



CB Inter In

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Sisters of Charity of St. Charles Borromeo

The Lord who guides and protects us

With these words the song about the Good shepherd begins. Mind you, we cannot think of a better title for this edition of CB Inter in which date of issue is a bit later than usual. For, God's guidance and protection form the connection between the articles from the different areas.

Sisters from the Philippines and Norway tell us their stories. A postulant from Indonesia shares her experiences with us and from East Indonesia, we received a coverage of the opening of the new St Carolus Borromeo outpatients' clinic. Also the Netherlands is well represented this time. Two Dutch fellow sisters want to share part of their life story with us. Last but not least the multicultural community in the Netherlands keeps us posted of its 'adventures'.

All these contributions make that we can tell how our Creator and Father guides and protects everything! It strengthens us, young and old, in our faith and courageously we continue always bearing in mind Mother Elisabeth's motto: "ALL THINGS WILL COME".

On our way to Pentecost we pray to the Spirit, that this faith, this trust will start to grow on us more and more.

**On behalf of the editorial staff,
Sr Adeltruda Jongerius**

If it is God's will, all things will come

Sr Elisia Terry
Maastricht, the Netherlands

"Still a little bit insecure, perhaps... Many times the same question will be put to you: what are you going to do?" The words spoken by sr Paulie Douven (Dutch Provincial Superior) at the mission ceremony on February 2nd 2009, fitted the feelings of my heart at that very moment and of all the days that preceded this event. At the turn of the year some sisters from Onder de Bogen began to ask questions about the multicultural community in Maastricht. They really wanted to hear more about it. The question kept coming up as in October 2008 the Dutch Provincial Board announced in its letter that a multicultural community would start in 2009 on the Theresia square

in Maastricht. The questions put to me over and over again were: "When will you go there? When will the sisters from the Philippines and Tanzania come to Maastricht? What will you do there?" I could not exactly answer these questions at the time. Also for me things were still unclear. In this way the sisters' questions became my questions and their inquisitiveness became my inquisitiveness. But, on January 23rd the mist of indistinctness lifted and a beam of light appeared when sr Lisbeth and sr Guiseppo came to tell us that on January 30th, after lunch, we would move to the Theresia square (at about a 15 minutes walk



from Onder de Bogen) to start the multicultural community. Sr Melanie spoke the memorable words: "We trust that the multicultural community may grow as the mirror image of the whole congregation." Hearing this made me even more determined to proceed.

I have lived with the sisters Onder the Bogen for four months now. I could always attend the daily as well as the Sunday mass. I seized every opportunity to learn Dutch. There was a moment of learning in anything. Patiently the sisters listened to my stammering as from a small child who has just learned to speak. The mistakes I made were immediately corrected. A sister said to me: "We are both learning. I learn to speak slowly, you learn to walk slowly." I actually felt safe because I knew myself accepted and loved. But at the same time I also felt how remote I still am from society. Now the time had come to leave the warm nest, which the Motherhouse is. There was fear in my heart because of the language barrier and because I did not know much about Dutch culture, traditions and customs. Mid March I started to study Dutch at Maastricht's University Language Centre. So no more private lessons! Thinking about this makes me feel like a sheep among wolves. But the Bogen sisters support us as much they can. And you know what? It helps! There were also sisters who said: "Thank you for having accepted this assignment. Don't be afraid! I always pray for you and also for sr Floriana and sr Hedwig. Keep courage!" And there were others who said: "I am so curious..." I was made conscious that the sisters, not only the ones living Onder de Bogen but all CB-sisters, no matter where they are in the world, really take a keen interest in the continuation of the historical story of the Congregation in the town of Maastricht where Mother Elisabeth laid the foundation of the CB-Congregation. It felt as if a heavy weight had been put on my shoulder. Now, what can I do to make the ideals of the Congregation come true, as they were decided upon at the General Chapter of 2005. As time goes by I, too, continue in the belief that when God wants it, all things will come! I am only the instrument in His hand. Let Him use me as He sees fit.

On Monday morning, February 2nd 2009 the three of us walked on foot from the Theresia square to Onder de Bogen. The day before we had prepared ourselves for this by means of a recollection. Although my heart had al-

ready been set to this assignment since the day I applied for a visa in Jakarta, it felt quite different now. On that Monday this mission became reality. I was determined because I know I am not alone. God and a great many other people are there to help me.

The mission ceremony during the Eucharistic celebration started with a procession from the sacristy. Like on Sunday, many people were present in the chapel on that day. The sisters who could not go to the chapel followed the mass on telly in their own rooms. The new community was given the name of 'Stella Maris'. The sisters were very impressed when they were asked, whilst remaining in their own seat, to lay their hands on the three of us who were standing in front of the altar.

After the mass we had a social cup of coffee together in the Cecilia hall. Apart from the Provincial and the General Board also some sisters and invitees were present. The programme was closed with a speech of thanks by sr Floriana who represented the three of us. She thanked everyone for their support in whatever form and for all the presents we had received.

The Provincial Board surprised us with a statue of Mary Star of the Sea, candlesticks and five roses (three red ones, two white ones) that were arranged in a crystal vase. The crystal vase, so we were told, was a keepsake from our convent at Rijckholt. The three red roses stood for the three of us whereas the two white roses represent the sisters of the Philippines and Tanzania who will, hopefully soon, join this community. During the Eucharist sr

Melanie handed us a Holy Bible on behalf of the General Board. The leaders of the communities gave us a shopping trolley and a shopping bag filled with food and drinks. From Kloosterhof I got a Dutch recipe book as a farewell present. All our spiritual and physical needs were met. The attention given to us was really touching.

But now, what will I do now on the St Theresia square? In her days Mother Elisabeth longed for the establishing of a convent in the city of Maastricht in which God would be served faithfully (EG 5). At the moment I feel my communicative skills are still too limited to give catechism and lay a good foundation in the hearts of the young ones, to teach at school or to go and work in a hospital as Mother Elisabeth and our predecessors did. When listening to the sermon of the priest I do not understand everything he says, yet. What else can I do? I can work on making myself more complete by persevering with my Dutch study. At the moment my apostolate is not 'doing' but 'being'. May my 'being' and sincerity make other people experience God's love? Together with Mother Elisabeth I, too, call out: "If it pleases the Lord let the spirit of Mother Elisabeth live on for ever in this city of Maastricht because it is revived by her successors. And, please Lord, let me be the instrument in Your Hands."



God carries us

Sr Cypriana Kerkhof
Maastricht, the Netherlands

You'll probably ask yourself what does she mean by this title? The fact is that, throughout my life, I felt carried by God no matter the circumstances.

As a young girl I went through a lot. I come from a family of ten. I was the third child in line. My dad was a small businessman who had to earn our livelihood all by himself in order to raise us. I reckon he did a perfect job.

From an early age on we were taught to help with all kinds of things, which was quite normal. Mother looked after the family and kept us children in line for as far as this was necessary. I did my fair share in the housekeeping and thus learned a lot. Though quite attached to the family I did feel that I had to step into the outside world if I wanted to gain more experience with 'strange' people, as I used to call them.

At first I could help out part-time in a family with three children and two little ones to come later. Then, I started to work for a family who owned a big butcher's shop. I stayed there eight years. I used to spend a great deal of time looking after the children and did the tasks set to me. At the end of the week I helped clean everything in the butchery. Here, too, I learned a lot and, what is more, I worked there with pleasure. Besides, I also gained some life experience as I mainly used to work with male staff. Being a young girl you often get to hear things that you do not understand. At home they never talked about it and when I asked my brothers and sisters they would call me ignorant. As I regularly went to lectures and meetings I got in touch with other young people and thus I could tell my friends about what occupied my mind. In our parish we had good gatherings and youth clubs where we learned a great deal from one another. It makes you think of the future. What will it be like? By talking to a priest regularly I gradually discovered my vocation and felt myself growing towards it. A Dominican father helped me with this and told me: "if convent life is your vocation, you should go to the Dominican sisters and have a look around." He gave me the address but it took me some time before I finally went there. However, in the end I did go and I was



able to speak with the prioress. I must admit that she was not the most inviting person I had ever come across but in the end she told me that I should come back a couple of times for further acquaintance. That's exactly what I did. I went back only a few times as I did not want my family to know yet what I was thinking of. Besides, I did not really feel at home there. And I also knew my father wanted me in the butchery because my brother could not be exempted from military service.

As if by a miracle my brother was exempted after a short time in uniform. This opened the way for me to follow my vocation. When I went to the habit taking of my sister, who had already entered Onder de Bogen, it immediately hit me: "This is the Congregation where I want to be!" And again you feel that God is carrying you. He holds you tight and He will make everything perfect for, I got what I desired most, didn't I?

Now, after having celebrated my fiftieth of religious profession, I am still happy with my vocation in this Congregation. In spite of my chronic illness I managed, with the help of God, to pull through. Fortunately I am an optimist always looking on the bright side of life. I will quietly continue for as long as I still can which, at a given point, didn't seem very long. After having under-

gone major surgery almost everyone was convinced that the Lord would call me home any time now. I heard the nurses whisper about this and even the doctor said that there was nothing he could do for me anymore. They consulted a lot. Yet, I always felt I would live! The recovery process and the complications that arose with it lasted all in all a couple of years. But the knowledge that God carries me, and that He takes me by the hand and leads me through life remained. And what is more, I can even say that this feeling is stronger now than ever before. Momentarily I am living in the care section of the Carolusconvent. It is good to be here and we get all the care we need. It makes me say sometimes: "We did work hard in the past, but it is returned to us a hundredfold now. If only we want to see it!!!" Of course we all meet with adversity at times. It belongs to life and especially to old age! It is an art and an assignment to deal with it in a proper way. After all human life is, in fact, nothing else but dealing with ups and downs. Firm in our faith that God carries us we try to go on till we are homewards for good, sharing eternally in His resurrection.

I did experience my own bit of resurrection while healing, something I always gratefully remember at Easter!!!

Gratitude for 150 years Norway

Sr Stefani Gowijaya
Moss, Norway

After having re-arranged the daily time table in such a way that there I had a few days off in a row, I left to be present at the celebration in gratitude for 150 years of presence of woman religious in Norway. This celebration was held during three days from October 5-7, 2007. I stayed overnight at the convent of the St Joseph Sisters in Oslo. The full and beautiful programme inspired me to continue the mission of the Congregation in Norway.

On October 5th the celebration was preceded by a mass of gratitude conducted by Mgr Bernt Eidsvig, the Bishop of Oslo. In his sermon he expressed amongst others his thankfulness to the sisters of various congregations who, by their presence, had become witnesses of Christ's love. He made it clear that the Church of Norway would never have been able to grow, bloom and bear fruit without them.

During lunch poetry was recited mostly concerning a small seed, strong faith, courage, love and sacrifice that had grown out into one big, fruit bearing tree. The seasons had made the old branches wither and the young shoots blossom. Thus also the tree of our life of service is always growing and bearing fruit because it is rooted in Christ. He is the Source of our strength. *"Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me"* (John 15,4).

On the second day, October 6th, a seminar was held. One of the topics discussed was the history of service of the sisters during 150 years (1857–2007). The apostolic work of the sisters from different congregations in the fields of education, health care and pastoral care meant a great deal to the society. Also the forming of faith had their attention because, at the time, the influence of the catholic priests was small.

A great number of the sisters who first went to Norway came from Germany, the Netherlands and Poland. Today's sisters come from various points of the compass e.g. from the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Mexico, the United States, England and Vietnam. The

number of foreign priests is also increasing. These multicultural religious are a blessing to the Roman Catholic Church of Norway. With their uniqueness they express faith and love of God and fellowman. The second day was closed with a Eucharistic celebration in the St Dominicus church in Majorstuen. Afterwards we had supper together with the bishop in the St Catherine of Sienna convent. The recreation programme included various songs and dances that expressed the burning spirit in proceeding the service to God.

On October 7th, the celebration ended with a Holy mass in St Olav's cathedral, in Oslo. For me this celebration also was an opportunity to reflect on the presence of our Congregation in Norway, that I am sure was God's work. In the book 'Memories of the CB-sisters' Congregation, Indonesian Province, from 1918-1984' written by sr Ignatio Hermans, I read the story about the voyage of the first ten sisters. On this voyage from the Netherlands to Indonesia the boat the 'Frisia' on which they sailed, docked at Bergen, a beautiful town in the Southern part of Norway, which is surrounded by a range of seven mountains. Sr Ignatio wrote: "It seems the inhabitants are kind natured people for big and small they are all waving hello to us. Of course we waved back for, who knows, perhaps among them there are catholic people and in

the future maybe Norway will become the second fatherland to some of our CB sisters." Who could have guessed then that, five years later, this assumption would come true! On June 30th 1923, four of our Dutch sisters arrived at Bergen to travel on to Molde later, to start the CB-ministry there. In the following years our apostolic work extended vigorously, not only at Molde but it also spread to Hamar, Kristiansund, Alesund, Baerum (suburb of Oslo) and Moss. The sisters worked in the fields of education (Kindergarten), health care (hospital) and pastoral care (parishes).

It is a pity that the constantly decreasing number of sisters forced the Congregation to give up the aforementioned ministries. Now we only live and work at Moss where we do pastoral work in the parish, assist mainly elderly people and stand by cancer patients who are terminally ill. Our social activities consist of visiting delinquents in prison.

I am very thankful to the sisters, to Norway's ex-missionaries. I have learned a lot from their spirit of servitude. It's true, on the one hand I do feel sometimes what Mother Elisabeth herself once experienced: *"From all sides people came..."* etc. (EG 54& 55).

But on the other hand I am also grateful that together with Mother Elisabeth I may implore again and again: "Lord, I am thirsty, give me of that life giving water", and thus be able to enjoy fresh spiritual comfort.

This situation encourages me to call on the younger generation of sisters to continue our mission in Norway by replacing us when our assignment is finished.

Welcome to you all!



Following Christ together

Helena (postulant)
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

We, the postulants in Yogyakarta, are really thankful because -like the year before- we were given the opportunity to follow the Kubina Initial Formation Course, a course in which postulants of various congregations join each other for two semesters.

In the first semester we got the subjects liturgy, the Old Testament, the

sweat. One day we were caught in a downpour. Cycling while wearing raincoats was a struggle for us, too.

Some of the subjects discussed during this course were not so easy to understand and demanded that we should study harder in doing the assignments set to us. Although it was pretty tiring we remained full of spirit and enjoyed

strict particularity. There were participants dancing, singing and reciting poems in their own local dialect. Others expressed themselves in performing drama. We staged a play taken from a story that originates from North Sumatra about the Origin of Lake Toba. We performed it in Batak style although the dialogues were always in Indonesian.

“Diversity of culture in one vocation”

theology of the Sacraments, the Psychology of Development, the Anthropology of Culture and the History of the Church. In the second semester we studied Christian Moral, the New Testament, the Mystery of the Church, the Psychology of the Personality, Sexuality and the History of Convent Life. With this story we want to let you share in one of our activities during this period of postulancy. An experience we particularly would like to share with our CB-fellow postulants in our formation houses in the various areas.

The Kubina course opened with a Eucharistic celebration in the chapel of the CB-novitiate. Afterwards we assembled and were introduced to one another, the participants as well as the formation leaders of each congregation. What I found rather unique about the Kubina participants was, that, although the place of formation was Yogyakarta and surroundings, most of them originated from East Indonesia i.e. from Nusa Tenggara Timur, the Moluccas and Papua. About ten people came from Java, the others were from Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. Though from various districts, tribes, backgrounds and ages we were united in preparing ourselves to answer His calling together.

From that moment on we studied together every Tuesday and Wednesday. Our lectures started at 07:00 a.m and ended at 12:30 p.m. To us, who had just learned to cycle, leaving for Kubina was a challenge in itself. It was even more of a challenge when we went home and the roads were crammed with traffic. By the time we arrived home the heat of the sun had made us

those days. Because of these Kubina activities we also trained ourselves to use our time as well as possible and be handier in obtaining knowledge that paved the way for our vocation. In the month of December we finished our first semester of lectures. At the moment we are in our second semester of lectures, which will last until the coming month of May.

Next to class study activities, the Tour of Culture and the Cultural Presentation are annually recurring events. On the Tour of Culture we visited the Wayang Museum, the Yogyakarta Palace, and the Prambanan Temple. We got to know far more about the cultural richness in this archipelago, the Javanese culture in particular.

Unfortunately, we could not enter the area of the Prambanan Temple. It was still closed to the public because of the earthquake in 2006. We could only walk around the temple and watch it from behind the demarcation line

The theme of the Cultural Presentation was ‘Diversity of Culture in one vocation.’ That’s exactly how it was! At the opening of the presentation we were all present in different traditional dress. The Eucharistic celebration held prior to the presentation, was also graced by songs and attire sung and worn on the various islands. It made the Eucharistic celebration unique, lively and festive.

Not to be forgotten are all the different kinds of district food dishes offered by each congregation, which we could taste and enjoy after the Eucharistic celebration.

In this programme, each congregation showed an attraction with a special dis-

At the end of the presentation, and that was rather attractive, my friends from Nusa Tenggara Timur spontaneously stepped forward to dance together with us. This Cultural Presentation programme radiated cheerfulness and togetherness as well as sisterhood without looking at origin.

Next to everything we have experienced we are conscious that by studying at Kubina we have learned many things. We are equipped with information that can serve us well on the path of our vocation. Not only because of the knowledge we have acquired, but also because of the richness we have received through our diversity. The differences we have experienced make that we learned to understand the customs and habits of other cultures better, so that we are more open to the presence of people from other societies.

May all of this be a meaningful wealth of knowledge in fulfilling our vocation, during which we will of course meet and work together with people from various cultures in representing His Love in this world.



The healing power of love

Sr. Natalia Siwi Wantinah
Kupang, East Indonesia

The World Day of the Sick, February 11, 2009 was a very special one for us because on that day the St Charles Borromeo Clinic at Kupang was officially opened.

'The Healing Power of Love' is the motto of our health service in this clinic. *Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interest, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury. It does not rejoice over wrong doing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.* (cf 1 Cor 13; 4 – 7).

Love bears several characters is hospitable, compassionate, zealous, truthful and respectful. We serve every patient who comes here with hospitality, and compassionately take part in his/her suffering. In the spirit of joy and moved by our faith we zealously help these patients. In this clinic, patients are well respected and being served truthfully.

Sometimes I question God. What is it

that He wants? Why did He choose for us this very dry and infertile land to share his everlasting love?

Before the official opening of the Clinic, we managed to introduce our presence to the people in the neighboring area. We launched a free, one day health treatment program for the community. Initially we doubted if it would be enthusiastically received by the people. However, to our surprise 750 people registered as patients. Because of the great enthusiasm from the people we had to close the registration period earlier for fear of not being able to treat them properly if there were too many patients.

There were eight medical doctors who voluntarily helped us. For this I could only thank God and humbly I said: "How beautiful is your plan, God, in my life". I praise the Lord and am thankful because this program makes that we can serve and help many people. For this activity we had also asked some help from the health department to provide us with medicine. Unfortunately we haven't heard from them, yet.

Thank God, we got help from the Oke Peduli Bangsa Foundation. This foundation provided us with enough medicine. With their help we managed to serve all the patients as best we could. Again I thank God for his kindness and his open arms to always provide us with what we need through the help of many people. I thank God also for allowing me, the unworthy servant, to take part in his work of salvation.

I hope that the seed planted in this dry and infertile land will grow and develop into a more complete and advanced health care service for which the people from the Kupang area have been longing such a long time. Surely God has answered my hope. The increasing number of patients in the St Charles Borromeo Clinic shows that this health care service is already in the hearts of the people. May this health care service, based on the healing power of love, bring salvation to many people.

Amidst my Muslim sisters and brothers

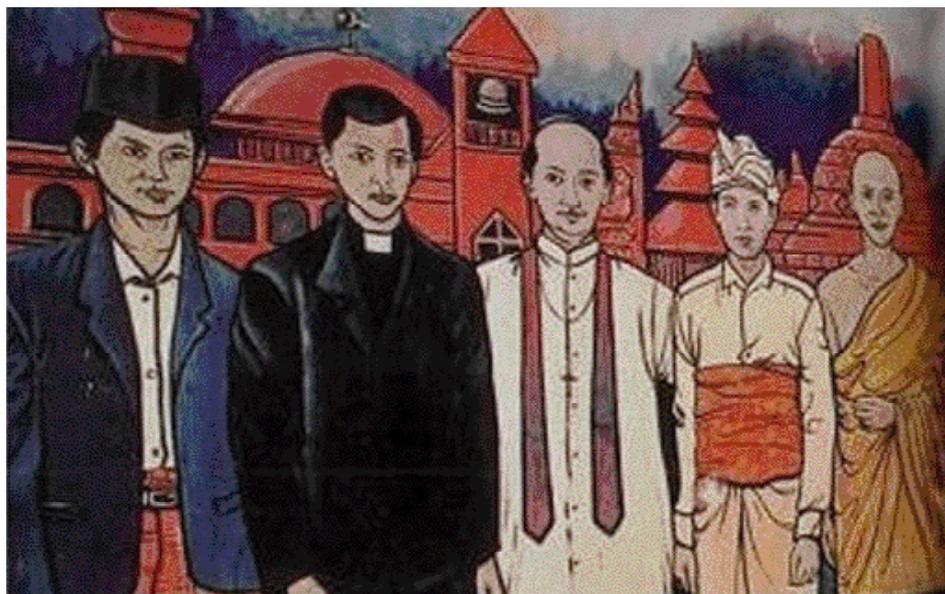
Sr. Agnes Suarin
Quezon-City, the Philippines

When Sr. Jane presented the new apostolate to me and asked me how I felt about it, I was touched and so I accepted this new challenge in spite of the fact that I neither am experienced nor trained for this kind of ministry. Thinking about it made me feel excited.

I grew up with Muslims in the neighbourhood and learned to be friends with them. My parents taught me to be fair; that everybody is equal and that we all have the same rights, whether you are Muslim, Christian or Lumad (indigenous people). Of course I have heard the stories about Muslims and Lumads but, since I myself have never had any negative experiences with these people, it is not difficult for me to relate to them.

When I started orientating myself in this place there was no fear in my heart. I rather enjoyed talking to and getting to know the people of this community. Though, at first, it was difficult to convince them to join the programme mainly because of personal reasons (e.g. being ashamed, having to work or feeling too old for it, etc.), they did show a keen interest. There were ten adult women who joined the programme and six of them even made it through to the end. We had a lot of processing and adjusting to do during this four-month programme. Personally, I had to adjust to their situation, culture and belief because I thought, I would only be working with the women but then I all of a sudden found myself dealing with the men of the community as well. I started visiting their homes, trying to get to know them and their families better, giving them time to share. Very important! They asked a lot of questions and some of these bothered me. For, their questions were always related to the situation in which they found themselves in everyday life. Even the children raised their own questions but since I could not understand their dialect (I tried to master it), they would just smile at me and often-times I just tried to read their facial expression.

When people or friends ask me about my ministry, I tell them about the adult literacy programme with Muslim women. When I answer their questions they react in different ways. First they



ask me “where?” and then say “what!” “Are you not afraid?” especially since they know I am alone in the place. The truth is that I have a lot of fears... but not with regard to this apostolate. Why? Because I never ever feel that they are “afraid” of me. Every time I go there, I ask God’s blessings to give me the inspiration to share something with them. (A sharing that I don’t need to say I am Christian, which is the greatest challenge.) Somehow, I not feel fear in terms of being a Christian alone in their Muslim midst because of their situations and needs. The motivation of going there is clear to me. That is why I never feel scared, though I know I still have to be careful in terms of my actions and the language I use. I do feel at home in the community especially with the women and children because of how they treat me.

Working with them, being alone in their midst... it is not as easy as I thought it would be! Not easy because I see the situation in which they find themselves, because I see how they struggle to get by every day. I thought I would only be teaching adult women literacy but they, in their turn, teach me how to be literate about life. I know that the process of teaching them numbers and the alphabet is the same as the process I have to go through in order to learn and understand about life and the situations of different people. Because even if they will not say a word or literally teach me about life, their sharing and real

situations teach me to understand life in many different ways. Though the process of teaching them the letters of the alphabet and basic arithmetic demands a lot of patience, we still, at the end of the day, come back to the harsh reality of their situation and learn to cope with it. This is the most challenging part of my work.

I have been in their midst for nine months now and it is not anymore “me-working-with-them” but us, working together. I may be alone in their midst, it is not the issue of being Christian with Muslims, instead it is an opportunity and a privilege for me to be with them. I may be alone in their midst... physically, I believe that God is always with me, working through me, teaching me to discover and even going beyond what I can understand, sometimes even to the point of confusion. Yet, in spite of this I just let God be the God of my journey with them. I entrust to Him everything because even until now, some people are still asking me what I am doing amidst my Muslim sisters and brothers... To them I would like to say: “Well, only God knows...”

He was always there and still is

Sr. Martino van de Vijfeijke
Maastricht, the Netherlands



*Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of
Your faithful
and enkindle in them
the fire of Your love.*

Colofon

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On October 3rd 2008 my thoughts went back to 1918. It was the year that I saw the light and that the first ten sisters arrived in Indonesia. I was born on Pentecost, ninety years ago.

It has been seventy years now that I went to Indonesia and met these first ten sisters of the Congregation. At the time, October 3rd was the feast-day of St Theresia of Lisieux, which was later on shifted back to October 1st. That day Holy Mass was celebrated Onder de Bogen for a particular intention namely choosing who, from a group of forty-five postulants, would go to Indonesia. Two days later and only one week after habit taking on November 22nd, I knew I was amongst the lucky ones. I had already asked my parents permission to go, long before that time, but now it was final. Don't underestimate the impact this had on parents who, in great faith, had to part with three of their five children because they entered the priesthood or went to the mission. They all travelled overseas to far off countries for 55, 50 or 40 years.

In everything I did God showed me the path along which He wanted me to travel. He did and still does ask something in return. Something I hope I can fulfil with His unremitting help until the day that He will come to see me home for good. When He kept knocking on the door of my heart I knew I had to take a radical decision. How grateful I am now that I had the courage then to follow Him. He literally showed me the way.

After having been a missionary for more than fifty years I was courageous enough to again take the right decision. No matter how hard it was, no matter how dear the people were to me.

My youngest sister who, for forty years, had been teaching at the institute for deaf children left Indonesia and returned home because she was critically ill. She was a member of the congregation, which, in the beginning, assisted Mother Elisabeth. After having been seriously ill (stroke and cancer) for one year and a half I was granted permission to go and assist her. Then it dawned on me why I, with His help, had made the right decision. She would never have been 'at home' here. In fact she wanted to stay where she had



spent so many years of her life, together with the people but especially with the deaf children. Their love was mutual.

When growing older and seeing so many needy families -of which children usually are the victims- you realize how grateful you should be for having been born into a family with good, simple parents who were altruistic and had such great faith. I am thankful for what I can still do and for everything I have. How moved I was when, on October 9th 2008, sr Hedwig and sr Terry brought me a festive envelope and everything that came with it. It explained in Indonesian (the language I know so well) about the festivities round the 90th anniversary of CB and Mother Elisabeth in Indonesia.

Twenty years after I was born I met the first ten sisters with whom I would work together and live through the camp days in Bandung and Jakarta. In the evening sr Cecila from Belgium dropped by and with her I shared my thankful feelings.

I will say it again: I don't regret a single thing I did. He was always there and still is. I call them 'experiences of God' to which I also count the little daily things in life and my encounter with people in particular.