

Newsletter- 2
RNDM Renewal
“Rekindle the Gift of God that is within you”
2 Timothy 1:6
6 September to 6 November 2017



Dear Sisters

Greetings from St Rambert where we are concluding our six weeks' stay. In our first newsletter, we shared with you some of our life and experiences since the beginning of the program until our visit to Lyon. We hope that you enjoyed reading it as you journeyed with us though at a distance. We are excited to share with you our second newsletter.

After our visit to Lyon, we had two weeks with Susan Smith who worked with us from 18 to 29 October. Susan shared with us her diverse wisdom about women in the scripture and integrated her teaching with RNDM women and mission today. We found this helpful and very enriching. Susan also shared with us the beginnings of our provinces/regions whose history we found amazing. In various part of the world, due to the political situations, the RNDMs at the time went through great suffering and endured many difficulties. We appreciated being able to reflect on this reality of our history and we are happy to be part of the RNDM family.



We were inspired by stories of many women in the bible among them: Judith, Deborah, Ruth and Mary Magdalene just to mention a few. We appreciated their leadership qualities, exercise of power, prayerfulness and their courage. Reflecting on these women, we feel called to evaluate our life and mission as RNDMs in our world today and to keep the spirit of Euphrasie alive.



We understood the bible better, especially the significance of women. Some of us had a misconception that Mary Magdalene was an adulterous woman but Susan's input changed our understanding. We discussed and shared much about our work with women in our different ministries.

The resource material that Susan shared with us will be very useful for our work with women. We thank Lucy for binding the material into a work-book form.



Lucy 24.9.17

Birthdays.....were celebrated in style.



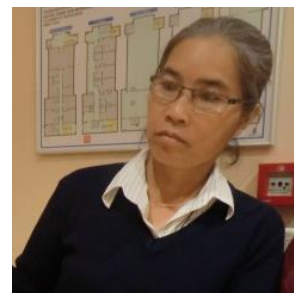
Elizabeth 26.9.17

On 30 September, Marie Benedict shared with us the history of the Abbey of St Rambert. We also appreciated seeing some photos of the Eurasian girls from 1949-1979. About 500 Eurasian girls were taken care of by the sisters in this house. The dedicated work of the sisters at that time was very impressive. Many of the girls settled well in life and some of them became doctors, nurses, teachers, business women, and two of them became RNDMs - Mary Simon and Mary Danielle Babou. Some of these women still keep connection with the sisters and visit occasionally and have a gathering at the Abbey once a year.



Pushpa

On the 1 October we had the joy of celebrating the feast days of Pushpa and Teresa Hong Xuan. What a great day as we all journeyed to Taize. We greeted them and prayed for them as we started our journey to Taize.



Teresa Hong Xuan

Our visit to Taize was enlightening. We learnt of its beginning which was in 1940 by Br. Roger Schutz Marsauche, a protestant from Switzerland. Taize is an Ecumenical Community. It was a real inspiration for us to see where thousands of people of different ages, religions and cultures come in search of “something” in prayer and silence. We found this an invitation for us to deepen prayer and listening in our daily lives.

On the way back, we visited Cluny another historical place in France. Then we stopped at Ars, the place of St. John Vianney. We visited the museum which was very interesting to see how simply he lived yet touched the lives of so many people. All these were very moving experiences for us.



We were happy to welcome Crescencia Sun, a member of the CLT who shared with us some reflections on Laudato Si. In the three days, we were able to go through the major topics of what is happening to our Common Home today. Pollution, climate change, the throwaway culture, water, and the injustices in our society. All of these contribute much to the damage done to our common home.

Having heard the cry of nature due to human beings irresponsible behavior, Pope Francis calls us to a radical change in order to protect our Common Home. We are all challenged to a change of lifestyle, production, consumption and caring for the ecosystem. Pope Francis challenges us to reflect on what kind of world we would like to leave for the generation to come.



We enjoyed the sharing about the different realities where we come from and we also made practical suggestions to implement our learning of these days.

On 4 October we had a social evening which was conducted by Elizabeth and Emelinda. It was a joyful and relaxing evening for all of us. We shared our joys and laughter by performing beautiful cultural songs, dances and games.

On 5 October we began our retreat on the Constitutions which was directed by Margaret McInerney. It was a time filled with the grace of God through prayerful reflection, meditation, adoration and relaxation. It was a great chance to have quality time with God the Creator and reflect on our life and ministries. Weaving scarves together into a tapestry was fun and highlighted new insights about communion. The icon of the Trinity provided us with fruitful meditation. The retreat ended with a reconciliation service. A meaningful Liturgy was prepared and we renewed our Vows during Mass. A big thank you Sister Margaret for guiding us with your wisdom and inspiration. May God bless you with good health and long life.



Antoinette, one of the past pupils of the Abbey, organized an evening of Bingo with many prizes given to all.



We were lucky and excited to visit a new country Switzerland – Geneva on 14 October. As we went, we enjoyed the beautiful autumn colors across the hills and we passed through many tunnels. Geneva is a great attraction for tourists due to its many beautiful spots, among them, the famous flower clock, a fountain in the lake, which is about 140 meters high. The most significant landmark in the city is the UN headquarters, which we were able to visit. The twelve-meter tall broken chair, which stands in front of the UN building, is a powerful reminder of the movement to end the use of land mines. We thank God for the lovely weather and quality time together.

Rose Mary Harbinson spent a week leading us in a reflective and relaxed way on Liturgy and RNDM spirituality. She reminded us that Liturgy is a circle of prayer, the work of the people and that it is communal. Liturgy is more than the devotional practices and in particular, during the celebration of the Eucharist, we relive the mystery of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, “Do this in memory of me”. Rose Mary invited us to be more present whenever we participate in any liturgy be it Eucharistic celebration, Liturgy of the hours etc.



As we are nearing Advent season, we spent time reflecting on this beautiful season which is a time to journey, to look back, a time of waiting and expectation, time of prayer and reflection in order to make new beginnings and to deepen our commitment. We also reflected on transitional time as we go through life changes and the challenges we face as we advance in years.

We ended this session on Liturgy and RNDM Spirituality with Rose Mary with a ritual in which she sent us forth to our own respective missions.



Lucy led us in the closing liturgy as we concluded our stay in St Rambert. Together with the community members and Patricia, we gathered to thank God for all the goodness we have received during the last six weeks. We reflected on the graces and blessings that we will carry with us as we move to Caen, England, Rome and later to our home provinces. We are grateful to the community of St Rambert who throughout our time here have made us feel very much at home. We carry with us many

wonderful memories and experiences.

We wish you many blessings and enjoy reading our second newsletter.

Margaret, Marcia, Molly, Cam Linh, Ngan Ha, Emelinda and Hong Xuan