

INSTITUTE HISTORY WORKSHEET

TOPIC: Mère Josépha de Saint-François (1951-1963)

Mère Loretto Julia Carroll (1963-1969)

Places:

Rome: 1958 – Generalate moved there

Brazil: 1962 – preparations, 1st Sisters arrive from U.S.A. in 1963

Nigeria: 1963 – 3 SNDdeN from Britain open a secondary school in Oro

Kenya: 1965

North Belgium: 1968

Baghdad: 1965-66 – 2 Sisters sent from Ohio to form religious teachers for 1 year (1 left at end of year; violence cut it short)

Bulawayo: proposed international novitiate under Loretto Julia

People & Relationships between them:

Mère Josépha de Saint-François (Augusta VAN DEN EEDE, 1917-1986)

- Flemish, 24 when she enters in 1917 after teaching at SNDdeN School in Antwerp
- Experience as primary teacher, principal, & superior
- 1938-1947 served as Councillor for the Belgian Province
- Provincial of Belgian Province at time of election in 1951 (58 years old)
- 80 new foundations (?)
- 1963 – elected general councilor to Loretto Julia – devoted herself entirely to furthering with great tenacity the canonization of Mère Julie.
- Participated in the opening and closing of the 1st session of Vatican II, which she followed with great attention

“The Sisters of the Birth of Our Lady” of Romorantin (a French Congregation) became members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

Pope Pius XII

Sister Loretto Julia (Clare Carroll, 1898-1975)

- Taught by our Sisters at St. Mary, Cambridge, MA; Entered in 1916, began teaching as a novice
- Health was never robust – sometimes withdrawn from teaching because of that
- Superior of various communities from 1930-1952

- 1953-1959: Provincial of Waltham/Massachusetts Province – purchased Ipswich property; encouraged expansion of college at Okayama
- 1959-1963: 1st provincial of Connecticut – spearheaded project to start Brazil
- 1963-1969: Superior General
- **1st non-European superior general** - led the Congregation in the renewal called for by Vatican Council II – her council:
 - **Sister Marie Frederica** (California) Assistant
 - **Mère Josepha** (Belgium) General Councillor
 - **Sister Joseph of Nazareth** (England) General Councillor
 - **Sister Mary Immaculata** (Ohio) General Councillor – Rosemary Wach
 - **Sister Marie Chantal** (Belgium) General Secretary
 - **Sister Therese Marguerite** (Italy) General Treasurer

Pope John XXIII

Pope Paul VI

Sister Mary of the Holy Angels Linscott

Dates & Events:

1951: Chapter opens March 27

1956: May 31 – Pope Pius XII publishes the Apostolic Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae* on religious formation

1957: Chapter opens on April 17

1962: October 11 – Pope John opens 1st session of Vatican II

1963: Chapter opens in Rome May 5

1963: September 29 – Pope Paul opens 2nd session of Vatican II

1963: October 23 – Mère Monica de la Passion dies

1963: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum concilium*) passed

1964: 1st Visitation of a Mother General to Africa

1964: September 14 – 3rd session of Vatican II opens

1965: September 14 – 4th session of Vatican II opens

1965: Decree On Renewal of Religious Life (*Perfectae Caritatis*) passed

1965: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) passed

1967: December – March 1968 is 1st session of Special Chapter
1968: Notre Dame Cross begins to be worn
1968: Implementation of Special Chapter decision to divide Belgium into North and South
1968: Intersession Newsletter started
1969: Special General Chapter

Impact of War/Political Unrest:

- World is changing very fast: scientific and technological discoveries – add to that the renewal of the Church begins before Vatican II
- Division of Belgium into North & South: The foundation of the North Belgian Province was approved by the General Chapter 1968/69. The desire of the sisters to separate themselves from the French speaking sisters was the result of the history of Belgium and the desire of Flanders to be emancipated. In 1962, several Belgian laws established the linguistic border in Belgium with Flandres in the North and Wallonie in the South. At the same time, the Belgian sisters divided their province into two distinct linguistic regions. (Heritage Center Website)

Relationship with Hierarchy & Clergy:

Juniorates open (Ohio in 1959) in response to the Apostolic Constitution on religious formation

Collaborative – Pope Pius XII challenged Religious Communities to send 10% of their personnel to Latin America (part of motivation is to battle communism)

Collaborative – we embraced renewal (it wasn't always easy, but we did it)
Generalate moved to Rome

Primitive Spirit:

- **Mère Josépha de Saint-François** stressed being daughters of Mary, loving one another, service to the poor, prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, in mission ALL of our life, special love for Congo
- Need to center the work of the congregation somewhere more international than Namur – for unity, adaptability
- Teach them what they need to know for life: scope of training widened to art schools, beauty culture departments, commerce, youth clubs,

baby-care centres, parent-school associations; work with the mentally challenged and under-privileged

- Greater international awareness
- Congo & South Africa made international missions (not just Sisters from Belgium and England)
- Loretto Julia personally visits Africa, Europe, the USA, Brasil and Japan = 1st hand acquaintance with Sisters and work being done
- Adaptability: Loretto Julia tells provinces to decide what should be taught and how
- Consultation is encouraged (back to Mère St Joseph and writing of Rule – never totally lost it but it felt that way because of WW2 and canon law)
- Need to strengthen devotion to Julie – knowledge of Institute History (see new insights Chapter of 1957 decisions)
- Chapter of 1957: sanctification of students was the goal
- Truly daughters of the Church – we take Perfectae Caritas very seriously – all Sisters are involved

Spirituality underpinning everything:

- Church of the Better World Movement, the aggiornamento (bringing up to date, modernization), the pilgrim Church, the people of God, the Church of the poor
- Delegates to 1951 Chapter welcome at Namur a week early to pray Holy Week/Easter together
- Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, to Our Lady (Eucharistic Crusade, Sodalties) stressed among Sisters and students. Equally stressed is need to make students (ourselves?) apostles, missionaries – train them for Catholic Action

What touched your heart?

- Generosity of Sisters to reach out to new places
- World-wide movements within the Church are well underway by the time John XXIII is elected; renewal has already started
- How obedient our Sisters were to the Church –

- Things get a little out of control for Loretto Julia – habit (in and out and in again in some places); starts the renewal process with hope and ends up a little afraid of it (can't control the runaway horses)
- Josépha de Saint-François elected councilor after serving as Mother General – all of us are equal; her commitment to the congregation

New insights?

- Moving the Generalate to Rome put SNDdeNs at the heart of the renewal of the Church (Quiet Revolution p. 71)
- Generalate built on Via della Guistiniana - called Casa – opens during Loretto Julia's time
- Ease of travel and communication in this era (air mail!) Loretto Julia most traveled Mother General up to that time
- I did not give Loretto Julia enough credit for the role she played in renewal: she did the hard work at the beginning and then Mary Linscott grounds us in Julie and keeps it going

Chapter of 1951 – details gathered because of report that had to go to Sacred Congregation of Religious:

- Number of houses in province – name of each w/full address, year of foundation, diocese, name of Superior, different types of schools & TOTAL number of pupils
- List of houses founded since 1947, closed since 1947
- Properties sold since 1947, bought since 1947, new construction since 1947
- Numbers of professed Sisters, novices, postulants, same numbers of 1946
- Number of professions & deaths since 1947; Sisters who have left since 1947
- Chapter was concerned with customs – clarifications of changes to rule Chapter of 1947 made – big change: no more wooden forks and spoons; didn't have to wear the cloak in the summer

Chapter of 1957 –

- Lots of stuff around customs AGAIN;

- 2 big decisions – transfer of Generalate to Rome and Division of Waltham province into Massachusetts and Connecticut;
- Unanimous desire of the members of the Chapter to see a renewal of the Spirit of Poverty;
- Intensify devotion to Julie: books regarding the Institute should be placed at the disposal of the Sisters; a biography placed in student library; prepare studies of Blessed Mère Julie, Mère St. Joseph and different aspects of the work of the institute;
- copies of any new publications sent to Namur & a list published each year (focus on the province is showing – need to renew primitive spirit) – attention paid to ARCHIVES

Chapter of 1963 – renewal in the Church already under way – constitutions revised & approved in 1964, but it is too early –

Perfectae Caritas: 1965

3. The manner of living, praying and working should be suitably adapted everywhere, but especially in mission territories, to the modern physical and psychological circumstances of the members and also, as required by the nature of each institute, to the necessities of the apostolate, the demands of culture, and social and economic circumstances.

According to the same criteria let the manner of governing the institutes also be examined.

Therefore let constitutions, directories, custom books, books of prayers and ceremonies and such like be suitably re-edited and, obsolete laws being suppressed, be adapted to the decrees of this sacred synod.

4. An effective renewal and adaptation demands the cooperation of all the members of the institute.

18. Adaptation and renewal depend greatly on the education of religious. Consequently neither non-clerical religious nor religious women should be assigned to apostolic works immediately after the novitiate. Rather, their religious and apostolic formation, joined with instruction in arts and science directed toward obtaining appropriate degrees, must be continued as needs require in houses established for those purposes.

Special Chapter 1967-1968: Addresses to the Delegates

- Towards a Study of Blessed Julie and the Spirituality of the Active Religious Today – Sr. Mary of the Holy Angels
- The Problem of Discerning the Presence of the Holy Spirit in This World – Ladislav Orsy SJ
- Chastity in Religious Life – Ladislav Orsy SJ
- Communication and the Structures of Government in an International Congregation – Sr. Mary of the Holy Angels
- Subsidiarity in the Religious Life Structure – Sr. Mary Daniel Turner
- Community and Vatican II – Sr. Marie Augusta Neal
- Religious Life in the Post Conciliar Period by Cardinal Hildebrand Antoniutti, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious – given to the Union of Major Superiors in Rome 1967 and sent to communities to read in the refectory by Loretto Julia

Sr. Loretto Julia & Renewal:

- Opening of her “Report on the State of the Congregation in 1969”: “I am conscious that the account I have to give differs from previous ones in at least one important respect: it must be pre-eminently a report on a Congregation in movement, not to say in ferment. This stirring which encourages some and troubles others is due in part to the crisis of our times and the tensions of the post-conciliar age. As Sisters of Notre Dame, we see it inevitably connect with the implementation of priorities established by Mère Julie: dedication to the Church, and commitment as an international congregation to the apostolate of education, with a particular preference for the poor.”
- Sr. Loretto Julia knew there could be no response but commitment “...to a movement of renewal: a movement towards the world, towards missionary awareness, towards freedom, true education, greater concern for the needs of others, unity and re-discovery of the spiritual depths of our consecrated being.”
- A decline in total numbers becomes marked after the peak year of 1965: decline in number of Sisters in Temporary Vows, increasing # of invalided and retired; Sisters above 50 years of age outnumber those below; sharp reduction of # of postulants beginning in 1968 –

departures since 1963: 228 professed and 228 novices; increasing # of leave of absence, exclaustation.

- Influence of following Vatican II: rapidly changing world, psychological disturbances resulting from wholesale questioning of long-accepted and unchallenged values
- Educational works expanded and broadened
- Efforts at Unity of the Congregation: visitation; more frequent gatherings of those in leadership, formation, presidents of colleges; 1st session of Special General Chapter; Opening of Casa with room for hospitality and gathering spaces.
- She clearly detected the strengths and weaknesses of effort "...to retain what was good in our life and structures, and to reject what was injurious in them."

Injurious:

- too much haste in renewal efforts;
- superficiality (external changes do not reflect a renewal of spirit);
- mistaken idea of subsidiarity as evinced by abdication of authority by some and resistance by some to any authority;
- confusion by some of authority and authoritarianism;
- mistaking secularism for secularization through a tendency to excess in exaggerated attempts to identify with those we serve;
- failure to properly understand accountability & preoccupation with material concerns;
- a neglect of prayer in some areas

Good results of renewal:

- Heightened value of community
- Deepened appreciation of personal dignity of each Sister
- Enlightened concept of our role as persons who "by profession of the evangelical councils have answered the clear call to live for God alone
- Clearer grasp of the place of such basic virtues of the Foundress as realism, simplicity and confidence in the evolution of renewed efforts in our community living, our work and our structures

Sr. Mary Linscott's remarks when Loretto Julia died: "...had the courage to make us advance effectively into the current of renewal." Comments on her "...integrity and simplicity, sense of humor, faith, righteousness, love of the Church, and total disinterestedness."