create and continuously reinvent our future. The present time calls us to respond with urgency to the needs of the world. We know our orientations, for the work of the General Chapter had pointed them out to us:

- to renew our missionary horizons
- to provide ourselves with a strong spirituality
- to build authentic religious communities
- to become responsible for the unity and the future of our Congregation, together, as a body.

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2 Hebrews 4:12
With Saint Paul, let us renew our missionary horizons.

“As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.”

“I have loved you just as the Father has loved me.”

Jesus has thus made the summary of the contents of the word “mission”. The love that the Holy Trinity brings us is accomplished in a mission. Each Christian, each Sister of St. Paul has a mission. It does not mean that every one has to travel far but that we are all called to work in communion with Christ. Being with Jesus and working with Him are two essential and inseparable aspects of the mission.

Mission is a fundamental element directly related to our baptism with its Trinitarian dimensions as mentioned in the Gospels.

“Go therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

“Baptizing in the Spirit” is the mission of Christ, whom the Gospels reveal to us as the Redeemer. We are invited to reread and deepen our reflection on these passages.

“The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest is the one who is to baptize with the Holy Spirit.”

“John baptized with water, but, not many days from now, you are going to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Right from the beginning of his apostolate, Saint Paul affirms that his ministry is the work of the Spirit.

“All our competence comes from God. He has given us the competence to be ministers of a new covenant, a covenant which is not of written letters, but of the Spirit; for the written letters kill, but the Spirit gives life.”

Being baptized in the Spirit, we are all sent in order to continue the Mission of Christ throughout the world. We Christians, find our unity in this common Mission. As Pope John Paul II reminds us in his 1991 encyclical Redemptoris Missio:

“Missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity and offers fresh

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3 Jn 20:21  
4 Jn 15:9  
5 Mt 28,19  
6 John 1 :33  
7 Acts 1 :5  
8 2 Co 3, 5-6
enthusiasm and new incentive. Faith is strengthened when it is given to others!”

With St. Paul, let us provide ourselves with a strong spirituality

“Saint Paul is the Patron of the Congregation. His epistles serve as the foundation of the spirituality of the Sisters of St. Paul.”

We say that ours is a Christocentric Paschal spirituality. St. Paul who personally experienced God’s touch when he met Christ on the road to Damascus, centered his teachings on Christ Jesus, the Lord and Savior. For St. Paul, the death and resurrection of Christ is at the heart of the History of our Salvation.

Our Baptism in the Spirit, introduces us into the Trinitarian life, through the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection. Let us be aware that in order for us to approach the Father, we must make that journey walking side by side with Christ and guided by the Spirit.

Saint Paul reminds us in his letters that the Holy Spirit, being present and active in the world, has a fundamental role in the personal life of every baptized Christian as well as in the life of the community.

“You have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance.”

The Spirit is the source of prayer and the knowledge of God. Paul himself is a witness to the visible action of the Holy Spirit in the Christian communities that he founded and he often prayed for this gift of the Spirit for the brethren.

“May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ... give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed...”

“The Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness... we do not know how to pray properly...”

Building authentic fraternal communities with Saint Paul:

“The law of love is the charter of the fraternal Community founded on Christ.”

God’s love is the foundation of fraternal life. The community is the basic unit of the Congregation

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9 Redemptoris Missio no. 2
10 LV n° 4
11 Ph 1, 13-13
12 Eph 1,17
13 Rom 8,26
14 BL no. 35
it is the place of renewal. The Sisters of St. Paul, sent and brought together by providential circumstances, share a common faith experience in that same contemplative gaze on Christ and in walking with him towards the Father in the Spirit.

“We were baptized into one body in a single Spirit, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as free men, and we were all given the same Spirit to drink.” \(^{15}\)

The Community is where the Sisters learn to become “Sisters”, by going beyond cultures, language and differences. It is in Community where together, the Sisters learn to live and grow in faith, in trust, in mutual listening and exchanges with deep respect for the mystery of each one.

“The Christocentric Paschal spirituality is at the very heart of our fraternal life in community. Having been baptized in the death and resurrection of Christ, we become children of the Father and sisters to each other in Christ.” \(^{16}\)

St Paul was concerned for the entire Church and this was apparent in his exhortations concerning the quality of fraternal relationships among communities. The love of God and of neighbor was at the core of his teachings. He exhorts, encourages and intercedes:

“In charity, place yourselves at the service of one another. For the entire Law is fulfilled in this one commandment: love your neighbor as yourself.” \(^{17}\)

“Prove yourselves kind and compassionate to one another, mutually forgiving, as God has forgiven you in Christ.” \(^{18}\)

With St. Paul, let us all together become responsible for the unity and the future of the Congregation

The Sisters are aware that they are fully responsible for the continual growth of the Community and strive to maintain an atmosphere of warm welcome, hospitality and cheerfulness. \(^{19}\)

We are all responsible for the vitality of consecrated life in the Church and for the unity and the future of the Congregation. As persons in authority, the Superiors are particularly concerned about building unity through the quality of their relationships.

\(^{15}\) 1 Co 12,13  
\(^{16}\) A.C.2001 p.23  
\(^{17}\) Ga 5: 13-14  
\(^{18}\) Eph 4: 32  
\(^{19}\) CA 2001 p.26
It is important to dialogue and discern together.

To promote edification and unity, it is the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and the Son, who will establish communion among the members of the Community. It is also the Spirit who will help us to bear fruit, who will bring us closer to our Sisters in order that we may become signs of God’s gentleness for them.

My dear Sisters, personally and in community, let us deepen the four directions that the General Chapter has indicated to us so that an authentic renewal may take place deep within us. Let us allow ourselves to be touched by St. Paul as he exhorts us:

“Since the Spirit is in your life, walk by the Spirit!” 20

Let us ask the Holy Spirit to make us attentive to God’s calls in the service of our brothers and sisters. Let us start to truly listen to the Spirit who is leading us to new paths opening to the future and towards new roads of hope.

These, my dear Sisters, are my wishes and prayer for you this Christmas and for the New Year.

The Sisters Assistants, Secretary and Treasurer join me in thanking you for your kind Christmas wishes and in greeting you a happy and holy Year of Saint Paul.

To each and every one of you we express our profound and fraternal affection.

Rome, December 8, 2007

MERRY CHRISTMAS
and a Holy Jubilee Year 2008
to you all!

20 Ga 5: 25
ROME: Generalate

Mother Myriam and her Council have appointed Sr. Paula Miossec as Superior of the Generalate local community for a first term of three years.

On November 11, 2007 the new Superior was presented to the whole community gathered at the Crypt of the Casa.

In her welcome talk, Mother Myriam invited each Sister to bring her contribution in the building of the community, in the light of the 46\textsuperscript{th} General Chapter’s orientations.

The letter of appointment was read during a simple liturgy, after the Word of God and the related reading from the Book of Life. This was followed by the Sr. Paula’s word of acceptance and the thanksgiving prayer. A representative of the community expressed gratitude to Sr. Maria Goretti, the former Superior. Then each Sister presented herself to the new Superior. The aperitif was served at the hall in an atmosphere of joy and fraternal conviviality.

ROME Travels of Mother Myriam and the General Assistants

December 2007

\textbf{Turkey}  
Mother Myriam & Sr. Saint Jean

January 6-February 5, 2008

\textbf{Hongkong}  
Mother Myriam & Sr. Mary Ann

Feb. 10 – March 1, 2008

\textbf{Philippines}  
Mother Myriam & Sr. Mary Ann

Feb. 8 - March 7, 2008

\textbf{Vietnam}  
Sr. Saint Jean & Sr. Monique
USA

Sr. Gloria Schultz was appointed Superior of the District of the USA for a first term of three years with Sr. Rosalie Hughes and Sr. Marie Kim as District assistants.

Sr. Gloria went to Rome for a period of orientation from November 16 to 29, 2007. She takes the place of Sr. Mary Ann Laurin who is now an Assistant General.

ENGLAND-IRELAND

On October 29, 2007 Mother Myriam and her Council appointed Sr. Rose Margaret Nuval Superior of the Region of England and Ireland. Sr. Rose Mary Clifford and Sr. Fabiola Pak are the Assistants. Sr. Rose Mary gave a feedback of the General Chapter to each of the two communities of the Region.

JAPAN

In the island of Hokkaido, the Sisters of St. Paul have created two projects for the children who are under their care in the Welcome Houses which used to be Orphanages. These children are welfare cases, victims of violence or abandoned.

The first project is a “Day Service” training program for the young, mostly single mothers in the city of Hakodate. They get basic instruction on how to care for, feed and educate their children better. The team of trainors who are nurses and teachers are happy with the improvements shown by the mothers particularly in learning to solve their problems by talking about them.

The second project is for the youth in the Home “Nazarean” in Yatsushiro, Kyushu. After getting interested in and studying about the environment, they formed a group of Nature “Boy-Scouts” whose activities captured their interest, helping them to become more self-reliant and active in the protection of nature.

These two projects illustrate how the Holy Childhood apostolate started in 1878 upon the arrival of the SPC in Japan, has evolved and adapted to the present needs of society in Japan today.
HONGKONG

About one hundred persons attended the Mass for the opening of the School year in St. Teresa’s Nursing School on October 15, 2007. The guests, which included Sister Jacqueline Ho, SPC Provincial Superior, Father Loke Hang Cheong, of St. Teresa parish, the Sisters of St. Paul, Doctors and personnel of the hospital, participated in the celebration to praise the Lord.

The School of Nursing was reopened in 2005. This year, it has enrolled 55 new students. This is the fourth batch since 2005. The school had to refuse other candidates for lack of space.

These new students are full of enthusiasm to learn how to care for the sick with competence and with the compassion of Christ.

— contributed by Sr. Catherine Woo

MARTINIQUE

On November 30, 2007, the Sisters were gathered in the “Holy Family” room for the opening of the Continuous Formation Program facilitated by Sr. Louis de Gonzague, when an earthquake shook the house with the strength of 7.3 on the Richter scale. Fortunately, it occurred deep below the ground that there were significantly lesser damages than would be expected of an earthquake of such magnitude: a partly destroyed Church, part of a building that collapsed.

Other damages are still being reported. For safety reasons, all schools were closed for damage inspection.

— sent by Sr. Marie-Odile

CANADA

Sister Madeleine Audet has just sent a collection of « Blessings of St. Paul » to the Generalate. This is a fruit of a research from the Epistles of St. Paul done by Sr. Madeleine herself and which the Province of Canada would like to share with other Provinces, Districts and Regions.

These blessings, may be used in the place of the Blessing at the end of the Liturgy of the Hours during the Pauline Year.
HAITI

In the month of October, a flash flood struck the town of Cabaret, Haiti. The Sisters and other disaster victims fled their houses to seek shelter in a National School owned by a Religious Congregation. When they returned to their house the next day, they discovered the refrigerator and the gas cylinder floating in water. Muck was everywhere. The municipality has reported 7 deaths and 600 houses badly damaged. Many people came to help the Sisters. The SPC in Haiti are requesting for prayers in behalf of the town population who suffered most from this calamity.

-sent by Sr. Thérèse Yvonne

PHILIPPINES

A group of Filipina SPC Sisters have prepared a liturgy for the Opening of the Pauline Year on January 25, 2008. They have likewise come up with a Prayer Guide intended to be used for the monthly recollection during the Jubilee Year. The themes are all on St. Paul. The Generalate is ready to send a copy of these works to the Provinces, Districts and Regions who are interested.

ROME: Catholic Education

The results of an international survey on Catholic Education was made public on October 17, 2007 during the launching of the Handbook on Catholic Education at the Lateran University in Rome. The Handbook, published by the IHCF London, was presented by its editor Professor Gerald Grace.

The survey involved Catholic Universities from 17 countries all over the world. The results affirm the influence of Catholic Education which runs counter to the secular culture of the consumer society today.

Mother Myriam, Superior General, and 8 sisters of Saint Paul of Chartres from different countries were present at this International Conference considering the commitment of the Congregation for education in many countries. Professor Grace, underlined the active role of the Catholic Schools in evangelization and development through the education of the poor.

Sr. Maria Atchara, spc
THREE COUNSELS OF PAUL

For A Fervent Community Life

Colossians 3: 12-17

From your hands that are full...

Give, and it will be given to you in return.

Give attention, joy and affection...

Give to everyone without excluding anyone.

Give constantly.

Give when it’s hard to give.

Give from the very dawning of day.

Give without pretense nor expectations of return.

Give to her who has hurt you.

Give when you yearn to possess.

Give love when you finally understand that everything else is useless.

And daily beg for the strength to continue giving.

Give with love, even the lowliest of things,

And never grow weary of giving.
Colossians 3:12-17

**WORD OF GOD**
which is rich and profound

“Let the Word of Christ,
in all its richness,
find a home in you.”

**CONVERSION,**
through mutual reminders,
in wisdom and kindness

“Teach each other,
and advise each other
in all wisdom.”

Constant **THANKSGIVING**
with Christ
and in Christ’s name

“Whatever you say and do
let it be in the name of the Lord Jesus,
in thanksgiving to God Father
through Him.”
Attentive like Mary and Paul at Christmas

“As I reflect on the seasons of Advent and Christmas, I think of Mary. She offered her entire self to God – mind, heart, body and soul— not knowing exactly what would be asked of her at moment, but ready to respond to God’s calls to her. I also remember Paul’s readiness: first his zeal for what he thought was God’s will—to persecute the Christians, and then after his conversion, to bring the Good News of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

May we also be ready to discern and to follow all of God’s calls to us even though we don’t know where this would lead us.

I think of the coming of Jesus – historically at that first Christmas, presently in his Eucharistic presence, and in the future, in his coming as King. With all the darkness in the world, we need the Light of Christ. With all the violence in our world, we need the Joy and Hope that Christ brings.

I pray that we will always be ready to meet Him, to see Him in others and to bring Him to others – not only at Christmas but all during the year!”

These are the reflections that Sister Mary Ann Laurin, first Assistant General and former District Superior of the United States of America wants to share with us for this season of Advent and Christmas.

Sister Mary Ann joined the Congregation on January 25, 1965, barely two years after the arrival of the Sisters of St. Paul in Michigan, USA. She is a native daughter of Michigan, being born in the town of Carney.

After her First Profession in September 8, 1967, she completed her studies in the Northern Michigan University.

(continued next page)
(Sr. Mary Ann continued...)  
She was sent as a teacher to St. Christopher School in Marquette.

An experienced teacher, she has equally a rich experience in Community responsibilities. For several years she had been in charge of the Local community and at the same time School Principal. It was in 1997 that she was appointed District Superior of the USA.

Sister Mary Ann is no stranger to the life in the Generalate having participated twice in the Spiritual renewal Program and the Orientation Session for Major Superiors. She participated in the General Chapters of 2001 and 2007.

In 2005 she joined the Sessions for the Formators and in 2006, she was among the Superiors who attended the International Meeting on Evangelization in Korea.

The above reflections on Christmas give us a glimpse of how she prepares her heart to be ready to welcome the Lord in her life and to follow Christ to Rome and wherever she will be sent.

The Mystery of Christmas, A Mystery of the Incarnation

“In this special period of waiting for the coming of the Savior, God invites us to experience the Mystery of Christmas, a mystery of the Incarnation: it means contemplating the Triune God in the humility, the poverty and the kenosis of His Son. The Word, who took on the likeness of men, saves all men by the gift of his great love, and bestows upon them his own riches... “Rich as he was, he made himself poor, to make us rich out of his own poverty.” (cf 2 Cor.8:9)

It also means becoming another Mary, the living cradle of Jesus, giving birth to him in the world by rekindling life in others such that Jesus’ face may be perceived by others - in our own faces, through our entire life - as the “Prince of Peace”

For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son... that the  
(please go to page 17)
The Love of Christ Impels Us

On a beautiful day, in the summer of 1935, the Lord visited the Gaudron family and gifted them with a daughter whom they named Monique. “Carved from that moment in the palm of his hands”, the Lord set her apart for the mission that he reserved for her.

Having entered in the Community of the Sisters of St. Paul on October 2, 1960, Sister Monique took the Habit on August 28 1961. She made her Profession on the same date in 1963, and her Perpetual Vows in 1968.

After her years of formation, Sr. Monique was ready to take more responsibilities in the apostolic life as well as in the different communities in France. She was assigned as a Teacher in Dreux for 16 years, then as a local Superior in Reze and in Soisy and lastly, in Brou where she was reappointed for a second term.

As the delegate of France, Sister Monique actively participated in the 2007 General Chapter. The Lord’s call for her was heard through the votes of the Capitulars who elected her as the third Assistant General of the new General Administration.

As the Spirit of Easter and Pentecost have moved the Capitulars to start walking on new roads, the same Holy Spirit invites Sr. Monique to leave her country for other horizons. We welcome her to Italy to continue Christ’s mission.

Below, she addresses a brief message to all the Sisters of the Congregation:

All the years of my religious life have been spent for the children and preadolescents, until today. In the recent years since my retirement, I found more freedom to speak to the youth about Jesus and teach them the Gospel through songs and gestures. This is what we call “the oral transmission of the Word of God.”

Now, I am here in Rome. The Lord has allowed that I should give my time and my heart, from now on, to my religious family, the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres who are present in many places in the world. I am making myself available to be of help (please go to the next page)
The Love of Christ...continuation to Mother Myriam and all those to whom Mother will be sending me. Likewise, I shall be praying for your personal and missionary intentions...

So, “I will see you soon” perhaps, and I wish you a good preparation for Christmas! “The Love of Christ impels us!”

Christmas : A Light to Share

Some years back, during a midnight mass on Christmas Eve, I had an intense interior experience of this glorious Light that came down from heaven and made its entrance into our world on that first Christmas night in Bethlehem: A tiny, newborn child, the baby Jesus, by his coming, brought a great light into the world and to all of us.

By his life here on earth, he showed us how this light has been given to each person. And he asks us to become Light for others whatever our life situation may be. I am convinced that each one of us has received a part of this Light in our life – in different ways and intensity depending on the person, but coming from the same source of Light.

A few days ago, here in the Generalate Chapel, we celebrated the funeral mass of Signor Bruno, our faithful employee who died suddenly at the age of 76. Many of those who have known him said that he was a man of prayer, who shared “his light” in his own way by his manner of being and by the things he did.

As Christmas approaches, let us try our best to be “Light” in our local communities every where in the world. Wherever we may be, may our light shine and brighten the world like Jesus, the true Light.

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......These challenging words come from Sister Maria Goretti, the 4th Assistant General who has certainly faced many challenging moments in her life as a Sister of St. Paul of Chartres since her entrance into the Congregation.

Coming from the beautiful country of the “morning calm“, our new Assistant General entered the Congregation on March 7, 1972 in Daegu, Korea.

She made her First Profession (go to the next page please)
Christmas, a light to... continued.

on September 8, 1974 and five years after, she made her Perpetual Profession.

As a young Professed she studied in the Institute of Theology in Korea. In 1983, she was sent for language studies in England in preparation for Theology studies in Regina Mundi.

She responds to each call with generosity and a sense of duty. Upon her return to Korea, she was given more important responsibilities as in charge of Vocations, Teacher, Catechist and Provincial Secretary.

In 1999 she was appointed Superior of the Province of Daegu.

In 2005 she became the Superior of the local Community in the Generalate, in Rome. During the 46th General Chapter in September 2007, she was elected 4th Assistant General.

May the Light that guides her path shine upon her in every stage of her life as a member of the General Council where she is called to be a Sister to all the SPC in the world!

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The Mystery of Christmas... continued

world may be saved. In thanksgiving, let us welcome this supreme gift that God gives us through Mary and let us share that gift to those who do not know God. May Christmas bring Peace to this troubled world, Peace to men who are lost, Peace to the Poor and Peace to all men of goodwill.

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Sister Saint Jean TRAN THI ANH, hails from Danang, Vietnam where she was born on September 6, 1940. She entered the Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Paul on September 7, 1961, took the Habit on May 10, 1962 and made her first Profession on June 10, 1964. After her studies, she was appointed Assistant Mistress of the Juvenat from 1964 to 1968, the year when she was sent to Rome for Theology studies in Regina Mundi. She made her Perpetual Vows in Chartres on August 28, 1969.

She returned to Danang in 1971 and was appointed Junior Mistress after a brief teaching job. She was appointed Assistant Provincial in 1978 and in 1988. She became Provincial Superior in 1992 and was reappointed in 1997.

Elected as 4th Assistant General in 2001, she was reelected 2nd Assistant General in 2007.

Sister Saint Jean, may the Lord accompany you in this new stage of life.
A Journey to the Crib

It was a rainy Monday afternoon. The bus I was riding on my way home got caught in the traffic. I looked out of the window and my attention was caught by a billboard the ad which said: “The journey begins here!” In the midst of the long wait, I mumbled to myself several times the word “journey” – as if lost in time, I suddenly remembered the children and the daycare center called Creche FIRMACASA where I work and live with the Sisters, Sr. Helene, Sr. Mariana and Sr. Agnes.

It was on the 15th of August of 2005, feast of our Lady of the Assumption that we responded to the invitation of the Archbishop of Campinas to work and serve the children in this poor section of Campinas. For us, it was the beginning of the Journey marked by FAITH and HOPE... as I always say... our walk towards Levesville-la-Chenard... our Bethlehem.

The Creche FIRMACASA, which stands for Foundation Irmã Ruth de Maria Camargo Sampaio, is a non-governmental organization, founded on February 21, 1973 by a Franciscan religious. It is located in the northern region of Campinas, some 20 kms from São Paulo.

The Creche, situated in the midst of slum areas, attends to 160 children, ages 3 to 6, who live in these areas. The Pastoral of the Child was then established with the help and guidance of Sr. Laurette. The children are served 3 meals and 2 snacks a day to assure that they grow healthy but the program also seeks to educate them so that they will grow up with
dignity, be creative, participative, responsible and happy. The journey of service, of discipleship and mission is long and challenging... but it is a “travel time” of the heart which invites us daily to rediscover in the midst of our poverty, in faces of our children, Jesus in the manger, the Love Incarnate, alive in simple, life-changing ways.

Suddenly, the bus stopped... and so did the rain. I alighted the bus, and walked though the muddy road leading to the Creche, my little Levesville, a piece of Bethlehem where I encounter Jesus in the midst of poverty, not only to be "with us" but also to nourish us.

As I entered the community, I realized how I have made the “journey” that afternoon... the mystery of the Incarnation continues to break into our lives with glimpses of grace that allow our souls a knowing beyond all understanding. Christmas came, ...during that simple bus ride...that rainy Monday afternoon.

Be watchful in this Advent. One never knows when or where the gift will come. But the watchful heart will know.

The dark night wakes, the glory breaks ... and Christmas comes once more.
Ecology In Gyeseong High School

For years, Gyeseong Girls' High School has been taking small steps in order to revive our ecosystem. We are feeding earthworms with leftovers from students' lunch, and using the earthworms' castings as fertilizer to grow tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, and cabbage. Moreover, we are making use of the water which has been used to wash rice. That water is processed with effective microorganisms and gets fermented. We make the fermented rice water in order to reduce water pollution and recycle water resources. This is a part of our school's effort in environmental education.

The most critical task that the whole world should carry out is to restore our ecosystem.

'The Preferential Option for the Poor' must begin with our compassion for the planet by

1. Listening to the cries of the Earth, showing compassion for the ailing earthworm, the Earth's old companion. It is the precious ground healer that restore our dying soil, transforming waste material into useful fertilizers. Their own castings mixed with soil is of the highest quality fertilizer.

2. Being Alert to the Cries of Water. When washing rice, the nutrients get washed off. If this water with the nutrients flow into the sewer, the number of microorganisms soars at an abnormal rate. However, when we ferment the rice water using EM (Effective Microorganisms), we can prevent water pollution.
Since our school is located in the urban area, we lack green space and to compensate for that lack, we have just transformed a 662㎡-roof deck of our High School into a roof garden with shrubs and flowers. Furthermore, in the little patch we have made along with the flower garden, members of our two environmental clubs – the Earthworm Club and the Fermented Rice Water Club – are going to grow vegetable crops, making full use of earthworms and rice water! God has created the universe and entrusted us with its maintenance. We humans have the obligation to preserve our ecosystem so that future generations will still be able to lie down on the grass, observing snails climbing up a bough and clouds floating in the sky. Those who are close to nature know instinctively that humans are to live in harmony with it and can therefore choose the right path to take, without the need for us to scold them constantly about protecting the environment.

The Shirayuri Schools... continued

Thus a well-adapted educational approach gives a chance to these young recluses to succeed. Cultural activities allow the adolescents to have a venue for self-expression and forge their own personality. Through this open welcome, a young girl who was blind was able to learn how to play a musical instrument and participate in the winning School Band which played in an International Music Festival in Korea!

The Shirayuri College in Sendai on the other hand has a project designed to help the old persons who are becoming more and more numerous in Japanese society. With their fund and with financial help from the government, they were able to build a Home for the Aged. In this new residential area for the old, the Sisters come as volunteers for the liturgical and pastoral animation. Other volunteers come and participate in the group prayers and recitation of the Rosary.

In Tokyo, the Shirayuri college has opened a Teachers’ Program on Saturdays which allows those who have a regular employment to update their studies or to obtain another diploma without leaving their work or giving up a well-paying job.
Prenatal Care Unit Opens in Taoyuan

Creating a place for a safe and comfortable antenatal care to prevent premature birth of babies is one of the primary concerns of the “Premature Birth Trust” Organization.

In October 2007, this organization, in a joint project with St. Paul’s Hospital, held the Blessing and Opening ceremony of the first antenatal care ward in Taoyuan, Taiwan. The occasion was attended by the Director of the Trust, Mr. Tse Kai Ming, Chung (Hospital Deputy Director) and twenty Hospital staff. Fr. Chan officiated in the blessing and unveiled the commemorative Plaque.

In Taiwan, there are about 200,000 infant births and about 4,000 neonatal deaths annually. 75% of the total deaths is due to low birth weight. This means that 2,500 infants with low birth weights die.

Therefore, proper antenatal care can prevent premature births and can reduce future medical problems. As St. Paul’s Hospital Obstetric Consultant, Dr. Yeung Sing Kar pointed out, a premature birth, aside from the risk of death, can cause acute, chronic respiratory diseases and poor functioning of the organs and other problems affecting the whole family.

Each month at St. Paul’s Hospital there are about six women admitted due to risk of miscarriage. They require rest in a comfortable environment, with proper medical care to avoid premature birth of infants.

In the Hospital’s new four-bed Prenatal ward, with close medical attention, these women are helped to complete their pregnancy safely.

The Shirayuri “White Lily” Schools Today

Education is one of the most important missions in the Province of Japan. All the SPC Educational Institutions are known a Shirayuri Gakuen, which means “White Lily School”.

The Shirayuri Gakuen in Yatsushiru in Kyushu is a bit different from all the High Schools of Shirayuri Gakuen. Here, students with physical and psychological handicaps are accepted. Each student is helped through an individually designed program adapted to his capacities. (please go to page 21)
THE PAVILION “SISTER ST. LAURENT”

On Monday, March 12, 2007, the Pavilion “Sister St. Laurent” was blessed and inaugurated. It is a tribute to Sr. Saint-Laurent FERRE, a French Sister of St. Paul of Chartres who was a missionary and who dedicated herself to the care of the sick in the Medical Center of the municipality of Saint Esprit from 1916 to 1974.

We gathered at the Chapel. On the altar were two photographs: one was of Sr. St. Laurent and another, showed her doing a dressing. The second photo belonged to a retired Doctor who was among the guests and who made sure that he got back the picture. Other pictures dated back to the start of the hospital.

At 12:30 in the afternoon, the Mayor invited everyone to go in procession to the cemetery where we observed a minute of silence, before the tomb of the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres.

A photograph of Sr. Saint Laurent was likewise displayed there in a sort of a crystal urn.

The director of the Hospital made it clear that this honor bestowed on Sr. Saint Laurent is an example for today’s generation. Her courage, self-sacrifice and dedication were all done for the good of others. The former Chapel will remain a place of prayer and celebration for all. The building will continue to be a place of life and activity because on the day of the inauguration was also the opening of the Home Nursing Care unit with 40 beds. This is the first public Institution with a service of this kind.

The Director specified that he did not change anything in the former rooms of the Sisters so that people will be able to notice that the Sisters once lived there.

Sister Laurent has made an act of love for the people of Martinique, commented one of the guests; a Doctor recounted, with a lot of humor, the beginnings of the hospital starting from the laundry in the river being done upstream and the toilets further downstream, without forgetting the cornette of the Sisters which were well-starched and rendered blind on one eye anyone who came close to a Sister’s face.
The atmosphere became lighter and he continued... No one knew that Sister Laurent was deaf because through lip-reading she participated in conversation. It was only much later that the Doctor realized she was deaf.

Then Sr. Agathe thanked the Hospital director for the tribute given to Sr. Laurent.

Father Gaston JEAN MICHEL, who arrived and worked as a vicar in the parish of Saint Esprit in 1930, also expressed his admiration for Sr. Saint Laurent having seen her face dangers in her work and her great sense of sacrifice. He also addressed the Hospital Director in these words:

“It was you, a native of the Comores Island and a Muslim who took up the task of making up for the negligence of our fellow Martiniquais. Indeed, we almost buried with the past the memory of this heroic and saintly woman Sister Saint Laurent FERRE. She gave herself to God by dedicating her life in the service of the sick and working hard, she spent herself serving the entire community of Saint Esprit. Even after her death, she continues to watch over this Hospital.

Thank you, Mr. Director for accepting to be the driving force in making our wish of honoring the example of Sr. St. Laurent a reality. It will be an honor for you and a beautiful remembrance of your short stay in our place. May the Almighty God accompany you and go with you.”

Returning to the chapel, we proceeded with the Inauguration of the Pavilion in the presence of the civil and religious authorities.

The gray, commemorative plaque in marble was unveiled. It read: “Sr. Saint Laurent worked with dedication in the Saint Esprit Hospital Center for 58 years (1916-1974), Buried in Saint Esprit on 15/1/1979.”

At the end of the tributes and speeches, Father Wilfrid BANNAIS reminded every one of the biblical sense of “remembering” which is an actualization of something that occurred in the past. Then he said a thanksgiving. The choir sang “To a Saint” which is said to be a song of the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres. The celebrations ended with the visit of the Pavilion guided by the Mayor. It evoked many souvenirs for those who have worked or who have lived in the Community. A quiet joy reigned.

Sr. Marie Odile DISPAGNE

Among those present for the occasion were Msgr. Brian UDAIGWE and Msgr. John John KALLARACKAL, Councillor and Secretary respectively to the Apostolic Nuncio, the Archbishop Salvatore PENNACCHIO. They concelebrated at the Holy Mass and joined in the thanksgiving with our Sisters and their benefactors. The faithful who attended the celebration were so numerous that there was not enough place inside the chapel for everyone.

A free clinic was held that morning and the health care personnel of St. Louis Hospital had
their hands full receiving the crowd of patients, answering their questions, taking blood pressure, giving injections. People from the neighborhood came to receive free medical care. The elderly persons were especially happy to receive care from the Sisters.

The Louis Chauvet Center in Sampran is a new foundation of the Province of Thailand. This Center was created in answer to the needs of the present times: to improve the human and spiritual level of the people, thus allowing us to follow in the footsteps of our founder Father Louis Chauvet, parish priest of Levesville-la-Chenard.

Four Sisters make up a fraternal community in the Center: Sr. Emma, Superior, Sr. Theresa Somsri and Sr. Lydia, both nurses, are serving patients in the Center and giving home nursing care as well. Sr. Cyril, a professional psychologist, visits the families and offers counseling when necessary. Occasionally, the Sisters organize activities for the elderly persons, for the children and their families.

The Center is open from 9 o’clock in the morning to 6 o’clock in the evening from Tuesday to Saturday. On Sundays and holidays it is open from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

*The present works as well as the new foundations should meet contemporary needs. It is therefore advisable to be alert to the requirements of evangelization and local needs.* (Book of Life # 54)
Sister Mary Columba Coyle, Missionary

Thirty five years ago, I was a trainee lay missionary with the Viatores Christi, an Irish lay missionary group, when a request was received for an English teacher to work in Santa Cruz Convent in Bangkok. I was asked to go and I said yes. It was suggested that I should meet the Sisters of St. Paul who were about to open a Retirement Home in Dublin. I met Sr. Dympna Harten who had spent many years in Thailand. Her enthusiasm was so contagious that I couldn’t wait to go there.

When I arrived at Bangkok Airport, I was met by Sr. Mary Columba and Sr. Veronica Sexton. I was young and far from home but I found that I was never alone because Sr. Columba took me to her heart and we became close friends.

She was above all a woman with a big heart. She was a pioneer missionary one of the early group of sisters of St. Paul in Thailand where they had set up excellent schools and have many missionary involvements.

Atikan Columba (Sr. Superior in Thai), as she was known, was a much loved and respected elder in her community. She had spent many years as a teacher, Principal, superior, founder of missions to the poor. In all, a very active woman indeed.

Various images spring to mind as I reflect on my days in Santa Cruz. One was her door which was always open like her heart. She was always available to the young sisters, students, teachers, workers. Another image is that of her desk with huge piles of copy books to be corrected. She had classes of over 50 students. Despite her work, she would organize picnics and trips. The Sisters were always happy to welcome her everywhere.

She was a great missionary and an inspiration for me Her secret is that she genuinely loved the Thai people. She spoke their language and got into the Thai people and their culture. She dialogued with the Buddhists, her friends well before Vatican II. She returned to Ireland in 1978 but she had left a large part of her heart far away in Asia, to her beloved Thai people.

by Sally Fay
FIRST PROFESSION

Mother General, with the consent of her Council admits to First Profession

East Timor  January 25, 2008

Sr. Gracilda SOARES
Sr. Augusta GUTERRES
Sr. Jarserina CARLY TILMAN
Sr. Fidelina MAGNO

Korea -Seoul  February 1, 2008

Sr. Anna (Jeong Nam) YU
Sr. Catharina (Kyeong Mi) LEE
Sr. Clara (In Yeong) JEONG
Sr. Christina (Seon Mi) HEO
Sr. Theresa (Eun Seong) SO
Sr. Christina (Jae Suk) KIM
Sr. Clara (Yun Suk) CHA
Sr. Marie Rose (Mi Hyeon) JANG
Sr. Theresa (Jin Ju) PAK
Sr. Noela (No Mi) PAK

Brazil  February 2, 2008

Josefa ALVES DE MELO

Korea -Daegu  February 2, 2008

Sr. Odilia Ji Yun LEE
Sr. Agnes Su Hyun KIM
Sr. Agnes Ju Son KIM
Sr. Nonna Myung Jin KIM
Sr. Laurencia Hea Jung HWANG
Sr. Demetria Hea Jung KIM
Sr. Julianna Hang Hee KIM

Sr. Cécile TRAN THI BICH LIEN
Sr. Marie NGUYEN THI MINH
Sr. Marie VU THI SA
Sr. Therese TRUONG THI NGOC DIEM
Sr. Therese LE NGUYEN THANH PHUONG VY
Sr. Lucie TRAN CHAU THUC

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PERPETUAL PROFESSION

Mother General, with the consent of her Council, admits to Perpetual Profession

Korea – Séoul February 1, 2008

Sr. Helena Seon Heui O Sr. Josephina In Seong LEE
Sr. Gemma Eun I Ko Sr. Lutgarda Hye Yeong LEE
Sr. Gabriela Ok Im SEON Sr. Agnes Hyeon Suk LEE

Korea – Daegu February 2, 2008

Sr. Othilia Young-seon CHAE Sr. Joanna Eun-young KIM
Sr. Julianna Jeong-sook PARK Sr. Agnes Seong-yeul KIM
Sr. Anna Mee-a LEE Sr. Elisabeth Mee-kyeong KIM
Sr. Rosa Mee-kyoung LEE Sr. Maria Eun-kyeong KIM
Sr. Maria Kyoung-yeun KIM Sr. Martina So-hyun PARK

Philippines February 2, 2008

Sr. Judith ABIQUE Sr. Jennifer DAY DAY
Sr. Maria Celeste RIVAS
GOING HOME TO THE FATHER

*They were called to return home to the Father, to live in eternal fidelity:*

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May the Lord welcome them in his Light and his Peace

An Open Letter

Bruno Amori, “Signor Bruno” as we called him, left us in silence on November 24, as he had lived in silence. 

Who was Signor Bruno? – the husband of Signora Anna and the father of Cesarina. He had been at the service of the Casa since 1964. How many generations of Sisters have known him as driver, gardener and maintenance personnel who was always available for fixing the many problems in the Casa?

How can we forget his expressive, sweet smile? A sober and silent man without being a misanthrope, he loved company but also loved solitude with God. Working in the garden or elsewhere, Signor Bruno was always praying, as his mother had taught him. This is what he confided to some of us.

How it made him happy to offer cakes and croissants to the Community during birthdays of his family members. And on solemn feasts, he used to come, elegantly dressed in a suit in the company of Signora Anna, his wife, to greet Mother General and the community.

Our “Brother Bruno” was like that. We remember him with affection and keep him in our prayer.

The funeral mass was celebrated on November 26 in our bouquet-laden chapel which was filled with mourners, family members, friends, neighbors and the Sisters who were all familiar with his simple, honest and generous life.

Sr. Maria Teresa Milana