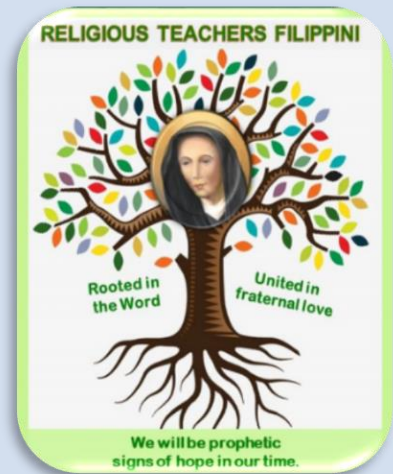


Pontifical Institute
Religious Teachers Filippini
Communicating... No. 14
Generalate
October – December 2022



Dear Sisters,

We are on the brink of closing the Christmas Season and also occupied with preparations to celebrate the close of this special Jubilee Year in honor of Saint Lucy. During this joyous movement, my thoughts turn to you, very grateful that we have been so spiritually, and in some cases, physically united, enriched, and blessed celebrating these festive times. These events spill over with gratitude that Emmanuel is among us and the light of Saint Lucy binds us more intimately to the Incarnate Christ. I look forward that in each of our Entities, we will offer our joint prayer, a Triduum of Thanksgiving, ending this anniversary year praying special Vespers. In unison, we render our thanks, in all parts of the world though separated by land and sea.

Gifts come in varied ways, not always in a package. On Christmas Eve, to my amazement, I received a phone call on “WhatsApp” from Sister Freweini Weldu, the Superior of Ethiopia. For the first time in almost two years, she was able to contact me directly from the regional house in Adigrat without having to travel miles to communicate that the sisters were safe. Presently they can make contacts via WhatsApp. They have electricity and water and the World Food Program is now in operation. This is so helpful for the people who have been without these for so long. Sister Freweini explained there are so many displaced people in the town and people have died because of the lack of food and medicine. Thank God there has been this cease-fire, and they are working on a peace agreement. Sister Frewini shared that just not hearing shooting and shelling is good news since the war was so close to Adigrat. The sisters give thanks to God and thank you for your many prayers and sacrifices. Sister Freweini expressed “*We are so lucky. Although these months have been so difficult, God is keeping us until now because of your prayers for us.*” Knowing our sisters have survived and were also able to assist others during these tragic times added to the true gifts of Christmas. Please continue to pray for them and these people as they recover from these hardships, and that the peace agreement ends this war.

The passing of Pope Benedict on this very last day of December ends the year on a melancholy note. However, when we reflect on the legacy he leaves behind, we know that his spirit continues to live on in our hearts and minds and also in the history of the

Church. His thoughts will continue to illuminate our path amid the darkness that exists in so many parts of our world.

There are so many beautiful messages Pope Benedict has shared through the years regarding our Consecrated life. As we enter this new year, let us be inspired by this message and take it to heart:

“Consecrated life is a plant rich in branches rooted in the Gospel. It is the Gospel lived daily that is the element that gives beauty to consecrated life and presents each person before the world as a reliable alternative. This is what today's society needs, and this is what the church expects from you: to be a living Gospel. To be Christ's means to keep burning in your heart a living flame of love fueled by the richness of faith not only when it brings inner joy, but also when it is united with difficulties, barrenness, and suffering.”

It is with this inspiring message of Pope Benedict that I pray we may each be more firmly rooted in our witness to be a *living Gospel* in this new year, 2023.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, MPF

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, MPF
Superior General

Saint Lucy Returns to Tarquinia, Place of Birth

Numerous heartwarming events in honor of Saint Lucy have made this a year to remember, one abundant in blessings. Among the many tributes and events in her honor, on October 27th through the 30th, Saint Lucy's return to Tarquinia, her place of birth, stands out brilliantly. The people of Tarquinia have not lost their devotion to the Saint of their town even though 350 years have passed. She continues to be known as “The Flower of Tarquinia!”



The reception Saint Lucy received in Piazza Matteotti from the people of her town was unbelievable. A dense crowd was present and a band played in the background. There were members of the hierarchy of the Church, the civil authorities of the town, Maestre Pie, townspeople, and parents with the children of our school each with flowers to place on Saint Lucy's urn upon arrival. All were so proud that their town's patron saint was arriving. After a welcoming ceremony in the

Piazza, in procession, the crowd proceeded to the Cathedral.

A welcoming solemn Mass followed. Bishop Fabio Fabene, a faithful former Filippini student was proud to be the main celebrant. And this was only the beginning of four days filled with scheduled rituals and creative programs yet to happen.

Among the many events, Lauds and Vespers were chanted each day in the Cathedral by the Benedictine cloistered nuns. There were Masses celebrated for different groups to attend, the Filippini school children, one for all those who graduated from our Filippini School, the Scouts of Tarquinia, etc. Another exceptional high point was an evening concert entitled *“Una Luce Splende Nel Buio,”* (A Light Shines in the Dark) with both narration and music. Throughout these four days, a flow of visitors came to the Duomo to pay their respects to Saint Lucy.



On Sunday, mid-morning, Mass was celebrated by Bishop Gianrico Ruzza, Bishop of Tarquinia. Several combined choirs from the neighboring areas provided magnificent music during the Liturgy. Many Maestre from the Sacred Heart Province attended. The filled Duomo reverberated the joy of the people of God.



Saint Lucy's departure from the Duomo Piazza was as incredible as the day of her welcoming. The vast crowd returned to bid her farewell and with repeated song and prayer expressed their devotion. On this Sunday evening, a cortege of cars accompanied Saint

Lucy back home to Montefiascone. The procession of cars made two stops along the way, in Tuscania and Marta, two places where Saint Lucy opened schools and where the people still look to her with heartfelt affection. Myriads of people lined their area singing, praying, and waiting for a brief glimpse of Saint Lucy. The deep love and intense faith of these people were inspiring. But how relieved we were when Saint Lucy returned safely home to Montefiascone!

This simple description of Saint Lucy's return to Tarquinia does not do justice to the great excitement and immense joy brought about during these four days. However, the memory of this event will continue to remain in the hearts and minds of all those who had the privilege to be a part of this historical event.

A debt of deep gratitude is extended to Don Augusto Baldini, who coordinated these special days in Tarquinia together with numerous people who assisted him in this awesome endeavor.



60th Anniversary of the Inauguration of the Crypt in Montefiascone

Upon returning from Tarquinia, the urn containing the sacred body of Saint Lucy remained exposed in the Cathedral of Santa Margherita, for the veneration of the faithful residents, until November 13. On that date, the 60th anniversary of the dedication of the Crypt of Santa Margherita as the Shrine of Saint Lucy Filippini was celebrated.

It should be remembered that during the sad period of World War II, Mons. Giovanni Rosi, Bishop of the Diocese of Montefiascone, had turned to Saint Lucy Filippini, asking her to protect the population of which she was Patroness, and had made a vow to erect a monument to her in gratitude.

Mons. Luigi Boccadoro, his successor, to fulfill his promise, rather decided to dedicate a sanctuary to her, and for this purpose, he provided for the restructuring of the ancient crypt of the Cathedral of Santa Margherita. The inauguration took place on November 14, 1962.

To commemorate this event, in the current Jubilee year which is drawing to a close, an invitation had been extended to individual faithful groups of catechesis, and families, to visit the cathedral, in prayer in front of the urn, personally and together.

Solemn celebrations of the Eucharist were presided over by His Eminence, Cardinal Fortunato Frezza, a native of these lands, devoted and attentive expert of the life and works of our Founders, and by his Excellency, Mons. Fabio Fabene, Under-Secretary of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

The period of homage ended with the Jubilee celebration, the Eucharistic Liturgy, presided over by His Excellency, Mons. Lino Fumagalli, followed by the moving and devout transfer of the Sacred Body of Saint Lucy returning to the Crypt, through the festively decorated streets of the historical center of Montefiascone.



Pilgrimages to Montefiascone

Inauguration of the School Year in Front of Saint Lucy

Since the end of September, Montefiascone has been the destination of many pilgrimages from parishes and schools.

Pilgrimages began on September 24; the first group came from Rocca di Papa. One can't imagine the tenderness and emotion with which the faithful, ex-students, now much older, approached the urn of the Holy Teacher. They sang, they prayed, and they asked for Lucy's intercession for their family members (children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren), remembering Saint Lucy with affection and devotion from the times of their childhood and adolescence. A feeling of nostalgia was perceived, remembering the wonderful years in which they attended school and catechism classes, and the names of the sisters, now in heaven, recurred repeatedly in their speeches.

The repeated invocations that arose spontaneously from the heart: "Send, Lord, workers to your harvest..." so that the Maestre may work as educators in our society which is so poor and in need of strong and stable values.

In October, groups followed one after another from Sulmona, Rome-Via Trevignano, Nettuno, Terracina, Anzio, Cave, and Gubbio, and at the end of November, a group from Bolsena, all animated by sincere admiration and gratitude for the work of Lucy, who, by God's grace, her name crossed oceans and centuries.

For the sake of brevity, we are only sharing one of the various testimonies that have been written. They all share many of these same sentiments and descriptions of their day spent in Montefiascone.

This comes from a testimony of a mother from Sulmona:

"The celebration of the Jubilee Year on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the birth of the Foundress allowed a large group of students, former students, and parents to visit, on October 1, 2022, the places where Saint Lucy Filippini was molded and worked, and to give a solemn and blessed start to the 2022/2023 scholastic year."



The journey was followed by a welcome from Father Marco, the pastor of the Cathedral, who waited for the group in front of the door of the crypt of the Basilica of Santa Margherita. Children and adults rediscovered the meaning of "indulgence" and "forgiveness." It was exciting to see the great devotion of the little visitors. They not only listened to, but made their own, the short but profound "lesson" of Father Marco.

What is the impact that these visits leave behind? The composure and seriousness with which the visitors crossed the Holy Door, how they entered the crypt, and the earnestness in following the celebration and participating in the readings and songs.



At the end of the Holy Mass, pupils and parents visited the crypt and knelt in front of the golden urn which preserves the sacred body of our Holy Teacher. They recommended themselves to her and prayed for their families and teachers.

The pilgrimage to the places where Saint Lucy worked, continued as far as her room, the place where, as a teacher, she gave her teachings and where the example of her love for

God and the young girls inspired so many. In every setting where they visited, one can feel the intense charism of the Saint, a young woman who, with a strong faith in God, carried in the streets of the world, not only the heavy wooden Crucifix that the visitors were able to admire, but above all, the love that fired her life.



The day ended on the shores of Lake Bolsena, where sun, water, and laughter were the absolute masters. It was an exceptional trip that will long be remembered.

Now that I explained what we did, let me share what we learned from this experience:

Both during the journey, the Celebration, and the visit to the places sanctified by our Holy Teacher, there was an air of heartfelt thanksgiving. The day was above all an occasion dedicated to the family and the "reconnection" of our deepest values and affections.

This pilgrimage allowed the children's imagination to review in their steps, the steps taken by Saint Lucy Filippini who, with the Crucifix in her hand, never tired of looking for hearts to inflame and girls to educate. In this way, they were able to materially approach a figure who, distant from them over time, ran the risk of remaining relegated to a sort of mythical sphere, in which "Holy" would take on the meaning of "perfect, difficult to reach".

And what did the adults learn? Surely to "spend" their time well, to leave the frenzy of daily life to listen to the words of a young parish priest, the caresses of their children, and the voice of God. Probably, however, the great gift of this day for us adults was finally having fully grasped the "charism" of the Saint and the great mission she left behind: multiplied in many small but determined teachers, religious and lay, she reaches every corner of the world, and the darkest corners of the heart to continue to shout: "Love God! Love God!"

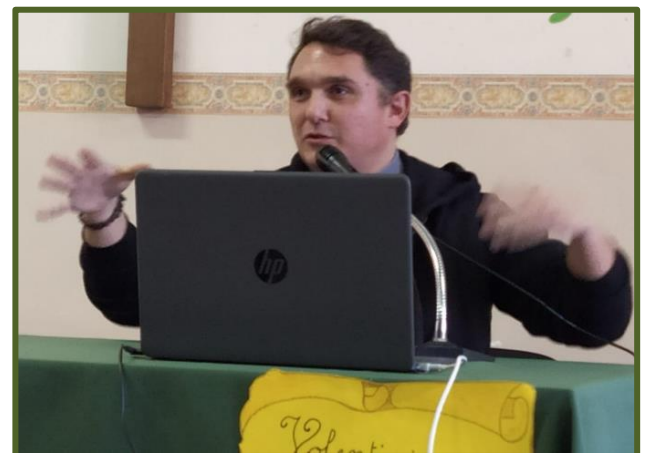
If one had to choose an image as a summary and culmination of the whole day, the preference would certainly fall on the moment in which the children, invited by Father Marco, left their seats and joined their mothers. Welcomed into the arms of their mothers, with their ears resting on their hearts, as a reminder of that secret talk that bound them together from the first glimmer of life, children and mothers have become symbols of the safe, welcoming, warm and cozy place that they are the arms of the Lord, who listens, protects, enlightens and forgives anyone who entrusts oneself to him.

Sacred Heart Province, Italy

On-going Formation

After two years, the Sacred Heart Province resumed their customary formative gathering during the Christmas Season. The Maestre anticipated their time together from December 27-29, 2022, to pray, enjoy meals, and celebrate and exchange the richness of the Christmas Season together.

The theme of the Day of Prayer, *"Sowing the Future,"* was guided by Father Bruno Sperandini, a former student of the Maestre Pie, and a good friend of the community. His presentation engaged the sisters and offered them challenges for reflecting on and digesting ideas for our future. This is what emerged from his presentation:



"Life is made up of choices. We need to be able to choose our priorities once again, and then have a clear goal. Only then, it is easier to achieve one's goal. Realization does not come

through gratification, but through what gives me an identity. This is given to me by the Institute. God incarnates not because he is gratified by it, but to bring about our salvation."

We must nurture our sense of belonging in conformity with the path that the Church is leading us.

For Reflection:

- Do you look to the future with hope?
- What can I do to revive hope, both on a personal and community level?
- Lucy used to say: *"I trust in God"*. But do I trust God?
- We need to direct our sails where the wind blows, without waiting for the wind to always blow on our side.
- Share your spiritual virtues, since they are not private gifts.
- Life is self-regenerating by giving of self. So also the charism!



Pilgrimage to the Madonna del Monte – Marta

On the last of the three days that the sisters were together, they went on Pilgrimage to the Madonna del Monte in the town of Marta near Montefiascone. Spending this day in an area where Saint Lucy gave tirelessly of her energies was reinvigorating.

The welcome that the sisters received from Father Roberto Fabiana, Pastor, and former student of the Maestre Pie was beyond measure. The parish priests of the area were invited to concelebrate at the liturgy. The Eucharistic celebration, the high point of the visit, was prayerful and touching. Father Roberto's homily was filled with love and tenderness as he recounted his love of Saint Lucy and his positive association with the Maestre Pie.

After Mass refreshments were enjoyed, the sisters returned to the Chapel where Father Roberto held the attention of the sisters. He shared the history of the shrine of the Madonna del Monte, spoke of the different traditions of the people in the town of Marta, and shared historical information about the years when Cardinal Barbarigo was Bishop of that Diocese. After his presentation, Father Roberto presented Mother General with a beautiful frame of the Madonna del Monte and each Maestre received a ceramic image of her.





The day concluded with Father Roberto bringing the sisters to a beautiful spot at Lake Bolsena to appreciate the beauty of this town. Dinner together was the culmination of the time spent in Marta.

This day of fraternity closed a beautiful, historical

and rich page of the Province, ending the Year of Jubilee since this was the last time the Maestre would be gathered as a Province to celebrate this event. They will forever thank the Lord for these "Tabor" experiences. Returning to their homes, it is certain they brought new enthusiasm and vigor to the beginning of a new year.

Disabled Children Celebrate Saint Lucy's Jubilee Year

On December 31, 2022, the Maestre in Terracina, opened its doors to a group of disabled children and their parents, to celebrate the 350th Jubilee Year of Saint Lucy's birth. Since Saint Lucy always welcomed the less fortunate, the most fragile, and the poorest in her midst, a moving and charismatic moment was experienced.

The director, Maria Valente, together with two members of our Laici, Alberto and Elisa Formicuccia share these tender sentiments:

"The group 'I Am With You,' works on behalf of children and young people in difficulty together with their families. There is full integration with peers who do not personally experience problems related to a disability or social discomfort. They have been welcomed by the Maestre Pie Filippini of Terracina since 2015. The charism of Saint Lucy immediately enveloped and guarded us. The attentive love and closeness of the Maestre helped us to grow. This is why we wanted to close this year by gathering at the Institute on December 31, 2022, to pray together with the sisters, celebrating the Jubilee Year on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the birth of Saint Lucy Filippini."



The Mass and common prayer addressed to Saint Lucy, a true witness of God's love for the less fortunate, was the most beautiful and profound way to renew our "Yes" to God's service by giving particular attention to the least, just as Saint Lucy taught us, putting God always first, even in moments when pain and disorientation seemed to take our breath away.

We cannot love the less fortunate if we do not welcome pain. The Crucifix must become a bond of unity, peace, and joy for us in the fulfillment of God's Will in this present moment. This is our personal commitment to God and the Church. It is supported by the intercession and the comfort that the life of Saint Lucy has given and continues to give to us."

Saint Lucy Province, USA

Centenarian - Something to Celebrate!

On Thursday, November 10, 2022, the Religious Teachers Filippini at Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey, gathered together to honor Sister Anna Pompei, MPF on her 100th birthday. The celebration began with the Eucharistic Liturgy presided by Bishop Emeritus Arthur J. Serratelli, during which he spoke of her fidelity to the Lord as a dedicated religious during such historic times.

Following the Eucharistic celebration, the Sisters gathered for a celebratory evening meal. Sister Patricia Pompa, Provincial Superior, in her remarks, noted the extraordinary example of Sister Anna in her many years of service within the Community, assigned to ministry in varied locations and States.



Sister Patricia added, *"Words cannot paint the grace and goodness you carry. Your legacy is respected by your Sisters in Christ and your years of faithful and generous service to the Community, the Church, and the mission are evidenced by the thousands of lives you have educated throughout your years of ministry. Know that the wisdom you carry, like Saint Lucy, still shines today"*.



After the celebration, Sister Anna thanked all who had made the celebrations possible, especially for the prayers offered on her behalf.

Sister Anna, we thank God for His faithfulness in your life, and we pray that your 100th year will be a happy and healthy one. May God continue to smile down upon you and give you the strength and wisdom to enjoy all of life's special moments. We wish you all the joy your heart can hold!

Community Day – November 19, 2022

Celebrating the Golden and Diamond Jubilarians

Sister Patricia Pompa, Provincial Superior, expressed the joy of this sacred tradition of reaffirming our Oblation, a grace-filled time to reflect on our commitment faithfully kept for many years. After the Opening Prayer Service, prepared by Sister Laura Bezila, a poignant PowerPoint, created by Sister Elizabeth Dalessio, honored the memory of the Sisters who died this past year. The Eucharistic Liturgy that followed was celebrated by Most Rev. Arthur Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of Paterson Diocese. The Diamond Jubilarians were: Sister Laura Longo, Sister Alma Blume, Sister Angela Bulla, Sister Assunta Rinaldi and Sister Carmela Caizza; and the Golden Jubilarians, Sister Helen Sanchez and Sister Elizabeth Calello. During his homily, the Bishop quoted Winston Churchill's famous words during World War II: *"Never Give Up! ... We have only to persevere in order to conquer."* Bishop added, *"Victory is already ours because God has never given up*



on us. Furthermore, God invites us to make victory real in our lives. As consecrated religious, we are witnesses that God has not given up on mankind. Each Jubilarian has said, "Here I am" and persevered." The Bishop concluded his homily by saying, *"For this gift of your lives for others, we give thanks."*

During a festive dinner, Sister Elizabeth Dalessio offered a PowerPoint, narrated by Sister Elizabeth Toft, honoring the seven Jubilarians. Sister Patricia read the congratulatory letter of Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior. Sister Helen Sanchez expressed gratitude on behalf of all the Jubilarians and announced the winners of the Saint Lucy Jubilee Year Contest. Prizes were awarded to the top three places in each category of art and poetry.



In closing, Sister Patricia shared, *"the Feast of the Presentation of Our Blessed Mother is a time to appreciate the gift of our unique calling and mission. May the Spirit of our Founders, Saint Lucy Filippini and the Venerable Cardinal Barbarigo be visible in our words and actions."*

Mater Divinae Grazie – Vice Province, Brazil

Christmas Catechesis Dramatized Colegio Saint Lucy Filippini, Sao Paulo



As in previous years, on December 7 – 8, Christmas Catechesis was again dramatized by the students of the Saint Lucy Filippini Colegio, San Paolo. This year the theme was *"Lucy Shines in Christmas."* The pupils presented the evangelical narration of the Nativity of the Lord, emphasizing sections of the well-known Christmas talk given by Saint Lucy. The festive evening began with a summary of the life of Saint Lucy and her continued presence of Maestre Pie Filippini throughout the world.

A student, dressed as Saint Lucy, captured everyone's attention by illustrating the importance of recovering the true meaning of Christmas: Jesus, the Emmanuel came into the world to lead the way to salvation for everyone. Christmas is a time for families to celebrate, pray, contemplate, and have faith.



Queen of Peace Region – India Legion of Mary

The Community of the Queen of Peace Region gathers children and youth on various occasions especially young girls for vocation awareness. Knowing well that Saint Lucy did not stop with the youth but also gave direction to the women, the sisters started women's groups in the villages placing them under the maternal protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the "Legion of Mary."

In connection with this Jubilee Year, the sisters gathered the members of the Legion of Mary from the different villages on October 16, 2022, for a prayer experience. Approximately seventy-five women all dressed in blue joined the sisters.



The day began with a procession to the chapel carrying the statue of Our Lady and praying the Rosary. Sister Jyothi Pasala spoke to the women about the Jubilee Year of Saint Lucy and the gift of a plenary indulgence. After a short prayer, all were given the chance to kiss the relic of Saint Lucy. Father Murali MSFS gave a short reflection on the Sacrament of Reconciliation which helped everyone to make a good confession while the adoration continued.



After a shared meal, Sister Mary Therlingi enlightened the group by speaking about the *“Powerful Qualities of a Woman.”* After the time of recollection, prayer, and reconciliation, the women were moved with tears in experiencing inner joy and happiness. This experience made the sisters recall the incident in the life of Saint Lucy where women were moved to tears when Lucy spoke of the passion of the Lord. The sisters felt the powerful presence of Saint Lucy and the maternal intercession of the Blessed Mother. Yes, Lucy’s light shines through us!



Mission in Amalapuram

In preparation for the Parish feast and the visit of the Bishop of the Diocese, the parish priest of Mary Immaculate Parish in Amalapuram asked our sisters to organize a mission. Sister Mary Therlingi, gifted with a beautiful voice, and power of the Word, together with three Aspirants held a 13-day camp in the parish in November. This involved visiting families, praying together, teaching catechism, and taking a survey.





peace with them. The sisters brought Christ to the people in the spirit of Saint Lucy. Being with them, one could experience their way of life, people who live in utter poverty. Since there is no work in their locality, many of the mothers work in gulf countries as housemaids to sustain their families. Consequently, children lack proper guidance and the love of their parents.



During the day, the group visited the families, and in the evening, they gathered the children and the adults in the church to catechize them. They also surveyed the children yet to receive the sacraments of Christian Initiation and the couples who need to rectify their marriages that were not celebrated in the church.

It was a wonderful opportunity to participate in the mission of Christ the Teacher and to follow the footsteps of our Mother Foundress who went to the streets and squares in search of souls.

Temporary Oblation *“Bend my heart to your will, O Lord”*



On December 7, 2022, on the vigil of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the four second-year Novices of the Queen of Peace Region India, Shanthi Narni, Sanitha Dhodrai, Regina Lakra, and Christina Lakra, made their Temporary Oblation. Most Rev, Jaya Rao Polimera, Bishop of the Diocese of Eluru presided over the Eucharistic Liturgy and the Mass was

concelebrated by several priests of the region. Members from the various religious communities, sisters of the Region, and family members of the novices were present for the occasion.

The Bishop's homily was very motivating and inspiring. He spoke of the importance of the vow of obedience and the necessity of surrendering one's own will, taking the example of Abraham who was asked to leave his land, nation, and people and to go to a place where God would show him. In obeying, they became a blessing to the other.

The Bishop also reminded the parents that their daughters now belong to the Church and the Congregation and that they should daily pray for their daughters, for their perseverance in the service of the Lord.

After the Eucharistic celebration, the newly professed and the Bishop were congratulated with garlands. Everyone present was invited and enjoyed the festive meal.



As we congratulate the newly professed Junior Sisters, we thank God for his blessings upon them. We pray that they experience the guiding hand of the Lord in the journey ahead and that by listening to His voice, and obeying His Will, the light of Saint Lucy will continue to shine through them.

Berat, Albania School Celebrates Twenty Years

On October 8, 2022, the community in Berat celebrated the 20th Anniversary of their Elementary School's opening. It was a moment of recalling warm memories, which the sisters shared with their friends from Bisceglie, Bari, who through the Rotary Service, brought joy and smiles to the children and teachers by giving them two bicycles for each class and one for each teacher.



The Eucharistic Liturgy of thanksgiving concluded the feast and together they prayed the prayer to Saint Lucy to obtain the plenary indulgence in this year of Jubilee.

The sisters of Berat thank and praise the Lord for all His goodness throughout the past twenty years. They gratefully remembered all the sisters who served in this mission and contributed greatly to the growth and establishment of the school.