

Maastricht, August 2012

Dear Sisters in Belgium, Brazil, East Indonesia, Indonesia, Kenya, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Tanzania, Timor Leste, and the USA.

We want to say thanks to and praise the benevolent God so that we can again celebrate a historical day in the Congregation. The exact date being August 15th, 2012. It is on this very day that we commemorate a truly significant event in our Congregation, about which Mother Elisabeth writes in EG 6: "*...and suddenly I heard the blessed 'yes' from Heaven, and hat 'yes' was no other than this: all things will come*".

Our gratitude invites us to ponder on, explore and deepen the spirit of Mother Elisabeth. EG 6 is the answer to the longing for God and the prayer of Mother Elisabeth. For years she longed for a convent to be established in the city of Maastricht in which God would be honestly served (cf. EG 5). For 15 to 16 long years Mother Elisabeth expressed her most ardent desire and made it her daily prayer (cf. EG 2).

On the journey of the history of our Congregation, we are invited to see, be aware of and be grateful to God Who has worked wonders in us and has given us the best according to His Will. Mother Elisabeth started the long journey of our Congregation. Later on this journey is continued by the sisters, her followers. Any efforts made on the entire journey of the Congregation are the manifestations of a deep longing for the

Glory of God, the Divine. Our Constitution says that the purpose of the Congregation is to glorify God zealously by striving for holiness of life and by performing various works of charity for our neighbour in their needs and distress (cf. Const. Pg. 7). Thus, each of us has been called and sent to glorify God by realizing the purpose of the Congregation in everyday life.

Currently we, as individuals and as a community, will look back on our mission journey by asking ourselves: in how far have I tried -with all my heart- to realize the purpose of the Congregation in my daily life? The purpose of the Congregation has become my purpose as a religious CB. We are always called to draw new strength from Jesus Christ and to deepen our personal relationship with Him. These now have become our spiritual weapons in living out and realizing our mission in the society. The mystical aspect thus becoming a source of strength which flows into the prophetic aspect, and the prophetic aspect as such being a manifestation of the mystical aspect. The mystical and prophetic aspect together thus being integrated in the mission of each of us wherever we are sent and whatever the task entrusted to us.

The event of August 15th, 1836, is so important because it was on this very day that God gave His approval and Mother Elisabeth heard it. This now was the starting point which moved Mother Elisabeth to realize her most ardent desire and to live according to this 'yes' answer by performing concrete actions in responding to the real situations that occurred in Maastricht at that moment in time, for example rendering services at

Calvarieberg and in the orphanage. What about us nowadays? In what way do we respond to this 'yes', to God's invitation and call that echoes through the concrete situation of our existence today.

The purpose of the Congregation is not only to perform various works of charity, but also to strive for holiness in our own life. These two aspects have become the content of our mission: striving for holiness and performing various works of charity. Constitution 69 confirms that the desire to respond to the call of God, as contained in the destination of the Congregation, reveals the presence of a desire to further develop love of God and neighbour.

God's grace must be developed in a process that lasts a lifetime. This is a manifestation of self-ongoing formation, which we need to work on continuously. Formation does not just stop at a certain stage. It is not enough for self-ongoing formation to just take place during the postulate-novitiate period or Juniorate period. It should last a lifetime and be developed continuously (cf. Const70).

Why is self-ongoing formation such an important aspect in our development process as religious? Constitution 71 asserts: "*The participation of the Congregation in the mission of the Church will be most fruitful if the members are formed in such a way that the charism of the Congregation is alive in them...*". Given the importance of formation the Congregation established the international FormationTeam (IFT). The team is expected to be responsible for organizing international training programs in a

systematic, holistic, relevant and integrated way. In the near future the International Formation Team will hold a meeting for formators of initial formation, meant to reflect on and develop their spirituality and psychological capacities which hopefully will effectively be integrated into their lives as formators. Nevertheless, we are each responsible for maintaining the self-ongoing formation so that we can grow in all aspects of life (spiritually, emotionally, psychologically) and in our ministries. Self-ongoing formation will help us to love God, Who calls us, more deeply and to love our fellow beings more sincerely. Accordingly, we, too, recognize the Will of God more and more and make it happen in our day-to-day mission.

The world around us has a lot to offer and we have the freedom to choose. By carrying out our self-ongoing formation continually and by being a prayerful as well as a discreet person, we will be able to choose what is best for us according to the Will of God. What is best is not necessarily what is in accordance with my own will. But Mother Elisabeth invites us to keep entering the 'dark night' as she phrases in EG140: "*... Now I roam about in the dark night, yet in bold courage, and on the word of my spiritual Leader, I throw out the net every day. May the Name of Lord be blessed for all eternity*".

On August 15th, we also celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven. Doctrine says that Mary was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory which is an expression of faith and belief. Human beings run out of words to explain and express respect and appreciation for the privilege of

Mary. Of the many women, she was chosen to be the Mother of God. Although she has become 'the elect', she remained Mary; a humble, simple woman, a woman who remained faithful and consequent to her promises, a woman also who always tried to understand the Will of God.

When the disciples of Jesus ran away from Him, when He was arrested, tortured and crucified, what did Mother Mary do? Did she run away with them? She most certainly didn't. She remained faithful to her Son and accompanied Him, even in the darkest hours of His life. Who of you now is like her; like a true mother who had the heart to watch her Son be defamed, arrested, tortured, crucified and finally die? Only our Mother Mary can do this with great fortitude. From day to day, from event to event she continually learnt to understand the Will of God. Mary even treasured all that had happened and pondered these experiences in her heart. Mary was faithful and thus faithfully carried out the whole plan of God. And so it pleased God to glorify her, thus lifting her up into the Mother Church. That's how she became the mother who raised us all.

In celebrating this historical day let us return to self-renewal, by fostering ongoing formation both personally and as a community. Each of us has tried to pursue the mission entrusted to us by constantly trying to deepen the personal relationship with God, self sharpening our capacity on discretion and by bearing the consequences of the choices we make. Hence, more people will experience God's love through our presence and service. The purpose of the Congregation is none other than that

God will be glorified through our mission and ministries.
Hopefully our 'yes' to God is growing in quality according to the
spirituality of Mother Elisabeth.

Happy feast day to you all!



MEMBERSHIP

- ¹² What shall I return to the LORD
for all his goodness to me?
¹³ I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD.
¹⁴ I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people ...
¹⁷ I will sacrifice a thank offering to you
and call on the name of the LORD.

(Psalm 116: 12-14, 17)

The Region of East Indonesia

Postulancy

On August 14th, 2012, two aspirants started their Postulancy in our formation house in Lili – Kupang:

1. Ermelinda Kosat, from the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Noemuti, Kefamenanu.
2. Rensilinda Julita, from the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Lando, Manggarai Barat.

Temporary Profession of Vows

On August 15th, 2012 five novices make Temporary Profession of Vows in Kupang:

1. Sr Alfiana Rahmat, from the St Christophorus Parish, Waning, Manggarai Barat.
2. Sr Leticia Maria de Jesus Barreto, from the St Fransiskus Xaverius Parish, Dare, Timor Leste.
3. Sr Ester Natalina Pereira, from the St Fransiskus Xaverius Parish, Dare, Timor Leste.
4. Sr Arlinda Caldas Exposto, from the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Ermera, Timor Leste.
5. Sr Ruth Bernadete dos Reis Soares, from the Our Lady of Assumption Parish, Same, Timor Leste.

The Province of Indonesia

Habit Taking

On August 15th, 2012, three postulants start their novitiate in the Formation house of Yogyakarta, Indonesia:

1. Cornelia Mimin Sumirah from the Christ the King Parish, Cigugur – Kuningan, West Java
2. Fransiska Rupin Maela from the St John Apostle Parish, Kedaton – Bandar Lampung, Sumatra.
3. Yulia Kristiyanti Wa Ada MR from the St Clemens Parish, Mandonga, Kendari, South East Sulawesi.

Temporary Profession of Vows

On August 15th, 2012, seven novices make Temporary Profession of Vows:

1. Sr Maria Retika, from the Divine Provident Parish, Lubuk Linggau, South Sumatra.
2. Sr Serlly Akwila, from the St Michael Parish, Labasa, South East Sulawesi.
3. Sr Nata Albina, from the St John the Baptist Parish, Raha, South East Sulawesi.
4. Sr Ristina, from the St Andrew the Apostle Parish, Marga Agung, Lampung, South Sumatra.
5. Sr Dorothea Caturini Puji Tyastuti, from the St Paul Parish Murnijaya, Tumijajar, Tulang Bawang, Lampung, South Sumatra.
6. Sr Antari Naning Yulianti, from the St Joseph the Worker Parish, Mertoyudan, Magelang, Central Java.
7. Sr Yeni Wijayatri, from the St Ignatius Parish, Magelang, Central Java.

Perpetual Profession of Vows

On August 12th, 2012, eight Juniors made perpetual profession of vows in the Bintang Samodra Chapel, Jl. Kolombo 19, Yogyakarta.

1. Sr Marianne Witantri CB, from the St John Evangelist Parish, Kudus – Jawa Tengah.
2. Sr Yuliani Bota Tukan CB, from the St Johanes Paul II Parish, Wulandoni, Lembata – NTT.
3. Sr Priska Sabonu CB, from the St Bernard Parish, Aimas, Sorong – Papua.
4. Sr Merry Sitanggung CB, from the St Bartolomeo Parish, Bekasi.
5. Sr Yetty CB, from the Cathedral Parish, Merauke – Papua.
6. Sr Marga Susmiyati CB, from the St Thérèse of Lisieux Parish, Wates – Kulon Progo, Central Java.
7. Sr Pauletta Arum Rumezar CB, from the St Mary Mother of Good Counsel, Wates – Kulon Progo, Central Java.
8. Sr Emyliana CB, from the Mary Immaculate Parish, Sorowako, Malili, South Sulawesi.

We congratulate all of them with the choice they have made to become members of this Congregation. We will accompany them on their path of life with our prayers and blessings so that they will remain loyal to God's call.

IN MEMORIAM

Praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD, my soul.

I will praise the LORD all my life;

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

(Psalm 146: 1-2)

1. Sr Christophora Petronella Johanna van Eerde, was born at Heemstede on October 16th, 1914, made her profession in our Congregation in Maastricht on May 11th, 1954 and passed away in Maastricht on July 1st, 2012.
2. Sr Marielena Johanna Bernardina Lampe, was born in Amsterdam on November 14th, 1925, made her profession in our Congregation in Maastricht on May 15th, 1949 and passed away in Heerlen ‘Bergweide’ on July 8th, 2012.
3. Sr Mariska Siti Roemtari, was born in Solo on May 3rd, 1918, made her profession in our Congregation in Yogyakarta on August 25th, 1940 and passed away in Yogyakarta on July 11th, 2012.
4. Sr Herminegildis Steffens was born in Maastricht on November 5th, 1923, made her profession in our Congregation in Maastricht on November 14th, 1950 and passed away in Maastricht on July 28th, 2012.

With gratitude we now entrust these sisters to God. May He embrace them with His love.

ASSIGNED TO A NEW REGIONAL BOARD

In service to our community and its mission,
some sisters are called
to assume the function of authority.

This is exercised at every level of the Congregation:
at the local level by the local superior
or a sister – in charge,
at the provincial level by the provincial superior,
c.q. vice provincial superior or regional superior,
at the Congregation level by the general superior.
(Const. 111)

With the completion of three years of service of the Regional Board of the Tanzanian Region, which lasted from August 1st, 2009 – July 31st, 2012, the General Board has assigned a new Regional Board to be in service to the Area for the term of office from August 1st, 2012 – July 31st, 2015. For this purpose, as it was already written in our previous Basic Letter, sr Rosaria and sr Jane visited Tanzania so as to conduct opinion polling amongst the sisters before assigning a new regional board (cf Const. 140). After fervent prayer and discernment during this process with the sisters, the General Board has decided to assign:

1. Sr Bernadetha Charles Kessy as Regional Superior
2. Sr Marie Jose Voeten as the first board member. She will substitute the Regional Superior in case of impediment or vacancy.

3. Sr Hanna Henny Rustiyati as the second board member.

During these three years term of office, the Regional Board will be assisted by the Regional Treasurer, a task which is entrusted to sr Reni Susi Ngadi.

Dear sisters, we kindly ask your prayers and support for these new Regional Board Members and Treasurer so that they may carry out their task and responsibility for the greater glory of the Lord and the development of the Region and its mission.

We sincerely offer our words of gratitude and appreciation to sr Regina Sumiyatni, sr Florida Kangawa, and sr Regina Massawe the former Regional Superior and Board Members who have now finished their service. They have done a great many good things for the development of the Region during their term of office. We hope that, together with the sisters, the new board will continue to build up the Region based on the good foundation they have laid down, and on what they have learnt from all the experiences over the past three years.

“Keep your hands to the plough, the foundations that have been laid will continuously be blessed by Our Dear Lord” (EG 75).

Sr Regina Sumiyatni, sr Florida Kangawa, and sr Regina Massawe, thank you very much, asante sana, terimakasih, dank u wel.

FROM THE GENERAL OFFICE

Formation for IFT members and Formators of Initial Formation

From September 3rd – 25th, 2012, formation for IFT members and Formators of Initial Formation will be held in the Mother House, Maastricht – the Netherlands. The theme is: a Deeper Integration of the Spirit of Mother Elisabeth Today.

The objectives of this program are:

1. To facilitate the IFT (International Formation Team) members and formators of Initial Formation to reflect on and develop their spiritual as well as psychological capacities and effectively integrate them in their life as formators.
2. To review and evaluate the workbook, Main Accents of Initial and On-going Formation of 1998; (*based on the questions addressed to the participants*).
3. To produce a new workbook on CB Initial and On-going Formation, which provides important accents as well as guidelines for formation in the Congregation.

International Formation Team:

- 1) Sr Hetty Sri Widjajanti (GB)
- 2) Sr Lisbeth Cicuh Ratwasih (GB)
- 3) Sr Silvia Tijmensen (Dutch Province)
- 4) Sr Krispiani Sukarwanti (Indonesian Province)

- 5) Sr Dwina Arintowati (Indonesian Province)
- 6) Sr Emmanuella Tri Widarti (Indonesian Province)
- 7) Sr Filomena Leal Perreira (Indonesian Province)
- 8) Sr Alphonsina Pius Tarimo (Tanzanian Region)
- 9) Sr Rachel Real (Philippine Region)
- 10) Sr Tavana (East Indonesian Region)
- 11) Sr Marivic Braganza

Formators of Initial Formation:

- 12) Sr Odilia Sadinah (Tanzanian Region)
- 13) Sr Restie Ucab (Philippine Region)
- 14) Sr Patromana Wea (East Indonesian Region)
- 15) Sr Mariati Sumarmi (Indonesian Province)
- 16) Sr Yvonne Inguliman (Indonesian Province)

**SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS FROM
SR LISBETH CICIH RATWASIH**

“Thank you all, dear sisters, for congratulating me on my birthday, for wishing me all the best, for coming to see me, for remembering and for celebrating this red letter day with me through your prayers, your kind wishes and your generous gifts. It was great to remember all the happy times we had together. Thank you ever so much. I really appreciate the time you took to make this day a special one. May you all have a wonderful and

blessed life, too. With this I wish us all a happy life ahead and God bless!”

THE AGENDA OF THE GENERAL BOARD

Srs Lisbeth Cicuh Ratwasih and Hetty Sri Widjajanti paid a visit to the community of Leut, Belgium, from July 22nd – 24th, 2012. Besides dissemination of the decisions and recommendations of the General Chapter 2011 the purpose of this visitation was to also enter into a deeper dialogue with the sisters, especially dealing with their specific needs and the concerns of the community. We also invited Sr Hedwig Wigi Astuti, from the Stella Maris community to be present at these dissemination sessions, because by the time the GB paid a visit to the Stella Maris community, she was in Indonesia for home leave and spiritual refreshment.

Kind Regards,
on behalf of the General Board



Sr Rosaria Nur Hardiningsih
General Superior