

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved. Forever!

Ametur

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Newsletter of the Associates of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

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Dear Associates,

Another year is coming to an end and what a year it has been! As we reflect on our world and on our own experiences in it during 2021 what are our feelings? Perhaps we should take time to sit quietly, reflect, maybe write down our impressions. Give the Holy Spirit free reign in your heart and see what happens! Whatever the outcome of your pondering let there be an abundance of hope in the One whose birth we are celebrating. He is the Prince of Peace, the Hope of all Nations, the Lover of us all.

In *Already Within*, Daniel O’Leary recalled a tender moment he witnessed in front of a Christmas Crib, where a father heard his little girl wondering to herself,

“I wonder if God enjoys being a baby.”

The author then went on to say:

“These are the moments when I find the realization of what the Incarnation means simply overwhelming. The veil of the routine seasonal repetitions is briefly parted and the heart is caught off guard.”

(The Columba Press Dublin, p 137)



The great mystic and theologian Thomas Aquinas, who believed that joy is at the heart of faith, said, *“Sheer joy is God’s, and this demands companionship.”* Daniel O’Leary muses on these words:

*Could it be that God created the world in the first place
because of a burning desire to be exactly like one of us,
and so, to experience everything that human beings experience? (ibid p 138).*

May our hearts be “caught off guard” this Christmas, and may they never be the same again as we contemplate with joy the incredible love that brought Jesus to our earth, to dwell among us. May the miracle of Christmas lift your hearts and may Jesus, Mary and Joseph bless you and your loved ones in the coming new year.

With joy and gratitude for each one of you

Sr Ancilla White OLSH

Our Chevalier Family's Logos

Our Chevalier Family Tree has four branches, and each has its own logo.



It is a joy to welcome the most recent one into the Family – that of the Lay of the Chevalier Family. In a letter from the International Council to the Lay Chevalier Family for 8th December, Alison McKenzie has presented a beautiful explanation of this Logo for your reflection. Thank you to the members of the Council and to all those who contributed to this description.

December 8th is the day Fr Chevalier always considered as the foundation day of the Chevalier Family. Fr Chevalier always dreamed of a Society where the laity recognised their role in the mission and were able to fully participate in offering Jesus' Heart to the world.

On this anniversary day we offer our Logo and its explanation for your prayerful reflection, and we ask all National Council Chairs to send out this document and to use it for formation in groups.

Blessings

Alison, Doris, Rita, Peter and Fr Hans.

Alison McKenzie

General Secretary

Laity of the Chevalier Family



The Logo of the Chevalier Family was designed in Brazil for use at the Third International Assembly of Laity of the Chevalier Family. In many ways, this Assembly marked the formal birth of the international, national and regional structures of the movement, and it was where the Guiding Principles and Statutes were adopted. The Logo depicts the spirit and essence of the emerging movement of laity at that Assembly and has since been adopted by both the International Council and many National Councils as their own.

The Logo is quite distinctive in its features and is different from the explicitly Christian images of the MSC, FDNCS and the MSC Sisters. While the key symbols of Spirituality of the Heart are present in the recognisable, but softly drawn Sacred Heart and Cross of Jesus, the Logo also contains strong images of the human interconnection and interrelationship that are identifying features of our shared charism, yet at the same time point to the distinctiveness of our Lay Charism, where we live in families, we earn our living in our communities and we commit ourselves in a way that is different from professed members. When the images are considered through the eyes of our Charism they point us to foundational scriptures: *since it is in him (LOVE) that we live and move and exist (Acts 17:28) and this LOVE of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us (Romans 5:5) and whoever fails to LOVE does not know God, because God is LOVE. (1 Jn 4: 8)*

The centrality but openness of the heart: the universal symbol for love, human and divine, draws us to the transformation of our own hearts that comes through our offering of our lives to the Heart of Christ. This offering leads us to encounter for ourselves the love of God. It is from this transforming encounter that our interconnection and relationality flows. The configuration of the figures reflects this understanding. Their shape and posture are gently intertwined, but loosely held; the different forms are reflective of gender, culture and worldview, but most importantly, all flow from the Heart of Christ. We are diverse yet animated by the same source. Our interconnection leads us deeply into the pain and suffering of the world, which could overwhelm us but for the Hope of Christ which is poured into our hearts to be a source of hope for others. It is from the flame of the charism that this transforming hope flows out of the heart encircling the people.

The flame of charism connects the interior symbols to the outer circle. The use of green, signifying hope, encircles the central image and symbolically reflects creation, in which we live and from which we are sustained. Spirituality of the Heart recognises that creation powerfully reflects a God of life and relationship and reminds us, as laity, of our sacred task to commit to the preservation and protection of the creation from which all life comes. This understanding is enhanced through the depiction of our name within the circle of creation and by the flame of our charism pointing directly to our name. This clearly identifies the place of the laity within the Chevalier Family as a group that is distinct, yet completely connected to the common vision.

The Logo is dancing; its gentle strength is reflective of the central place of Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, in our charism and draws us into the love between Jesus and Mary that flows from them to us and all creation, enabling us to participate in the joyful dance of love.

The Logo calls us, as members of the Laity of the Chevalier Family, to our responsibility to participate in the creation of hope, meaning and purpose which is the birthright of all humanity.

Pope Francis and Our Lady



Pope Francis celebrates his 85th birthday on 17th December. Let us thank God for the beautiful gift that he is to the Church and to our world and pray that he continues to receive the blessings of health of body, wisdom of mind and peace of heart. At the Angelus on 8th December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lady, Pope Francis offered these words of encouragement to those assembled in St Peter's Square and as our Shepherd he offers them to the whole flock.

*"Let us ask Our Lady for a grace:
that she may free us from the misleading idea
that the Gospel is one thing and life is another;
that she kindle our enthusiasm for the ideal of holiness
which is not a matter of holy cards and images,
but is about living what happens each day, humbly and joyfully,
like Our Lady, free from ourselves,
with our eyes fixed on God and the neighbour we meet.*

*Let us not lose heart:
the Lord has given everyone what it takes to weave holiness within our everyday life!
And when we are assailed by the doubt that we cannot succeed,
or the sadness of not being adequate,
let us allow ourselves to be looked upon by the "merciful eyes" of Our Lady,
for no one who has asked for her help has ever been abandoned!"*

Pope Francis





Marie Louise Hartzler (Concluded)

Sr Juliette Baker FDNSC

And now I had to lead a kind of double life: the relatively uneventful everyday life of religious observance in the convent at Issoudun, while at the same time my heart sought to enter into the life of the missionaries. Childhood memories of my father were revived – his stories of experiences in the Dutch Navy as he sailed the seas that washed the shores of new Guinea and the other islands where my Sisters would live and labour and die for love of Christ and his poorest ones. I eagerly awaited the letters which eventually found their way to me from the mission fields, describing people and situations that that I would never experience. My heart had to seek solutions to many of their difficulties and sufferings. I often found myself with pen in hand expressing to them my anxiety for their health, offering solutions to their problems which I had found in the Heart of Jesus during prayer, and showing my great joy in the fine religious spirit they unconsciously revealed in their letters. My elder son, Fernand, by now a seasoned Missionary of the Sacred Heart, was also on the other side of the world at Thursday Island near the northernmost tip of Australia.

The Pacific and Australia

During the period from 1886 to 1895 the training of the Sisters for the missions was my main work, and God blessed us with a steady, if small, stream of good vocations. Two years after the departure of the first missionary Sisters a second band left Issoudun, and in 1895 another group set out for the islands of Kiribati, isolated coral atolls in the central Pacific ocean.

The work of education had been successfully established in Sydney, Australia, when the first Sisters, shortly after landing there, were obliged to set up a convent and open schools in poor districts at the insistence of Cardinal Moran. All unknowingly they were laying the foundations of a sound educational system that was to serve many generations of children and young people by giving their lives a Heart-centred orientation. From the very first day of their arrival the sisters attracted Australian vocations; but it was a few years before they had the means to build the large convent and novitiate which was eventually established at Kensington, a suburb to the south of Sydney. Then all who wished to enter could do so. New foundations followed.

Belgium

I rejoiced at the expansion of the congregation in this young country and in the missions, seeing in it the providence of God and the guidance of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart for the preservation of her Daughters, for the affairs in France were very different. The political climate was becoming more and more hostile to religious teachers and anti-clericalism was rampant. We passed through a period of persecution when we did not know from one day to the next if the Government would seize our convent and disband our community. Early in 1902 it became imperative to ensure that there would be a place of refuge outside France where the Sisters could go in case we were evicted from Issoudun.

I turned my eyes to neighbouring Belgium. Not far across the frontier in the town of Thuin there was a residence available and, moreover, the Bishop was very much in favour of having Sisters to do some home nursing in the district. This work would open up a new field of apostolate for

us, and one that would be in keeping with our spirit of compassion for the sick poor. I choose three Sisters to make this foundation, the first in Europe after the mother-house in Issoudun. Professional training for the Sisters was made available at a hospital in Mons. Along with this nursing course I made sure that religious training continued, so that each Sister should understand how to bring to her patients the loving kindness of the Heart of Jesus and the valiant, feminine qualities of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. *“Do all you can for these people,”* I said to them during an outbreak of smallpox. *“One good religious can save the whole country.”*

Persecution

As a result of the Sisters’ devotedness, the congregation developed rapidly in Belgium. Within four years four more foundations were made. Vocations continued to come in increasing numbers, not only from Belgium and France but from Holland, Germany, Austria and Ireland. Now I had to ensure that numbers must not cause the quality of religious life to suffer. Many congregations disappeared forever in the upheavals of those times, and I could see that it was solely due to God’s mercy that we survived when many others better than we were badly shaken. I stressed to the Sisters that we be very obedient, generous and humble, and above all loving to each other.

The year 1904 closed on an ominous note. The French Government passed the Law of Separation between Church and State, thus abrogating the concordat between France and the Holy See and followed this up by despoiling the Church of all its property. It was certain now that our house at Issoudun as well as that of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart would be auctioned by a Government liquidator. The basilica of the Sacred Heart with its shrine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, which Father Chevalier had built more than twenty years before and which had become a centre of pilgrimage, was closed and the doors sealed by Government order.

As time went on the situation approached a crisis. As in everything important that touched the Congregation, consulted father Chevalier, pointing out the advantages of transferring the mother-house and novitiate to Thuin. It pained me to have to urge this step which I knew well would add to the sorrow of the now sick and ageing “Good Father” as we called him. I realised fully how humanly painful it was to him to see his life’s works, one by one, being forced out of the town and country which had seen his birth. Humble and self-forgetful as ever, he agreed to my proposal and gave, as always, his fatherly blessing.



I lost no time in acting, and speedily transferred the administration and novices to Belgium leaving, however, five Sisters at Issoudun. They were able to send meals to the priests now dispersed throughout the town and to nurse Father Chevalier who was by this time very infirm and suffering frequent illnesses. I myself was never to return to France.

The Last Sacrifice

The blow fell in January 1907. Father Chevalier, weak and infirm but indomitable in spirit, was brutally evicted from his presbytery – quite literally thrown out on the street by the police after they had battered down his door with an axe. To the accompaniment of cries of sympathy and

prayers from the townsfolk who had gathered in great numbers to protest at this outrage , our Good Father was taken to the nearby home of a true friend and benefactor, the Viscount de Bonneval. To those who expressed indignation he answered simply, *"Nothing happens without God's permission."*

When at a later date the auction took place for the state of the basilica, the monastery of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and the convent of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred heart, the Viscount and another benefactress purchased the properties and held them safely until the persecution had passed. Thus, a sacrilegious use of God's house was averted. All these events cost us Sisters many anxieties, prayers and penances of reparation and of petition for God's forgiveness of our enemies.

But the toll for Father Chevalier was the hastening of his life's end. By October of that same year news reached us at Thuin that he was failing rapidly. He died on 21 October 1907 at the age of eighty-three. His passing was calm and serene, very moving and very beautiful. He possessed no personal wealth; the properties for which he was responsible had been seized by a hostile government; persecution had forced him to renounce his Title as Superior General of the religious order he had founded so as to stay on as parish priest of Issoudun and to see his priests, brothers and sisters exiled and scattered. He had no worldly goods to will away, but he had written a *Spiritual Testament* which revealed the riches of his mind and heart. The heritage which he bequeathed to all who would be his spiritual sons and daughters was his won ardent missionary spirit, enshrined in homely, practical counsels for the everyday living of our vocation as missionaries of the love of the Heart of Christ.



My Prayer

Father Chevalier's mission on earth was completed. Mine, too, is almost done. For the past ten years my health has been poor: long since my work has been done from an armchair beside my work table. Now I feel my life is hanging by a thread. As my strength ebbs I am drawn more and more to God. My constant prayer is: "May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved forever!"

On 22 February 1908, simply and quietly, Jesus took Mother Marie Louise completely to his Heart.

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You might like to pray the following prayers for the Spirit of Mother Marie Louise and Father Chevalier taken from our Community Prayer Book.



*Holy Spirit of God,
you gave Mother Marie Louise, our first Superior General
a spirit of total dedication to the Divine Heart of Jesus:
you gave her wisdom and docility to find and to follow
your designs for our Congregation.
Fill our hearts with a faith and a generosity like hers,
so that we may have the light
to see your will for us in these times
and the strength to carry it out.*

*Above all, lead us to that inner renewal of spirit
which will make us true Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart,
[and true Associates of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart],
one in heart and soul in the pursuit of our special vocation
to make the Sacred Heart of Jesus everywhere loved. Amen.*

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*Father, in the Heart of Jesus, your Son,
our Founder, Jules Chevalier, came to know the revelation
of the infinite tenderness of your love
and a sure way of helping others to recognise that love.*

*May his charism live on in us today
so that we may share more deeply the joys and the hopes,
the griefs and the anxieties of all people of our time,
especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted.*

*Thus may we be on earth the Heart of Christ
through the transforming power of his love. Amen.*



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Our Congregation is present in the following countries.

Angola Australia Belgium Brazil Burkina Faso Cameroon Congo
England Fiji France Indonesia Ireland Italy Japan Kiribati
Marshall Islands Nauru Netherlands Papua New Guinea Philippines
Samoa Senegal Slovakia South Africa South Sudan
United States of America Tonga Vietnam

TO BE ON EARTH THE HEART OF GOD

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MEEJNG REPORTS

BENTLEIGH: There were sixteen of us met at the Convent on 27th November and it was wonderful to be able to come together after such a long period of lockdowns. Several of us had had hospital visits but, generally, everyone was now well. This weekend was the beginning of Advent and we looked at the characters who appear in the Gospels at this time. Sr Elaine encouraged us to look through the stories and reflect on the roles of these people during the Advent time prior to Christmas.

We remembered the Plenary Council which is in the hands of the 278 First Assembly members, including our Provincial, Sr Philippa, representing all aspects of our Australian Church. We prayed for the blessing of the Holy Spirit on this important event. A Synod of Bishops is also beginning next year to strengthen and foster unity in the Church worldwide. It will run over three years following the itinerary of diocesan, continental and universal churches each year. We shared a paraliturgy remembering those who had died.

Patricia Mirabile

CALLALA: Six of us gathered for our November meeting after a few months of lockdown. It is good to get together again. All were very grateful for the Oct-Nov *Ametur* with so much in it. Each of us shared something that had struck her, then we spent some time considering the *Laudato Si'* article in relation to the COP26 which was still in progress. After a beautiful Communion Service we said the Rosary with much to pray about in relation to our changing climate.

Sr Merrilyn Lee

CORINDA: Thirteen Associates gathered in the Corinda Convent Chapel on 31 October (with five apologies). With the Climate Change Conference into Glasgow about to commence our team led us in prayer for a good outcome. We then went on to further reflect and explore a synopsis of the Social Justice Statement of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference 2021/2022 concerning the *Laudato Si'* Encyclical which seems to be more and more relevant, with its ecological and social approach, in our present world. We look forward to the commencement of the Action Plan next year. It was an enriching afternoon for us all.

Mary McMahan

Nine Associates met on Sunday 28th November at Shirley O'Leary's home (thanks again to Shirley for her generous hospitality for our Christmas break-up). We were joined by Sr Margaret Reis. There were apologies from 11 Associates, due to illness or other date clashes.

We were privileged to have a reflection provided by Sr Merrilyn (online) which focussed on relationships and love, starting with Thessalonians 3:12 – 4:2 , "*May the Lord fill you to overflowing with love for each other and for all, just as our love for you overflows...*". We were invited to question ourselves as to whether we believe that God's relationship with the world is based on love, whether God's generosity is beyond limits; whether we love ourselves and forgive ourselves when we make mistakes. We also considered our relationship with the Trinity, which is beyond our understanding but overflows on to all humankind and ourselves. These questions provoked deep discussion and some wonderful sharing.

Our afternoon concluded with sharing a cuppa while we caught up with each other. Our next meeting is planned for Sunday 6 February 2022.

Mary McMahan

HARTZER PARK: It was wonderful to get together again on 17th October and enjoy a perfect Spring setting at "*Hartzer*". Most gathered in person but those not able to join us were included "*online*." Julianne presented a Reflection on "*Forgiveness*" drawing on Scripture, poetry, song and personal experience with the invitation to share and comment further. This brought forth

more reflective thoughts and experiences which we all agreed were helpful as “forgiveness” is common for all of us.

We discussed “Formation” in the light of how and what meets our needs as a group. There were various suggestions for the style of presentation, but all agreed that the quality, quantity and inspiration from the *Ametur* truly embodied the charism in which we desire to be formed. **Jan Clark**

As this was our last formal meeting (21 Nov) for the year and as we had not had time to do so previously (due to cancelled meeting), we combined our Reflection and Formation by reflecting on some of the many articles in the *Ametur* and praying the prayers that these articles prompted. This was followed by a discussion on any article that spoke to each of us in a special way. Interestingly, much of this discussion centred on “Our Care of Our Common Home” and the personal action and responsibilities in relation to this. The other articles that elicited comment and admiration were the Litany in Preparation for the 150th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and the admiration for the Missionary Sisters as spoken of in the article on Marie Louise Hartzer.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all Associates, groups and readers a happy and holy Christmas with many blessings throughout 2022. **Jan Clark**

On 5 December we met for our final gathering for the year and commenced with the invitation to “ponder like Mary” and in the words of the Introduction to the **“Blessed”** booklet of Advent reflections, *“by meditating on God’s word ... may [we] graced with moments of silence to ponder in your heart the many blessings of [our] life.”* We reflected on the personal gifts and blessings we have received and, in turn, prayed in thanksgiving for these and for the grace to pass them on to others in a specific circumstance in an individual way.

Our morning concluded gently and companionably with morning tea with the Sisters.

*May all share the many blessings and Advent and Christmas
and with grateful hearts look forward to 2022.*

Jan Clark



Editor’s Note:

How good it is to meet as Associates and share our Charism and Spirituality of the Heart. Let us hope and pray that the other groups will be able to meet again in 2022, and that our world will soon be free of the pandemic and the sufferings it has brought upon so many, especially our less fortunate sisters and brothers. Thank you to those who were able to meet and send in their inspiring reports.

Thank you also for the generous donations towards the printing and posting of the *Ametur* and for the used stamps. We are eagerly awaiting the results of the Stamp Auction on 9th December when we offered twenty-five kilos – five kilos more than our first Auction. All proceeds go to our OLSH Overseas Aid Fund.



We Remember Our Beloved Deceased

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Sr Anne-Marie Cavalié (France)
Sr Margaret Spieringhs (Holland)
Sr Fabienne Badillo (Issoudun)
Sr M Elise Jonchère (Issoudun)

OLSH Associates

Madonna Leung (Sydney)
Norma Stephens (Melbourne)
Meg McGrath (Corinda)
John O'Donohue (Corinda)
Margaret Mary Cumaiyi (Wadeye)
Rose Melpi (Wadeye)

Relatives and Friends

Rudolf Gebels, Cedric Holland, Angela Parker, Dean, Jessica DiSalvo, Gloria Laquian, Michael McGrory, David Wilkinson, Kathy Maxwell, Henry Ozga, Claire Hilder.

We Remember Our Sick and Those in Need of Our Prayers

Sr Patricia Smith olsh, Grace Lawrence, Judy Coxhead, Enid (aged 6), Ida, Trees Stockley, Christine Bulter, Norma Stephens, Annette Thornton, David Chong, Margaret Casey, Jo Stoker, Andy Galea, Ted Collier, Maureen Doherty, Joan Madden, David O'Connor, Tom Mollis, Rhonda Clark, Elise & James & Audrey Gabauer, Lucy Falzon, Blair Kay, Graham McMullen, Brian Sheehan, Gerry Orrin, Geoffrey Trenear, Syd Hamilton, Katherine, Jan O'Donoghue, Patrice Gillespie, Kayla, The O'Donohue Family, The Ozga Family, The McGrath Family, Monica & Adam Morrison, Damien Mollard, Christina Woodward, Marie, Maria Hribar, Lucie, Jenny Bentancort, Barbara, Lesley Cheeseman, Families still looking for work/income, Safe travel over Christmas, Eradication of Covid and its many variants, our deceased relatives and friends, OLSH Sisters and Residents at St Joseph's Aged Care Facility, Kensington.

We Pray in Thanksgiving For

70th Anniversary of OLSH College, Enfield
The progress of Kirk Gomes

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

*"I think there are ... moments, rapid and fleeting,
when Mary feels simultaneously that Christ is her Son,
her little Child, and that he is God.*

She looks at him and thinks:

'This God is my child. This divine flesh is my flesh.

*He is made of me, he has my eyes
and this shape of his mouth is the shape of mine.
He looks like me. He is God and he looks like me.'*

*And no woman has had her God for herself alone in that way.
A little God one can hold in one's arms and shower with kisses,
a warm God who smiles and breathes,
a God one can touch and who lives.*

*And it is in one of those moments that I would paint Mary,
if I were a painter..."*

(Sartre, A Christmas Story)



A Novena of Masses will be offered for you and your loved ones during the Christmas Season.