



vita
più

LECTIO
THE SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION IN
MAGDALENE OF CANOSSA

MAGDALENE HAS ENLIGHTENED OTHERS
THE POWER OF DUST

CANOSSIAN FOUNDATION VOICA
COLORED BIRTHDAYS



FIGLIE DELLA
CARITÀ
CANOSSIANE

N° 20
MAY / AUGUST 2023

vita più

Dear friends,
it is really difficult to be able to tell you something new about St. Magdalene of Canossa, to talk about a person so dear to us who, for almost 250 years, has revolutionized the lives of so many people.

In fact, for our Family, Magdalene is "like a tree planted by streams of water" whose "leaves will never fall" (Psalm 1, 3).

Thus, **for a river to remain energetic and give life it must keep in constant motion, we too are called to action**, following Magdalene's example.

However, let us remember she is not simply a "Saint", a "Foundress", but above all she was a woman, a person of flesh and blood who was active in the world of her time.

So, we too cannot live "life" in the abstract, but rather live many small daily actions, many works that make up our life, our days, our style.

Precisely for this reason, dear Read-

ers, the magazine you have in your hands will try to make a **brief review, incomplete and concise, of the actions Magdalene carried out** during her earthly journey.

As always, your voice will speak, from Verona to India and from Poland to the Americas, passing through Uganda, on a journey that embraces the entire planet and the whole of humanity. We are very grateful to you for this, because many of you wrote to us, but we must thank you especially because you have witnessed to us and to the world, something ancient and extraordinary: **Magdalene's actions are still alive and are still life-giving**, today as they were centuries ago, because they are reflected in the many small actions of the Canossian Family.

Thus, we are still waiting for many more of your words, since this is, first of all, your magazine.

Emanuele Pini



2

VITA PIÙ

N. 20 - MAY - AUGUST 2023

Authorized by the Tribunal of Rome
N. 52/87, 6 February 1987



www.canossian.org



Figlie della Carità
Canossiane



[infocanossiane](https://twitter.com/infocanossiane)



Figlie della Carità
Canossiane Official

OWNERSHIP Casa Generalizia delle
Figlie della Carità Canossiane

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Emanuele Pini

CONCEPT AND GRAPHICS Studio Bertin

EDITING Emanuele Pini

**COMMUNICATION TEAM,
CANOSSIAN INSTITUTE**

Sr. Mariana Litmanovich (General Counselor)

Sr. Daniela Anna Balzarotti (Coordinator)

Emanuele Pini (Operations Manager)

ONLY FOR LOVE

[...] **Inspice et fac secundum exemplar**", contemplate and act according to the "model" which, for love, has not abandoned the "throne" of the Cross, this is the foundation of the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor: contemplate the Crucified One while remaining within the complexity of History with the patience of Love.

But what does it mean to contemplate?

For Magdalene, it is a question of constant tension which is brought about in her in an admirable way, without ever separating being alone with God alone, in Jesus Crucified, working, especially, for the good of the poor.

For Magdalene, contemplation is an extremely concrete experience in which there is correspondence between what she experiences of the **Crucified One**, the **words** chosen to communicate it and the **actions** she implements: active Charity.

The Crucified Lord is for her and for us:

- **the Original to have in one's heart**
*"Remember that I highly recommend myself to your prayers so that the Lord may [...] place the original in my heart ... how far I am from having that original in my heart."*¹
- **the Master to listen to**
"I am very pleased that the Preacher that I have indicated to you (the Cru-

cified One), is giving you those sermons that I expected of him; believe me, my dear daughter, that the Daughters of Charity must rely only on this Preacher".²

- **the Exemplar to imitate**

"... the Rules of the Daughters of Charity are all established and based on the main virtues of which our Divine Exemplar, Jesus Crucified, deigned to give us an example in a singular way, on the Cross ...".³

How and who can really understand the "Inspice et fac secundum exemplar"?

Whoever assimilates the experience of Jesus, with the guidance of his Spirit, can do this (cf. Rom 8:14). It is truly a mentality of change that Jesus brought about with his life, made of relationships that include, of acceptance that does not marginalize, of trust that does not calculate, of forgiveness that rehabilitates, of mercy that abounds, of compassion that heals, of justice that does not privilege, solidarity that does not discriminate.

These are the paths of love that we too intend to travel, in which we re-invent a new way: to serve, to pray, to relate to the diversity and richness of cultures, which the charism embraces and consigns to us.



M. Sandra Maggiolo
Superior General

1 M. of C. to C. Durini, 7 October 1813, Epistolario Maddalena di Canossa, by E. Dossi, M. Pisani, Isola del Lira 1976-1983, Vol 1 lett. 259.

2 M. of C. to D. Faccioli, 26 May 1819, Epist. III/1, lett. 1139.

3 M. of C. Piani d'Istituto, Piano B 1-1, Epist. II/2, p. 1401.

Index

vita
più

2 TREES, RIVERS, FIRES

3



ONLY FOR
LOVE

6 CHILDHOOD

Short biography of Magdalene

8 MAGDALENE WELCOMED OTHERS

"Continuing her style"

9 MAGDALENE BLESSED OTHERS

Sincere thanks to the Sisters,
through Magdalene

10 MAGDALENE WELCOMED OTHERS

"The voice of animators, guests in
Gostawice, Poland"

11 MAGDALENE GAVE AN IDENTITY

"We speak the same Canossian
language" My Sharing as a
Canossian Educator

13 MAGDALENE SENT OTHERS

"The door is always open, together
with the heart"

14 MAGDALENE IS COMMUNITY

Magdalene, a woman among
women

15 MAGDALENE ENTRUSTED HERSELF

Sensitivity, mobility, flexibility for new
"Magdalenes"

18 MAGDALENE FORMED OTHERS

Walking with St. Magdalene

20 MAGDALENE HAS ENLIGHTENED OTHERS

The Power of Dust

21 RESPONSE TO MAGDALENE'S LAST LETTER from the young Sisters of the Delegation of South-East India

23 MAGDALENE ACCOMPANIED ME

Walking with her

24 LECTIO

The spiritual conversation in
Magdalene of Canossa



26 MAGDALENE GAVE TO OTHERS

Be a joyful giver of life!

28 MAGDALENE GUIDED ME

Following her example

29 MAGDALENE GAVE WITNESS

Magdalene's dream is today's reality

31 MADELEINE SHARED

The Canossian Laity of Chihuahua:
Sharing Magdalene; a formative
service for parents

34 MAGDALENE INVOLVED US

The promotion of the laity

35 MAGDALENE, A LIFE LIVED IN AUTHENTICITY

Burning with love

38 MAGDALENE FILLS ME WITH WONDER

admiration, Inspiration
My Testimony

39 Events

40 News from the world

42 Hints on line and offline

44 CANOSSIAN FOUNDATION



46 PROJECTS



*Infinite was her service in Verona
in which she enlightened the hearts of the poorest
among the poor,
she enlightened many hearts to make Jesus known and loved,
she was open to bring that burning love within her, outside
and beyond, into the heart of the world.*

*God alone, God alone was her shield,
humility in charity, charity in humility was her motto.
Leaving all her splendid comforts
she engraved them in the hearts of the marginalized.*

*The music of her life is studded with moments of prayer
while her soul rejoices at the presence of the Lord, 5
opening the door of hearts seeking to be united with the Divine
Companion eager to dwell with her.*

*Countless are the works of charity she opened,
she made the world feel comforted by Heavenly Grace, the
fragrance of the divine respite for delightful moments of
encounter with her soul.*

*Divine Beauty was poured over her,
she desired to be turned to dust and go to the ends
of the earth, spreading God's love to everyone through a life
built on love, echoing choirs of divine love.*

SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF MAGDALENE



Canossa's Coat of Arms

Infancy

Magdalene was born in 1774. Her parents were the Marquis Ottavio of Canossa and the Countess, Teresa Szluha. She was the

third child following Carlo Vincenzo

who died soon after his birth in 1771, and Laura Maria who was born in 1772. The heir Bonifacio was born in 1776, followed by Rosa in 1777, and Eleonora in 1779.

6

In the same year, the father tragically dies during an excursion on the Lessini mountains. Two years later, the mother marries Marquis Edoardo Zenetti of Mantua.

Magdalene and her siblings are therefore entrusted to two tutors, as was the custom of the nobility. Bonifacio will be accompanied by Don Pietro Rossi, while a French governess, Francesca Marianna Capron, will take care of the girls. She will be a negative influence, in the formation of Magdalene, through her cruel and repressive attitude.

When the governess abandons her service within the Canossa household, Magdalene becomes suddenly gravely ill.

Attempts at monastic life

Having overcome her illness, Magdalene confides in Don Pietro Rossi her

decision to consecrate herself to God and repeating the enclosed experience in the monastery of Conegliano, although for only three days. She experienced a lingering "horror to the enclosed life that she was prepared to overcome even at the cost of her life, but she interiorly felt that in that place she indeed would have sanctified herself, but she wouldn't be able to prevent sin nor be of benefit to souls, something she tried to overcome as a temptation."

The search

Just at this time, Magdalene meets Don Luigi Libera who becomes her spiritual guide. From his letters addressed to her from July 1792 to December 1799, one can follow her painful itinerary of spiritual discernment. In 1799, Magdalene meets the Vicar General of the Diocese of Verona, and subsequently the Bishop, Andrea Avogadro, to present them a plan of charitable works. The divergence of views between the Canossa and the Bishop put a halt to the plan, at least partially. Meanwhile, family events compelled Magdalene to assume the governance of the Canossa palace and of her family. This did not prevent her from exercising charity according to her dream: to gather the girls in the streets and to visit the hospitals. Between 1802 and 1808 she travelled between the Canossa palace and the houses she rented for the street girls: initially in the quarter of St Martino Aquario, later followed in



Maddalena
sull'atrio del palazzo
distribuisce
la carità ai poveri.
Particolare dell'arazzo
del Conti (1941).

the quarter of the Filippini and finally in the quarter of St Zeno in the Oratory.

The foundation

On 8 May 1808, having overcome her family resistance, Magdalene finally transferred with her companions to the monastery of Saints Giuseppe and Fidenzio. It was granted to her by the Prefecture for the care of the poor and abandoned girls in the area of St Zeno and for the visit to the hospitals. This is the date in which Magdalene began the Institute of the Daughters of Charity that, in her plan, would have to respond to the greatest needs of the society of the time through the school, catechesis, visits to the infirm in the hospitals and the preparation of the "country teachers". Besides, it would also have to engage the noble ladies in the char-

itable activities through organizing the annual spiritual exercises.

Between 1808 and 1835, the year of her death, Magdalene carried out numerous journeys, wrote numerous letters to her collaborators, and political as well as ecclesial personalities in order to establish her Works and obtain their approval. She will open other Houses: Venice on 1 August 1812, Milan in 1816, Bergamo in 1820 and Trent in 1828. She will develop friendships and make contacts with other Founders of religious institutes. Finally, in 1819, she obtains the ecclesial recognition of the Daughters of Charity. In fact, Pope Leo XII will approve the Rule of her Institution with the Brief Si Nobis on 23 December 1828. The founding of a male Institute, already anticipated since 1799, could only be realized in 1831 when Magdalene was able

to entrust it to the Venetian, Don Francesco Luzzo and to two laymen from Bergamo, Giuseppe Carsana and

Benedetto Belloni. It was opened in Venice as the Oratory of the Sons of Charity, beside the church of St Lucia. On 10 April 1835 in Verona, Magdalene departed the earth to be officially proclaimed a Saint by Pope John Paul II on 12 October 1988.



Verona. Palazzo Canossa.
Opera del Samonichelli
(1884-1889).

“CONTINUING HER STYLE”



Everyone knows that the Canossian mission was born from what Magdalene of Canossa has always defended and sowed: altruism. Giving without expecting anything in return and sharing in various ways, giving love, affection, care, educating, accompanying, guiding and always helping those who are most in need.

In our school, known as "Casa Nossa Senhora de Fátima", in Queluz de Baixo, Lisbon - Portugal, I feel that we continue to give relevance to all these concerns for others. Indeed, since it is an institution of social soli-

...darity, we could not be more in tune with what Magdalene taught us: **we are a home that welcomes our children and takes care of them.** We educate them in the best possible way, we love them, we always try to provide for every need. We are therefore attentive to any necessity and communicate with the parents, always trying to work as a team towards

the same goal: the well-being of our little ones. We are also attentive to the families who pass through here and, when- ever we are notified or we feel that there is a need, we intervene and help with essentials such as food, toiletries and medicines.

When the Sisters took on their employees and formed them in the knowledge of the principles and values of the Canossian style, they did so with the aim of cultivating in us the same desire to help and honour a Congregation which, for so many years, has worked for others.

I therefore feel that in this house we all help, we are attentive and we carry out the mission that has been entrusted to us in the best possible way. Magdalene of Canossa was a woman who dedicated her life to helping and caring for others.

She dedicated her life to God and always put herself in the background in favour of others. So here we try to imitate her in this in the best possible way and we will maintain this attitude so as to **continue the altruistic style** in which Magdalene of Canossa lived.

In her honour and in the name of the entire Canossian family.

Marisa Lopes,
Educator at the Canossian school in Lisbon



SINCERE THANKS TO THE SISTERS, THROUGH MAGDALENE



On behalf of the whole group, I with you how much we appreciate the **Canossian charism lived by the Sisters, among our people, for who they are and have been in our lives, because we have grown together with them.**

Indeed, we can see and touch the presence of Magdalene of Canossa and her Chrism through the way the Sisters live their lives.

I can say that we greatly admire the work that the Canossian Sisters do here. For many years, there have been Sisters who, inspired by the Spirit of goodness and charity, have helped each of us and they have done



so without expecting anything in return. It is truly a blessing for us to have these Sisters in our lives, because in addition to the many works they have done for us, they have helped us to know Jesus better.

In a small village, like Shënvash, where the possibility of celebrating Holy Mass was almost nil, now thanks to the Canossian Sisters we have a Church where we can all pray and draw closer to God.

As a group, but also as a community, we are sure we are very blessed by the presence of the Canossian Sisters who accompany us and they certainly have **a special place in the hearts of each one of us.**

With love and gratitude.

**Daniela,
the community of Shënvash (Albania)**

“THE VOICE OF ANIMATORS, GUESTS IN GOSŁAWICE, POLAND”

May God bless you all!

We are members of the KSM (Catholic Youth Group)

of the Diocese of Rzeszów and every year we organize summer camps for children and youth.

In 2022, one of the camps could not take place due to the lack of a suitable location but, thanks to the hospitality and availability of the Sisters, we managed to organize a children's camp at the community of the Canossian Sisters in Gosławice. Until then we did not know this place and this Congregation, so much so that we were a little afraid of this new adventure, but when we arrived at the place our eyes saw a beautiful Centre with a large open space and, above all, **the Sisters who welcomed us with great joy.**



They were happy that we came to them and **this made us feel at home.** During the following days of the camp, both we animators and children had the opportunity to get to know the Sisters better and observe their daily ministry. There were also meetings and stories about the Foundress, St. Magdalene of Canossa, about the Congregation and its charism. Each of them shared their personal story.

What have we seen and experienced?

Here, the Sisters are full of energy, always willing to talk and they can be trusted. They are also able to be open to the smallest ones, noticing them, being with them both in conversation and in play. The time spent with them made us educators also experience the love of Christ, as we felt cared for by them and enriched by their life and, through their kindness and openness towards us, they showed us the Lord God each day.

We are very grateful for this divine time, so much so that this experience has caused some of us to keep in touch with our Sisters to this day. All of us feel the support of their prayers and we know we can count on meeting and talking with these new friends.

May the Lord God grant his protection to these Sisters so that they can continue to realise their charism and vocation in such a beautiful way!

The group of ‘Children’s Oasis’ of the Diocese of Rzeszów and the youth of the south of Poland in the retreat house of Gosławice



“WE SPEAK THE SAME CANOSSIAN LANGUAGE” MY SHARING AS A CANOSSIAN EDUCATOR

Did you know that there are 261 Canossian schools and educational centres located in more than 24 countries around the world?

I would like you to consider that joining the Canossian Family is not a co-incidence. I know for sure that it wasn't a coincidence for me.

I was posted to St Anthony's Canossian Primary School in 1996, one year after the school moved from Middle Rd to Bedok North. Under the leadership of Sr Angela Ng, who is my role model of Canossian Ethos along with her fellow Sisters, we are sure of their presence at school and staff events and they confirm and support us in our work as Canossians.

As a new member of staff, I listened to the stories of St Magdalene's life and, gradually I deepened my understanding of what it means to be Canossian and I also witnessed many role models in fellow Canossians who exhibited Canossian qualities of commitment, compassion and cheerfulness.

Through the years, I had personal revelations of my role as a Canossian and became increasingly aware of my habits and ways of interacting with others in accord with the teachings of our Foundress.

However, in my 20th year as a teacher, I had a yearning to learn beyond school. As much as I was reluctant to leave, I had to make the brave move if I wanted to continue in education. I had

to gain wider perspectives as an educator.

I remember on my last day of school, I went to the statue of St Magdalene and told her that I was leaving and the reasons: I needed to go beyond school for learning, for my personal and professional growth. I also told her that if it is God's will and through her intercession and blessings, I would return one day.

I moved to my second place and was posted to a co-educational school where I applied Canossian ethos in a secular school and gained so much experience too. After 5 years, in God's time, I returned to SACPS and here I am today.

I do not wish to exaggerate that working in a Canossian environment is going

to be easy and smooth. You will meet challenges in your working relationships and your interactions with students, fellow colleagues, parents and other personnel because we are human.

Fortunately, the gift of being Canossian is that we can look to the Foundress for inspiration and reflect on how she would have responded and reacted when things were challenging for her.

Regardless of race, religion and backgrounds, we will be able to connect with the teachings of our Foundress because she was focused on the formation of the heart, respecting and valuing personhood.

I believe that God permitted many difficulties in St Magdalene's life, her sacrifice of giving up wealth and nobility, the sorrow she went through of los-

"We speak the same Canossian language" My Sharing as a Canossian Educator

ing loved ones at a young age and the obstacles she faced and the practice of patience to wait for God's time to begin her mission to fully serve God.

We have a Canossian Identity which you can never find anywhere else. You can find support and advice from fellow Canossians, that's the powerful thing about being Canossian because we speak the same language and are on common ground.

Each of us has a story, some of us will stay for years and some will move on to other workplaces in the future. However, there is a famous saying among us: "Once a Canossian Always a Canossian" because you will experience the call to develop the X factor. We are called to give and do X-tra and be X-traordinary in helping others.

The Canossian Daughters of Charity are one of the Champions of Catholic Education in Singapore and we are so privileged to be part of it. You will learn about the history of Canossians in the Singapore context.

As you begin this milestone year as

a Canossian, be open and be willing to grow and learn. I urge you to read more about what the other sectors are doing. You can access many YouTube videos of Canossians around the world and you will see how beautiful it is to be part of this huge Canossian Family.

I wish you a beautiful journey as Canossians and I know that the Sisters pray for us daily. Thank you for listening and may God bless you every day.



*Mrs Corinna Foo
Head Teacher
(Character &
Citizenship
Education)
St. Anthony's
Canossian
Primary School
Singapore*



*Participants at the
Canossian Induction of new
Staff of Canossian Schools
and Canossaville Children
& Community Services at
St. Anthony's Canossian
Secondary School*

“THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN, TOGETHER WITH THE HEART”

The Sisters in the Canossian community of Zagarolo, all those who participate in the various formative meetings for young catechists, families, animators of the Oratory and friends have welcomed with joy the event of the Jubilee Year of St Magdalene. **The gift of a woman who made herself a servant** and that, in this town the people have come to know over the years of service by the many Sisters who were substituted here.

In fact, in 1944, a group of Sisters, full of passion to announce Jesus, arrived at Zagarolo to care for the children. They were called by Mons. Ghezzi.

There were orphans but also many children whose parents dropped them off in the morning and collected them in the evening on their return from work.

Someone remembers: “Our parents took us to the Institute in the morning and, on returning from work in the evening, came to collect us. The Sisters took care of us for school, catechesis and lunch.”

The girls were many, the Sisters much less who worked hard to give them an education in the kindergarten, teaching catechism, singing, acting sewing and embroidery.

The Sisters were full of zeal and lived the charism through their welcome, humility, attention to everyone and, in particular, to the little ones and the poor, the chosen ones of Jesus and of Magdalene.

Some adults still remember with gratitude what they received and learnt from the Sisters. They remember their passion to “make Jesus known and loved”, the welcome and listening to everyone, the gratitude and joy in serving and, finally, they remember **the door always open, as well as the heart.**

Today we continue what Magdalene has left us through evangelization, catechesis, the formation of adults, the ministry of consolation, assistance to the poor.

We are grateful to the Lord for the gift of our Foundress, grateful to her for the gift of the charism that has passed on to us the passion of “God alone”, love for Mary and attention to the poor because, still today, Magdalene invites us to announce the love of the Lord Jesus.



M. General, Mother Antonietta Monzoni, on her visit to Zagarolo in 1949.

M. Giovanna from the community of Zagarolo (Rome)

MAGDALENE, A WOMAN AMONG WOMEN

What does it mean to live in a University College?

It is difficult to describe it in words. The first time that you enter you think you are in a “normal” place in which you will live during your time at university but, in reality, from the very beginning you discover that it isn't like this and that there could be more.

Living together limits the personal space and, in some way, your freedom. Because of this there can be two ways to live one's time at College: consider it as a hotel or **live it as a community.**

In the first instance, any pretext can be limiting and suggestions can seem to be a burden. Instead, in the second case, whoever lives with you becomes a reference with which you can confront yourself, share the difficulties and successes, and living in community becomes a style of life. How beautiful it is to wake up in the morning, come down the stairs and be welcomed by someone who greets you with a smile! Or share meals that, between one laugh and another, take hours or fly out the door breathless and full of luggage, and

to hear “happy jourey” from behind the window of the door keeper.

During agitated periods when we are concentrated more on ourselves and on what isn't the way we would want it, **to have someone to refer to, always**

ready to listen, hold out their hand and embrace you makes you feel safe and gifts you with the will to continue.

Besides, to live with girls who come from different places, have different habits, interests and behaviours forces one to widen one's horizons and consider the other by **appreciating and welcoming the diversity of everyone.**

And then, let us acknowledge, finding ourselves

together to play cards, to play music, to watch a lovely movie in front of the TV and create that healthy confusion that gives life, can also transform those trying days since we are not only co-tenants but **companions on the journey.**



SENSITIVITY, MOBILITY, FLEXIBILITY FOR NEW “MAGDALENES”

One of the charisms of Magdalene that strikes me most is her **sensitivity towards the needy**. In fact, she lived in the comfort of her palace and could have remained totally ignorant of the difficulties of the people outside. How she came in contact with the poor is a mystery. Perhaps, we can assume, through the relationship with the servants of her household, but it is certain that the impact this had on her was such that, when she entered the monastery, attracted by her thirst for God, she felt out of place to remain closed inside. She writes: “The aversion that I had always felt for the cloister, aversion that I was prepared to overcome even at the cost of my life. [...] In such a place I would no doubt sanctify myself, but I would never be in a position to prevent sin nor to work for the salvation of souls.” (Memoirs 1, 7-8)

Although at the time she was only 17 years old and was not under specific spiritual direction, Magdalene was already aware of two motivating forces within her that became her guide in discerning the will of God for her: the **prevention of sin and the work for the salvation of souls** (cfr. UR, p120).

While she was in that monastery, she said she had “experienced a special

attraction towards nursing the sick” (Memoirs 1, 5) so that, once she returned home, she began to visit the poor sick women in the hospitals to assist them in any way possible. She was also planning to found an Institute where she could educate some of the poor girls who were roaming the streets (Memoirs 1, 37) to protect them from bad ways, to educate them how to live and earn a decent life.



Through her letters, we see how much these objectives were clear in her mind. To her companions she would say: **“Our Institute is for the poor”**. Besides, she felt urged to instil moral values in these children and prepare them with the necessary skills to earn an honest living.

To her Sisters she said to be prepared **“to go where the need is greatest”**. Here we see her flexibility and her zeal.

We still have much to learn from Magdalene who had guessed that these were the most urgent needs of her

time and therefore, wanted to work for them. Hence, we would do well to treasure these insights and usefulness in their means and ways.

Her works were born in the particular situations of a society in difficulty, in which there were victims to save and

Sensitivity, mobility, flexibility for new “Magdalenes”

rehabilitate, to form and empower since **her project was to build**, even if the resources were scarce, both quantitative and qualitative. She didn't focus all her activities on herself and on her few companions but, on the contrary, she involved many others: influential friends in Government and zealous souls of all categories of people. This is how she saw the Tertiaries, both internal and external, those whom she formed to be lay apostles (IV Ministry), those she asked for help (V Ministry).

For example, she asked the Government for unused buildings - empty monasteries - to be able to begin her work although she never asked nor ever obtained such properties but only their “free use” for as long as she needed them. One could object: “One has to be farsighted and provide for those who will come after us”. Yet, Magdalene preferred to leave this work to God's Providence. Here we see all her practical sense, because, aware that her human resources were limited while the needs of the poor were many and everywhere, she began to form women who could have done what she could not have done in their villages (IV and V Ministries).

With the passing of years, we can find stability, fix ourselves in a place and celebrate our jubilees. As we become more “institutionalized”, it is less probable that we will move from that place, close

in on ourselves and risk losing touch with the outside reality. We then run the **risk of losing flexibility, mobility and the sensitivity of Magdalene**.

Magdalene wanted to live with, for and as the poor lived. However, when we are not in direct contact with them, we can become obsessed in searching for comfort because we no longer see the situation nor hear the cry of the deprived.

Perhaps our trust in God's providence has weakened. If we are not where He inspired Magdalene to be, by doing what she was asked to do, is the Lord bound to support us? Or will He raise up other groups to do what we have been chosen to do?

The diminishing numbers and ageing of persons can be the springboard that God can use to “revive”



our spirit, opening the path to new initiatives. Our big institutions could become dry, with fewer staff, less means and ulterior pressure from governments and political circles that see our institutions as threats to their programs and



ambitions. We may have to close some of them and confront a style of life that is simpler. This could be a pruning process that the Lord wants to use to purify us from useless baggage and to open the way to workers according to God's Heart! This could be God's way to bring forth new buds that are green and tender, able to bring the freshness and abundance of God's Spirit in the arid, desolate places of our world. We are called to become other "Magdalenes", to share God's love and care with the out-cast and deprived people of our world.

Then, freed from this cumbersome weight, God will be able to raise up for us "the rest of Israel", to carry out God's orders and reach once more the places in greatest need. It will be like crossing death and resurrection, because God has ways that are no less generous.

There are places that have greater need of our presence in our country and around the world. Lord, send us there as workers according to Your heart!

05-12-2022

JPIC members in action



3rd December 2022

JPIC members of St. Anthony's Inter College Allahabad, sold craft items made out of waste material at the School fete.

the profit will be used for charitable activity for the poor.

One such simple activity bore 3 fruitful outcome:

- 1) Children learned to use free time creatively and productively.
- 2) Waste is turned into useful items.
- 2) The fund raised, will be used for helping the Poor.



WALKING WITH ST. MAGDALENE

In this year 2023 we remember and thank the Lord for the 250 years of the life of Saint Magdalene of Canossa, foundress of our Canossian Family, present today in many countries of the world and also here in Bergamo, in the house she founded in 1821.

It seems particularly significant to us that this anniversary of our Religious Family, which we would like to commemorate with some significant moments throughout the year 2023-2024, also coincides with the year of the **Bergamo – Brescia, Capital of Culture**, an event that will offer significant initiatives in every context, with important objectives oriented towards the development of the heritage of cultural life, so as to stimulate tourism and encourage the growth of the city communities in all sectors of the world of work.

Re-reading the path travelled by St.

Magdalene in our city of Bergamo, we have realised with admiration what she has implemented in the field of cultural promotion. Magdalene, following the light and strength of the Holy Spirit, was able to **"read" the social reality of her time**, in the first decades of the nineteenth century, especially the reality of the city of Bergamo and subsequently of many towns in the Province. She knew how to plan and initiate, with the new generations of that time, **itineraries of formation, education and integral promotion of the person**, in all areas of daily living.

It is known that in the Italian society of the early 1800s basic education, such as knowing how to read and write, was greatly lacking, reserved for those belonging to the upper social class, while ordinary people had no access to it.

St. Magdalene started a truly ingenious and innovative **formation course**



right here in Borgo Palazzo, in our house. This was the educational, residential program she called "**Country Teachers**". She was aware that every educational endeavour required a human relationship between educator and person to be formed. This is why she chose and proposed the presence of one or more Sister guides capable of enlightening, supporting, encouraging and animating the young people. She was also the one who guided and accompanied some itineraries herself.

Her educational plan aimed at achieving the preparation of people who in turn would become educators of other young people in cities and in various country villages, increasingly widening the horizon of knowledge and culture, thus also improving the standard of living of the people.

She welcomed groups of about ten young people from the villages of the Bergamo area into the

house in Borgo Palazzo, occupying them for about seven months. She taught them reading, writing and arithmetic; she also offered courses of religious instruction and qualified them in various practical activities. Considering the vast content of the formation plan she offered, it seems that the duration of the course was very short.

Magdalene and the educator Sisters followed the young girls even beyond the time of their residential formation. In fact, every year she invited them back, planning for them courses of spiritual exercises to restore their spirit, with the aim of regaining new impetus in their

apostolic service. In addition, Magdalene also reached out to the young girls by correspondence.

The considerable educational-formative experience carried out by St. Magdalene for young girls, highlights the great value of **promoting female laity**. In the various parishes it was precisely these laywomen who, collaborating with their parish priest, carried out the formation of girls and boys and thus contributed to raising, in some way, the cultural level of the people, witnessing primarily charity, an indispensable value of Christian life.

Today, the Church is rediscovering even more, by virtue of Baptism, the privileged role of the laity and St. Magdalene, with that operative faith typical of the saints, was able to seize and implement this precious apostolic opportunity, valuing in particular Women.

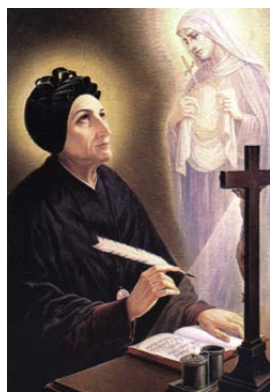


The experience of the "Country Teachers", over time and with the emergence of ever new cultural and educational needs, has given way in Bergamo and in many localities, to schools at all levels, to the preparation of many operators: teachers, educators, accountants and consultants who, having "experienced the Canossian atmosphere", have contributed to **"making Jesus known; He is not loved because He is not known"** and to bear witness to Magdalene's other great "dream": "I recommend to you as much as I can my beloved poor".

THE POWER OF DUST

As we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the birth of our Foundress, her life has been a **guiding light for us on our path towards holiness.**

We are inspired by the charism of St. Magdalene of Canossa, which is the Greatest Love of the Crucified Lord. She put this into practice and lived it among the poor, sharing everything she had with them: her time, her energies and her thoughts, to the point of **wanting to "be dust" to reach everyone everywhere**, a charism that is still alive in us today.



Thus, the Foundress challenges us to go out to our brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, and to share with them the love that shines from the Cross.

This is the grace of our vocation: "God has given you a great gift by giving you a vocation to this holy Institute of Charity and you have the duty to respond worthily to such a great grace", Magdalene said. Let us therefore contemplate the Crucified One in our brothers and sisters who suffer from a lack of what they need or whose rights are violated.



Many still suffer the consequences of natural disasters, family and political instabilities, where children and women are the most common victims. However, encouraged by the thought of our Foundress, who used to say "Those who love are never tired, because love knows no burdens", **let go forward in the simplicity of our life sharing our existence, our time, our thoughts, with our brothers and sisters through our Ministries of Charity.**



Community of Lweza, Uganda, Province of North-East Africa

RESPONSE TO MAGDALENE'S LAST LETTER FROM THE YOUNG SISTERS OF THE DELEGATION OF SOUTH-EAST INDIA

My dearest and esteemed Mother,
I am truly grateful to the Lord for having called me to this holy institute of his. With your words **"I will never forget you until I see you in Heaven"**, you reassure me by accompanying me lovingly on the path to Heaven. Saying this, I understand how much you love me and how much you care about me. I truly feel your presence with me, dear Mother. Yes, Mother, I too wish to meet you in Heaven and, holding your hand, I would like to share with you my divine experiences on earth. Please continue to support me with your prayers that my life may be pleasing to God and to you, my beloved Mother.

With love
Sister Theresa

My dear mum,
reading through your last letter, I felt very happy to have known you and your concern for your beloved daughters. The words that touched me in your last letter were, **"I sincerely ask your forgiveness and I ask your mercy, for the love of Jesus Christ, for all the bad examples I may have set with any lack in my observance or lack of virtue in any undertaking."** Through this declaration I understand the depth of your humility. Indeed, you were ready to admit and accept your mistakes, even though you lived a very holy life on earth.

My mother, please intercede for me, from heaven, so that I can love Jesus above all things and imitate the virtue of humility by accepting the mistakes of my daily life. I believe that everything will pass, but your love will stay with me fo-

rever.

Your loving daughter in Jesus Christ
Usha Rani

My dearest Mother Magdalene,
first of all, thank you for the great love you have for me. Reading through your last letter, I was truly touched by these two words of yours, **"To love humility"**. I understand the desire you have for your Canossian family: the desire that all your daughters may grow in this virtue of humility. In my opinion, humility is one of the most difficult virtues to put into practice. And yet, I assure you, Mother, I wish to walk the path of holiness by practicing this virtue of humility which is the foundation of all virtues.

Dear Mother, since this is my choice, to excel in this virtue of humility, I ask for your motherly blessing and your powerful intercession.

Your loving daughter
Keerthi

Dearest Mother,
I was really touched by this particular affirmation, **"I also urge you to love humility, regarding each one as the respectful and loving servant of the other."** Since I am invited to be humble, I assure you Mother, that in my apostolate I will practice this virtue in my relationships with everyone, especially with the less fortunate. I would like to be humble before God and I believe that only then will I be able to act as an image of God to help the poor. I will also train my heart and mind to focus on the virtue of humility whenever I spend time with people, listening to their problems. I will try my

Response to Magdalene's last letter from the young Sisters of the Delegation of South-East India

best to get regular feedback on my actions from others. I will also try to cultivate the virtue of empathy for the poor and needy. Please strengthen me with your powerful intercession.

With much love
Your loving daughter
Prameela

Dearest Mother,
in your last letter I was really touched by this particular affirmation, **"Choose, my dear sisters, the narrow and sure way to reach Heaven, which is obedience"**.

As I carefully read this text, I was inspired to choose the narrow and safe path to reach God by obeying everything asked of me during my life's journey. Mother, I want to do God's will in my life with obedience, always and everywhere. Mother, please intercede for me with the Lord so that I can fulfil your wish in my life.

Your loving daughter,
Anusha

Dearest Mother,
I have truly been inspired by these words, **"Keep a generous heart and, if obedience requires it, do not be afraid to leave a good work or to undertake something that may seem harsh and contrary to your senses"**. Mother, when I read your last letter, these words touched me and I felt they were just for me. I know you would like me to practice the virtue of obedience in a particular way. I believe a docile attitude will help me to be your true daughter in my life today. May your powerful intercession with the Holy Spirit lead and guide me to face life's challenges and to be obedient always and everywhere. Thanks Mother,

Your loving daughter
Divya

Dearest Mother Magdalene,

"Work diligently in God's vineyard. Oh, how happy you will be, my dear sisters, at the hour of your death, if you have wholeheartedly sought only your spouse Jesus Christ and his glory!" This is truly your maternal invitation to give myself wholeheartedly in God's vineyard. Mother, I will do my best to deepen my relationship with my Spouse, Jesus, while remaining faithful to my religious commitment. Thank you, Mother, for accepting me as a daughter in this family of yours. Thank you, Mother, for your heavenly blessings and I humbly ask for your support in prayer always and everywhere, that I may be faithful to Jesus who has called me as his daughter.

With love
Swaroop

Dearest Mother,

I am moved by this phrase from your last letter. **"Choose, my dear sisters, the narrow and sure way to reach Heaven, which is obedience"**. Mother, I can imagine the way you wish to see your daughters' obedience. In my opinion, the narrow way begins when I am asked for something that I may find difficult to do, but I believe that if I trust the Lord who has called me and whom I obey, He will surely help me achieve it. Mother, please obtain for me the grace to see God's will in all situations of my life and to obey gladly to reach the goal that passes through the narrow pathway.

With love
Ratnam

WALKING WITH HER

Walking with Madeleine, I felt called to guard the life of my weaker brothers, to accompany them in moments of loneliness and suffering. I felt called to grow with them, in hope and faith to help them look at life with new eyes. St. Magdalene showed me how in the most vulnerable brother one encounters the living Christ.

Mother Magdalena Amarilla,
San Pablo community of the Italian
Hospital of La Plata

Walking with Maddalena I felt called to be with young people to have an understanding and attentive look at the needs of each one.

Maddalena taught me to accompany them, to seek together, deal with, and respond to the challenges that arise, through listening to their reality. It is what I value and for this, I am grateful every day.

Melina Coria Hoffman,
Canossian teacher

Walking with Magdalene I experience every day the call of Jesus to **take care of my life as a consecrated woman** to meet the many people, children, young people, and adults, whom the Lord allows me to accompany, together with my sisters and many lay people with whom we work every day in the different works of charity that our community is carrying out in our Canossian Institute: “Sagrado Corazón” here in the city of Punta Alta.

Mother Ana María Duje,
Sagrado Corazón community,
of Punta Alta

Walking as a family accompanied by Madeleine gives us peace. Her example of life, her humility and her simplicity transmit to us love and patience. Her vocation and her commitment to education give us strength and teach us to **value joy as an essential virtue for the formation of the heart..**

Francisco, Priscila Bautista Robinet,
Teachers in La Plata

Walking with Maddalena I felt called to take care of life, not to be individualistic, but to think of others. **Her pedagogy has guided me in my life as a mother, in my career as a teacher** and has shown me that we must live with joy and that we must put everything in the hands of the Greatest Love.

Mariel Bosia,
Ex Student and Canossian Teacher

Walking with Maddalena I felt called to generosity.

I discovered St. Maddalena when I was at secondary school and from that moment I have felt accompanied by her. Animated by her words “Charity is a fire that seeks to embrace everything”, I try to live everyday life with love for my brothers and sisters by putting into practice generosity, joy, the word that encourages, attentive listening and help freely given.

I thank my dear saint who accompanies me with her example on this pilgrimage toward the encounter with the greatest Love.

Adriana Carmona,
former student, teacher,
and Lay Canossian

THE SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION IN MAGDALENE OF CANOSSA

[UR PREFACE; 145-168; 204-217; 227-237; 260-268]

The theme

The theme of spiritual conversation belongs to the tradition of the Church and is linked in particular way to the monastic and religious life, from the Rule of St. Benedict to that of St. Ignatius of Loyola, passing through some writings of St. Thomas, in which the whole of Jesus' life is seen in the category of *conversatio nobiscum*. Even today, this tradition is taken up again in reference to the practice of synodality. Indeed, the theme suggests **close contact between conversion and communication**, between welcoming the fruitfulness of the Gospel in one's life and opening oneself to the light of the Gospel through fraternal communication, understood as a place for listening to the voice of the Spirit.

24



Contexts in Magdalene

In the Unabridged Rule this theme is found in four different passages, as well as in the Preface, about halfway through the text, almost as a common element to the three ministries of charity, which are thus called precisely to remind us of what kind of fire we need “to instruct, educate, console and converse with our neighbours in the holy works of charity”).

Here are the four contexts:

- a. in the virtue of Silence and External Modesty (UR 2270282);
- b. in the virtue of Fraternal Charity (UR 243-259);
- c. in the role of the Novice Mistress (UR 310-335);
- d. in the method used to train Country Teachers (UR 175-202).

The first two texts have an operational-ministerial dominant characteristic, while the second two have a formative dominant characteristic, even if the two aspects closely refer to each other. From here it is advisable to proceed with a more in-depth analysis, point by point.

a. “Conversation” is involved in the Ministries of Charity, since our Ministries are not episodic in nature, but involve the implementation of effective communication which asks us to place ourselves as communicative subjects and witnesses. This requires **two actions of us: to develop a way of being coherent with the message we intend to offer and that has been entrusted to us; then take care of the place of others, of our beneficiaries, of their freedom and journey.**

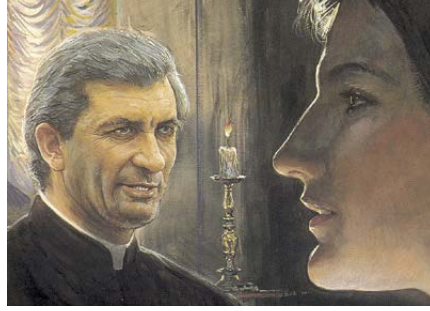
b. Our life is deeply linked to conversation because the **fraternity is a permanent style**, valid in community as in the conduction of the ministry, which is precisely the ministry of charity. In this situation the grace that attracts us is the way we “converse under the eyes of Jesus”, that is, it is necessary to let ourselves be inspired by the moment and the way in which Jesus gave us the commandment of Love, the moment and way which underline the gratuity of his love and fidelity, an ability to remain one-

self even in the face of misunderstanding. In fact, this message can also be understood by referring to the Gospel text of Jn 13, if the commandment is interpreted as what is indispensable for us.

This ensures that charity shapes our multiple conversations in relation to others so that nothing, neither differences nor difficulties, can take the place of charity as an inspiring motive. **Every word takes the form of Charity and becomes its expression.** It requires a certain care of one's interior life and continuous vigilance, through attention to situations, to the difficulties which charity is called to face.

c. Since the Ministries of Charity require conversation with fellow human beings, this **becomes the content and place of formation.** Our attitude in relating to others, of creating a point of contact, must therefore take shape from the message we bring. This suggests that the entire formative process is aimed at the effective assumption of the Spirit of the Institute and to do this it requires the good practice of meditation and exchange-sharing between Sisters.

The close connection between the message we intend to convey and the way we behave in communication and in relationships needs the patience of **continuous formation**, capable of making us aware of our humanity and our resources, as well as letting us know our limits. At the same time, formation must



space in our lives, **exposes us to risks and distortions, which formation is called to watch over.** The major risks that Magdalene recognizes are

two. **The first risk is that of escaping into protagonism or presumption,** when we make our "knowledge" a reason for superiority. Formation helps to cultivate familiarity with God, to open up to the intimacy that he offers us, allowing ourselves to be instructed. **The second risk is that of making the ministry our own individual enterprise;** in fact, formation teaches us to establish collaboration with every other initiative in favour of the poor present in that reality.

Conclusion (open!)

Healthy conversation, it has been said, is the appropriate way of communicating, entering into relationships, in the exercise of our Ministry; it is the content and place of formation. It is therefore a way of presenting oneself, of communicating, of being part of the world, which already lets one understand the message we serve. **It is an echo of an interiority that vehicles the message and makes it the inspiration of one's actions.** The theme, thus contains an acute intuition: we can correctly offer the message, *instruct, educate, console*, if we interiorize it in such a way that we allow ourselves to be guarded and guided by the message.

Concluding, in this way we can receive the indication of the Preface, which suggests taking care of conversation as a dimension that involves all three Ministries of Charity and thus asks to be given particular attention.

Verona, 18 March 2023

Don Giuseppe Laiiti



promote the ability to be attentive to the experience and humanity of our interlocutors.

d. Conversation, which, because the Ministries of Charity take up so much

BE A JOYFUL GIVER OF LIFE!

I am pervaded by an inexplicable sense of pride and joy as the Canossian Institute begins to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Magdalene di Canossa. Our Saint says, “Charity never tires of going out towards others, especially towards the poor and lost.” When I was a young student of the Canossian school, I didn’t know who St. Magdalene was. Of course, I often heard about her, but I didn’t have a clear understanding of who exactly she was. Later, when I entered the Canossian Convent in Dhule, India, in 1988, under the guidance of M. Margaret Chettiyar, I came to know who this great Saint was, in the same year in which Pope John Paul II announced her canonization. It was precisely during the celebration of that moment that I came to know of her great virtues, “Humility in Charity and Charity in Humility”, which made a profound impact on my life.

I am proud to share my simple experience in which God used me as a tool to touch the beloved poor of St. Magdalene. As a teacher, in fact, I was entrusted with the responsibility of the fifth class and M. Jessie entrusted to me two students who were repeating the same class for the third time and for whom that year would have been their last chance. They became my companions for a long time, at school and at home, while I gave them all my attention and I started teaching them the very basics. It was hard, but God gave me strength and patience in dealing with them. So,

in a few months many improvements could be seen, for example their reading capacity had increased, as well as writing. It was a great moment of joy for me when both of them were told they had passed and were promoted to the sixth class. Incredible! Thus, Magdalene taught me **to love in a selfless way** and offer my humble services to the most fragile students.

Over the years, St. Magdalene has brought me closer to her and to serve her for love and with humility. I understood that life is an invaluable gift of God and must be respected. Whatever the problem or the situation encountered, inflamed by the same fire of God’s love, I opened up to the cry of those children who needed my hand. St. Magdalene favoured the full growth of these children, since those responsible for ed-



ucation were invited to pay particular attention to the formation of the heart. For example, a few years ago I was the teacher of the eighth class and I came

across a child, named Yash Choudhary, who struggled to read and write. The learning skills were not yet developed in him, so he seemed lost and therefore showed little interest in learning. I took the initiative to meet his parents and pointed out to them the difficulties of the child. The tears and pain of his parents made my heart ache and it was at that moment that I decided to do something for this boy. I therefore began to pay special attention to his studies even after school. Slowly he began to show great improvements and I could see joy in his eyes, which in turn gave me greater satisfaction as a teacher. He began to show interest and commit himself to learning. I had to face many obstacles along the way, but I had great trust and hope in the person of St. Magdalene who walked with me and gave me strength not to surrender. Despite all these difficulties, he miraculously completed his studies. This experience had a great impact on my life, because I saw the immense joy that strengthened his self-esteem. Yes! He passed the SSC school exam with a mark of 67% and it was a memorable day in my life as a teacher. **I felt I had touched the heart of a child just as St. Magdalene desired of me as a Canossian educator.** Now he is doing well in a degree course in engineering and is preparing to take a Master's degree in a good university, so that he can be admitted to Management Studies in a foreign university.

All the sisters, during my life as a teacher, have had an influence on me in forming and shaping my general development. The awareness programs planned by the Sisters for different in-

stitutions such as a Home for the elderly, a leper colony, a school for the blind, a school for mentally retarded children,



27

the Hostel in Shirpur, the village of Mukehd, generously sharing contributions for Christmas, have left a perennial mark on me and I thank the Lord for this.

Yes! God has a great plan to be realised in everyone's life, if only we are open and collaborate with him. For this reason, I am proud to be a Canossian Sister who follows the great inheritance left by St. Magdalene. May I continue to be a humble tool in God's hands to touch many other lives and set them on fire! It is the first time, in 32 years of teaching, that I open my wings to soar high in the sky and sing the glory of Saint Magdalene!

FOLLOWING HER EXAMPLE



Lay Canossian Association

Cristo Rey Province - North America

28

Even if we are a few Sisters coming from different parishes in Albuquerque, New Mexico (USA), the Daughters of Charity and the Lay Canossians of Cristo Rey Province make known the passion of St. Magdalene in our communities in which we live, becoming active in parish life and in other community organizations. In fact, St. Magdalene wanted us to be close

to every person, especially the poorest, to **experience together the care that God has for life and to announce the goodness of the Lord**. In her spirit of charity, she has taught us to **engage with others with gentleness, meekness and humility, keeping a spirit that is joyful, loving, generous and patient**. When we are entrusted with a new mandate, we need to accept it with zeal and fortitude, being committed to give the best of ourselves.

We share some roles in our apostolic works and charitable organizations that our members have covered and are covering: lectors, animators, sacristans, Christian formators for children and adults, teachers of Bible studies for adults and young people and other activities in awareness within the parishes. In the local area, the Lay Canossians

have been involved in providing support to pregnant women, in the building of houses for the less fortunate and in volunteering with gravely disabled children in a home run by the Canossian Sisters of Cristo Rey Province. The members also work in schools and hospitals, besides attending to the formation of those who have expressed the desire to become Lay Canossians. It is they who truly witness the motto of Magdalene: **“The one who loves is never tired, because love does not know burdens”**.

In the preparation to the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Magdalene (1 March 2024), our Provincial, Sr Anna Maria Serafini, has delegated us to mark the “Canossian Wednesdays” in the schools, in our ministries and, above all with the Lay Canossians, with the recitation of a short prayer to St. Magdalene. In fact, during this year of preparation, we have been asked to prepare some activities such as vigils, songs, videos or photographs linked to the charism of Magdalene according to the ministry, and to engage young people, staff and Lay Canossians in all the preparations.

Barbara Landgraf,
Lay Canossian of the
Province of Cristo Rey

MAGDALENE'S DREAM IS TODAY'S REALITY

Maddalena's dream is now a reality in the Missions.

The voice of Love calls everyone to love and service; but how can we even imagine, what in fact could be the scope of love that travels beyond all generations, times, nations, and peoples? And how can it be possible to attract the attention and communicate a love story to people from so many different social backgrounds?

We have in Magdalene an ardent apostle who constantly tells us, her daughters, to look to Jesus and to do as He did. It is this gaze that led me to look at the current reality in which I live: Bilpudi, Gujarat in India, which is a mission begun by the witness of Saint Magdalene, since what impels us to act are the two precepts of Charity, Love for God, and Love for neighbor. We are then constantly invited to form ourselves in the school of love, our love must in fact pass through the Cross.

What do I see in this mission? Young women, children, young people who leave their families in search of work as migrant workers, elderly people who cling to traditional practices and have the treasure of experience, their desire for well-being, strength, and healing, young people who in turn follow the tribal culture and marry young and some chasing their dreams and aspirations after overcoming situations of poverty and difficulty. There is also political conflict, as tribal exploitation prevails when their land and property are at stake. Jesus himself in fact attacked and disturbed the rulers, for he himself was the change when he walked tirelessly through the

streets of Jerusalem witnessing to the elements that threatened society, including injustice.

What disturbs others when I proclaim Christ? Perhaps like Jesus, we set an example when we strive to imitate the model of Christ Crucified and our dearest Mother who encountered the pain, suffering and misery of ordinary people and asked her Son to act when the wine ran out. In our mission, when the "wine" in our lives runs out we are constantly invited to go to Jesus through Mary to fill us with the true wine of the true Vine that is Jesus.

The Mission of Magdalene will continue to live, for it is built on the foundations of love, on the rock of those who love. Attentive listening, the gift of hope and the telling of the story of Jesus through our lives will awaken the culture of love.

Today, when I look at the school, which was imagined by Magdalene, and dreamed of and realized by so many of our Sisters, I understand how the union of hearts prevails, following the call of the Spirit. Our Community responds to the needs of the present time through the empowerment of women, visits to families, education of children and youth through our Gujarat State Primary School, assistance to children in villages, and by welcoming them in the hostel.

Is not our being consecrated in love a fertile ground to make Jesus known and loved even if most of the many people we encounter come from different faiths? Is it not in this fertile ground that respect, tolerance, and love for all cultures are transmitted by our acceptance of people

Magdalene's dream is today's reality

of all religions? Magdalene said that Jesus is not loved because he is not known. In fact, when I love Jesus, my friend so much, how could I not introduce him to my closest friends, to the people we serve? In the state of Gujarat, India, minorities are exploited, and not respected, and constitutional rights are denied for the interests of a few, so in our mission, we must be creative in presenting Jesus, our greatest friend, to them.

Through the spiritual experiences of our Mother, we are constantly invited to practice Universal Love. Magdalene writes: "Almost every time I heard, during Mass, the text of the Gospel that reads <Euntes in universum mundum>, without knowing why, I was deeply moved and full of consolation. Even though I don't cry easily, my eyes filled with tears." Universalism assigns mission to all humanity spread throughout the world, but at the same time, it opens the Gospel message to everyone even in the most difficult human situations, and impels the messenger to focus on the poor and the least, following the example of Christ.

Living the Canossian charism means entering the wounded side of Jesus: it is therefore from this perspective that we must see our charism and become capable of entering this wound. The wound can be of the person, of the community, of society or of the whole creation; for example, Magdalene saw the wounded reality of Verona and, although she did not become a healer, she was an instrument of compassion to offer hope and love, to assist people and lead them to accept God's will even in the midst of their suffering.

What is the Spirit of a Canossian?

What is the meaning of this suffering in

this moment of our lives? One cannot eradicate or erase suffering from a person's life,

but how can one truly experience God's presence in this wound, in one's own suffering? The path is to participate in the Paschal Mystery, that is, in the Passion, which leads to seeing death and experiencing the resurrection. The Sorrowful Virgin leads us to practice love, truth and justice in faith.

In suffering humanity, we need to know the truth that it is in suffering, which is part of every human life, we discover and encounter the true living God. Through this understanding we will do justice to our own lives and the lives of others, and we will then be able to promote true justice and each one will be able to find the only true God, the one who acts justly in our lives.

Like Magdalene, let us walk the path of love, of the search for "God alone". The true value of the charism lies in this discovery, which leads to the paths of faith and love. God's Word tells us in Galatians 5:22-23 that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, benevolence, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These reveal the nine characteristics of Jesus. Let us live this charism of Jesus and learn from Magdalene who teaches us, her daughters, to inflame our lives.

To repeat what St. Magdalene said: "I desire that God inflame your heart with his love".



**M. Esperance Fernandes,
Premimata Bilpudi, Gujarat
India Centre**

THE CANOSSIAN LAITY OF CHIHUAHUA: SHARING MAGDALENE; A FORMATIVE SERVICE FOR PARENTS

The Canossian Laity of Chihuahua: Sharing Magdalene; a formative service for parents -

We are Antonio Grijalva Castillo, Maura Alejandra Duarte Ruiz, Rodolfo Martínez Mendoza, Laura Estela Martínez López María Lizeth Piñón Ruiz, Jesús Manuel Armendariz Torres, Liliana Elizabeth Ortega Ortega, Mónica Ivonne Sigala Arana, Martha Yesenia Chaparro Márquez and our sister animator Jocelyn Densing Lobitaña.

We are the lay Canossians of Chihuahua, Mexico, and during the 7 years since our association was born we have grown in the Canossian charism, and currently, we are already two generations, full of promise.

As lay Canossians, we have understood the importance of serving and making Jesus known in the different actions we perform, with attention to the neediest, from all points of view, so in addition to our formation and spiritual growth, we have made a great team in which we carry out some service activities, such as bringing food to the hospital to the families of the needy or who come from out of town and have nowhere to spend the night. Another service to which we have contributed together with the Canossian Sisters is the collec-

tion of clothes, blankets and food for the large number of migrants who arrive in our city from various parts of Central America. Our state is on the border with the United States, so we also contribute to the project initiated by a group of



people who support the community center of the Sisters, located in one of the most vulnerable areas of the city, where every Christmas we break bread using donations and with the help of the community, which helps

us prepare Christmas dinners, shared with families in the area. The needs are many and the hands are still few, so we are always looking for new people to join the call of St. Magdalene of Canossa as laypeople.

Within the apostolic work of the Canossian Sisters in Chihuahua City, Mexico, is the Morelos A.C. Educational Institute, an educational institute that promotes the values, excellence, and integral development of its students through cultural and spiritual formation, creating an atmosphere of respect, freedom, brotherhood, and peace.

“A challenge full of blessings”

As a group of lay Canossians we have undertaken a very special challenge in formation: we seek to make Jesus known and create strong bonds with families so that those who feel the call can become

The Canossian Laity of Chihuahua: Sharing Magdalene; a formative service for parents

active lay people within our community and at the same time build a community as a great “CANOSSIAN FAMILY”, where all families are united in service and spiritual formation. This is the first time we have worked in this field and



what better way to do it than with the families we already have at the Morelos Institute?

We started with the parents of children in the 6th grade of primary school, who are preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, offering them an experience that will allow them to strengthen family ties and growth in faith by the 2022/2023 school year, under the name of “Accompanying our children”. The main aim of the workshop is to provide a space to mutually express the main challenges and fears related to the entry of children into adolescence, through 5 weekly sessions lasting 2 hours each.

We started the first session with an ice-breaking activity, to get to know each other as a community and share our concerns as parents. Each session then began with a prayer in which the Holy Spirit and our Mother were invoked to

pour into us the light necessary to understand the message.

The team of the Canossian Laity actively participated in each theme, in fact, all the members took part in the reception of the participants, in the coffee service, and in the accompaniment and delivery of the themes.

With this experience, we realized how the Lord has poured out his blessings and unfolded gifts in each of us to work in his name and we asked the Lord to flood our hearts

with his Spirit of love; At the end of each session, parents took this attitude home to share it with all their families.

In the second session, we worked with the parents with a tool called SWOT

in which we analyzed our strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats. Thanks to this we became aware of our current situation as a family; We also took this exercise home for every member of the household, from the youngest children to us parents, so it was a special moment to reassert ourselves as a family and to touch on sensitive issues in each of us. The intention was to achieve spiritual discernment and make important decisions to improve our community life.

The third session focused on strengthening what we discovered at home, and planning strategies of action to strengthen our family, through healthy communication, prayer, and life in grace. Many of the participants brought back to each



session very valuable and timely testimonies that enriched each meeting. We have worked to **form “a happy home”**, teaching our children to love and be loved, with the promise of transforming our home into a small earthly paradise, a refuge and a temple of love where God is always present.

The fourth session was very special

because each family had clear its strengths and weaknesses, as well as a plan of action and the inspiration of the “Holy Family”. The only thing that was missing was to deliver this work to a very special guest of the meeting, “Jesus in the Eucharist”, so with a very moving presentation we received the Blessed Sacrament with joy, happiness, and hope and in a

very intimate relationship we delivered it to our families. We were given a truly spectacular afternoon.

The last session was the conclusive one with sharing, in which parents were very enthusiastic and moved by the Holy Spirit; here we took the opportunity as a team to invite them to be part of our Canossian family, showing them the journey of Magdalene and part of her charism.

The feedback we received from them was very surprising, so much so that

many confessed that the workshop seemed very short to them. Little by little, other fathers and new couples arrived, until it became their space, confessing that they had a lot of fun and that they could share their concerns with other fathers, so much so that they discovered that they were not alone and that it was not a situation that happened



only to them; on the contrary, **it has made us aware that we are a great community that supports itself shoulder to shoulder, with the presence of God's grace in these families that have managed to communicate, to unite, to grow.** It was truly wonderful to see the greatness of the Holy Spirit pouring out upon them and consequently upon us.

Now it is up to us to work on the formation of a new generation of lay Canossians, since several of these parents are interested in starting their journey among us, as new brothers and sisters. If you want, we invite you to follow us on Facebook as Lay Canossians!

A big hug from your lay Canossian brothers and sisters of Chihuahua!

THE PROMOTION OF THE LAITY

My first contact with the Canossian Sisters took place at Porto towards the end of 1964, when I was only 12 years old.

My sister, Zulima Antunes, then 15 years old, entered the Institute as a postulant, at the time of Vatican II Council. To know Magdalene and to live at the same time of the Vatican Council as a lay woman, was a happy coincidence that, however, I would come to appreciate only a few years later.

In fact, if the teaching of the Vatican II Council, on the promotion and empowerment of the laity, can help us see the type of concerns that, from the very beginning of her work, brought Magdalene of Canossa to form the laity of her time, the opposite is also true. **The zeal of Magdalene in engaging the laity with the desire to have them participate in the charism of her Institute** through the announcement of the Word and the witness of charity, can help us understand also the thought of the Council regarding the lay faithful, almost 100 years later.

Besides, already from the middle of 1985, at the initiative and impulse of Sister Gina, a group of Lay Canossians was born in Porto. During their first meeting on 11 May of that year, the theme discussed was “The Laity in the light of the new Canon Law: the prophetic intuition of Magdalene of Canossa for the promotion of the Laity, yesterday, today and tomorrow”.

One could not have chosen a better title to give way to the Lay Canossians, called to share in the charism of Magda-

lene. In effect, they were very relevant, both the message and the relationship that took place, bringing us to understand how much the Foundress was ahead of her time regarding the responsibility, mission and dignity of the faithful laity.

Then, there followed deeply felt moments in which I had the privilege to directly participate. The First International Congress of the Lay Canossians from 24 to 31 October 1987 and the Canonization of St Magdalene of Canossa on 2 October 1988.

By now, definitively attracted by the charism of St Magdalene of Canossa, I am very happy to be part of the Canossian Family, but I also feel the great responsibility that I carry.

It is enough to remember one of the great preoccupations, if not the greatest, that moved St Magdalene of Canossa, was to “above all else making Jesus Christ known!” because “Christ is not loved because he is not known”, and to experience **the gravity of what we are asked and what we can and must do as Christians and as lay people.**

May St Magdalene of Canossa continue to welcome us within her Family and intercede for us with her Model, the Greatest Love, Jesus Crucified. May we, with the help of Mary, our Sorrowful Mother at the foot of the Cross, become **courageous and creative in living and witnessing the Gospel** in our families, at work, in society, politics, parish or in whatever place in the world we find ourselves.

BURNING WITH LOVE

Weaver of Hope and Life

Boundless love and scrupulous humility are the ingredients that make up the alchemy of the person of Maddalena Gabriella di Canossa. Her life can be summed up in these two virtues: Charity in **humility and Humility in charity**. If we reflect on Mary's life it is possible to notice a similar charity that never tired of reaching out to others and sharing with them the riches of life in fact among the many titles attributed to Mary Magdalene, the one that struck me most is this "weaver of hope and life". Don't you think that this title also sums up the identity of Mary, our Mother?

A rejection transformed into Love.

"Live your life counting on God alone and, if you lose everything, you will find it all in Him ": Maddalena, born on 1 March 1774 in Verona, held fast to these inspired words throughout her life. The third daughter of an aristocratic family that anxiously awaited the birth of a male heir, Magdalene experienced rejection from birth. She lost her father in an accident at the age of five, while her mother remarried, leaving behind five children. This meant that Magdalene lived a hard education at the hands of a governess, a life studied with trials and tribulations, both physical and emotional, yet she always

fought for everything that was right in the eyes of God, regardless of the punishments that were inflicted on her. As a teenager, she suffered from a mysterious debilitating illness from which he miraculously recovered. In all this Magdalene found in God a paternal love that never died and in Mary, Mother of Sorrows, a mother whose healing touch would never abandon her, so much so that she also shaped her thoughts, words, and actions based on the example of Mary's life. This period of intense pain and suffering led her to make the firm decision to offer herself to God as a religious.



Her life, therefore, was never easy and was especially difficult in the years spent deciphering his vocation, **but it was lived with a missionary spirit**, with the zeal to go everywhere and do anything, to make Christ known and loved. Her journey

of faith was truly demanding and often painful, but she never abandoned her faith in God, which led her to holiness step by step. This is why I see a vivid resemblance to the choice of Mary, who although she did not understand did not question anything that happened in her life, after her epochal "yes" to God. She did nothing but reflect on everything in the silence of her heart. At the same time it was the Virgin Mary herself, Mother of Faith, who accompanied Mag-

Burning with love

dalene on her journey of entrustment to the Crucified Lord, so in her, Magdalene found comfort, support, and answers to decisive choices, as she sought the glory of God and the salvation of her brothers and sisters.

Fulfilled woman and believer.

Magdalene lived in a society dominated by the arrogance of privilege and used the aura of her noble education to become the protagonist of spiritual change. Leaving the luxury of her palace and the trappings of wealth, she settled in San Zeno, one of the poorest neighborhoods of Verona and, with some companions who thought like her and whom she affectionately called “Daughters of Charity”, she committed herself to the task of revealing God’s love for humanity. She did so by giving herself unreservedly for the redemption of the many people abandoned in their poverty, of those who were exploited by the selfishness of the rich, and of those who found themselves oppressed by the prevailing evils of a materialistic society. She did this in Italy, a country hit by numerous wars, that was just beginning to reorganize itself. In addition to the enlightening experiences of communion with God and with the Crucified Christ, the small daily joys, made up of gestures of goodness and total self-giving to the least and the poorest, made her poten-

tial as a woman and believer totally fulfilled. When she later took refuge in Venice she was rewarded with a vision that opened the way to her life mission: she saw Mary surrounded by six nuns, who were led two by two into a church, full of children, young people, and adults, then to a hospital and finally to a room full of tormented children. The women were instructed to care for all three groups, paying special attention to the poor. Magdalene responded to the vision with alacrity and founded the Congregations of the Canossian Sons and Daughters of Charity. **Thus, her great commitment meant that she and all those who followed her became capable of responding to the Faith, a zealous and ardent Faith that animated them at all times.**

Masterpieces!

I have known the Canossian charism for a long time. Just before the start of the school year my parents had already taken an apartment in Marina-gar, in the Mahim district of Mumbai. This is why they

enrolled me in Canossa High School, which was just a short walk away. I still remember my daily commutes for 4 years from Marine Lines, where we lived, to Mahim but I never felt regret for not having another possibility or the thought of enrolling in a school closer to home never touched them. They were convinced that they had made the right





choice for their daughter, a school that would be responsible for my growth and integral development. We moved to Marinagar when I was in third grade, where I completed my baccalaureate in Canossa, and soon, as a trained teacher, I joined the staff of my Alma Mater, to shape the countless hearts and minds that have passed through our hands. Here I also had the good fortune to implement the pedagogical system encouraged by Magdalen; a system that pays attention to the person of the child, his or her pace of growth, and their responses to the situations they encounter in life. I understood that **teaching is a vocation, a divine call to serve the children entrusted to our care**. I was accompanied to understand that it is an honor to collaborate with the Almighty to make children sure of who they are: each one is a masterpiece of God!

Dialogue, the perfect tool

“Perfect love is the bond of unity,” said Magdalene. She was in fact a person of numerous and profound relationships, who constantly dialogued with all those who could help her to initiate and consolidate her apostolic works. As a Canossian educator, I have had the privilege of observing firsthand how im-

portant it is to seek dialogue between us. Although working together is never easy, **confrontation is a precious tool for the search for the good of all**. I realized that a simple question, a proposal, or advice given with love is worth more than an imposition or a judgment given in haste. I have learned that these attitudes liberate people, allowing for greater acceptance, even when what you have to say is not what the other person expects to hear. Although I was not able to put all this into practice during my time at school, I am still working on it and this is the most essential lesson I have learned from my years at Canossa.

Proud to be Canossian

Today, as a former Canossian student and teacher, it is with an inexplicable sense of pride and joy that I write this dedication to Magdalene. The commemoration of her half-centenary of birth has already been declared open this year. As a schoolteacher in Canossa, I had a myriad of opportunities to learn and discover about a woman who was a visionary, far ahead of her time. Magdalene’s vision implied a missionary spirit that today is manifested in 35 countries, spanning the continents of Asia, Africa, Oceania, Europe, and America. St. Magdalene was considered by the then Pope St. John Paul II “a prophetess of charity” She, lived a life **of truth and love. Aren’t these the qualities we desperately need** to heal our bruised and broken world today?

Ninette Dsouza,
former student and teacher at
Canossa High School, Mahim,
Mumbai (India)

ADMIRATION, INSPIRATION: MY TESTIMONY

My name is Noella Ndayiziga, originally from Burundi, mother of three children and Grandma to one granddaughter. I am a Catholic, lay Canossian in Kenya, a member of the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and a parish catechist.

Admiration.

Here in my community, the Canossian Mothers are involved in many kinds of apostolate among people of many religions. When I met them I found them humble, kind, calm, and hardworking. I admired their organization and commitment.

38

I also traveled with them in some activities that I coordinated, and it is from here that I developed the desire to be closer to them. So they told me about their foundress St. Magdalene of Canossa and her story inspired me a lot! Inspiration How I wanted to be a Canossian Sister, but couldn't, I was so happy when one of them told me that I could live the charism of St. Magdalene as a lay Canossian. I couldn't wait: I immediately made an appointment and went to meet the Sister in charge of the Lay Canossians, who agreed to let me begin the sessions on the charism of the foundress. I was so happy! "Wonderful! I have a part in this rich charism!" I exclaimed in my heart. It was so amazing to learn about the experience of a girl from the nobility who had abandoned everything for the poor. This love she shared caught my attention and inspiration: in spite of everything, life has no

meaning without the Cross. Indeed, it is from this that we draw love, courage, patience, humility, prudence, fortitude, strength, hope, mercy, and forgiveness.

Testimony.

I have faced many challenges and the only way to overcome them is to fix my gaze on the Cross like Mary on Calvary and remember the courage of St. Magdalene, and the patience with which St. Bakhita endured torture and slavery. I am so grateful to have known the Canossian Sisters and the Faith they shared with me. With the Spirit of the Crucified, I visit the elderly sick people in their homes, I teach catechesis, I animate different groups in the parish, and I feel strengthened by the fact that there is the crucified Christ who inspires my service.



In the photo: the Canossian Laity of Nairobi with the Canossian Father Don Piero and Mother Grace Nestor

E V E N T S

MAY 23

1
Feast of St. Joseph

8
Foundation of the
Institute (1808)

13
Our Lady of Fatima
15 International Family
Day

21
World Day for Cultural
Diversity for Dialogue
and Development

23
Anniversary of the
inauguration of the
Oratorio of the
Canossian Fathers in
Venice (1831)

25
World Africa Day

26
Anniversary of
the death of M.
Antonieta Novello,
Superior General and
Missionary in India
(1983)

31
Visitation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary

JUNE 23

5
Feast of Pentecost

12
Feast of the Holy
Trinity

15
Anniversary of
the death of
M. Margherita Rosmini
(1833), Foundress of
the House in Trento

19
Feast of Corpus Christi

20
World Refugee Day

21
Inauguration of the
foundation of the 5th
House of the Institute
in Trento (1828)

26
Anniversary of the
death of M. Teresa
Pera, Missionary
in Hong Kong and
Regional Vicar in
South China (1938)

29
Feast of St. Peter and
St. Paul

JULY 23

16
Blessed Virgin Mary
of Mount Carmel

18
Anniversary of the
foundation of the 3rd
House of the Institute
in Milan (1816)

30
World Friendship Day

AUGUST 23

1
Anniversary of the
foundation of the 2nd
House of the Institute
in Venice (1812)

6
Transfiguration of the
Lord

12
International Youth
Day

15
Assumption of the
Virgin Mary into
heaven

19
World Humanitarian
Aid Day

20
Anniversary of the
death of M. Emily
Aloysia Bowring,
the first Canossian
Missionary (1870)

22
Feast of the Blessed
Virgin Mary Queen

NEWS FROM THE WORLD

DIGITAL GENERATION

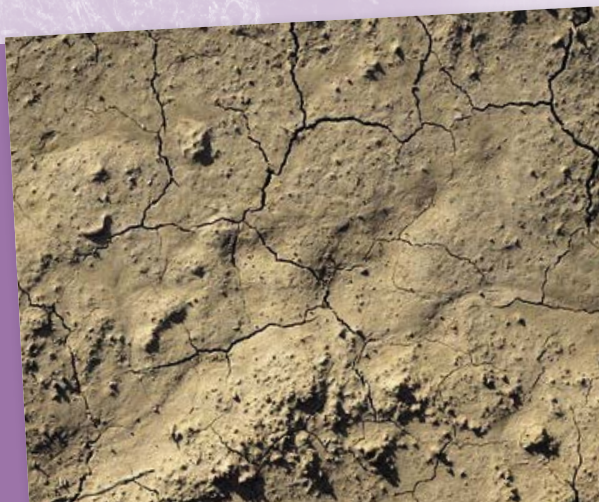


40

Information technology is destined to be remembered as a revolution that has radically changed the daily life of man in the 20th century. Mail, social networks and smartphones enhanced with all kinds of applications have, in fact, quickly become everyday tools for everyone. Yet screens, networks and connections have not only transformed the world around us, but are perhaps also destined to change the characteristics of the human being. So, in the near future a new relationship with the machine will be inaugurated and, according to some scholars, a new human being, with new learning processes. These innovations can already be found, for example, in the new generations who show a much shorter attention span and very different acquisition methods compared to the past. Are we on the threshold of a new society? And what new teaching methods will we need to reaffirm those values that constitute the authenticity of man? These are the challenges of the 21st century.

TWO BILLION PEOPLE ARE THIRSTY: IT'S A RACE FOR BLUE GOLD

«Praised be the Lord for sister water, which is so useful and humble and precious and pure», recited the Canticle of the Creatures of St. Francis of Assisi and



WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINE

In Iran, on 16 September 2022, the death of Mahsa Amini sparked an unprecedented popular uprising that continues across the country even today, months later. Protests quickly spread to all the provinces, just as quickly as actions of control and repression were ordered, even resorting to killing if necessary. The Iranian authorities have extensively used illegal ammunition, metal balls and tear gas against anyone who took to the streets to demonstrate. However, although no one has been spared, the will to carry on demanding justice, human rights and freedom has not diminished. The walls and public spaces of cities have



begun to be covered with the inspiring slogan of this revolution: "woman, life, freedom". Women have always been an instrument of life.

HAS NORMALITY RETURNED?

Three years have now passed since the spread of COVID-19, three years in which we have faced unexpected situa-



tions, isolation and masks, difficulties of all kinds and the pain of losing someone dear.

Today the virus (almost) no longer scares us and life seems to have returned to normal, but we should not wish to forget everything. During the health emergency, the heroism of volunteers and doctors also emerged, a responsible concern for relatives and friends, but, above all, the attention towards the other person has, for a moment, overcome the individualistic tendency of contemporary society; and no, we shouldn't really forget this.

41

today we are even more aware of how essential this element is. In March, at the UN conference in New York, this problem was discussed, as too many people are denied access to drinking water, due to the climate crisis but also to the ever-increasing water consumption for agriculture and industry. Humanity is increasingly thirsty and the proportion of those

who do not have access to safe water and sanitation remains very high, so much so that alarm is high regarding the imminent risk of a global water crisis.



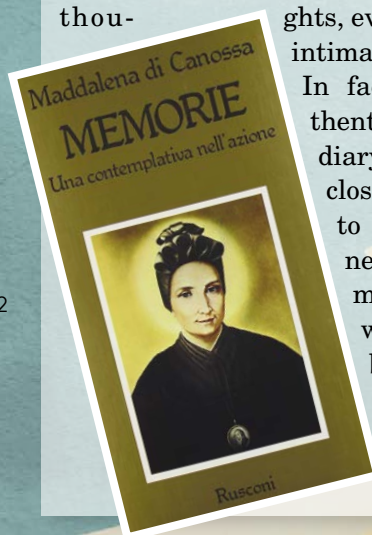
HINTS ON LINE AND OFFLINE

“MEMOIRS, A CONTEMPLATIVE IN ACTION”

of Magdalene of Canossa,
Rusconi ed., 1988

A classic to deepen not only the life of the Saint, but also her actions, her thoughts, even her most intimate motions.

In fact, this authentic intimate diary brings us closer than ever to Magdalene's heart, so much so that we feel it beat. A reading of which to fall in love.



42

“SANTA MADDALENA DI CANOSSA”

di Massimiliano Taroni, Velar, 2000

A very slender booklet of 48 pages, which in its simplicity manages to reveal all the charity which, like a fever, devoured Magdalene: charity towards God, pushed to the heights of mystical experience; charity towards one's neighbour, taken to the extreme consequences of giving herself to others. An agile tool for those who still don't know her personality.



NURTURING REFLECTION



FIGLIE DELLA
CARITÀ
CANOSSIANE

HOME

COS'È | WHAT IS IT



www.archiviocanossian.org

Here is an online archive of the most important texts by and about Magdalene, in several languages, everywhere and free of charge. Note the address, because it will be useful for research, activities and personal studies.

MAGDALENE... SING!

Do you need advice on music that speaks of Magdalene? Or do you just feel like singing a little? No problem, indeed you are overwhelmed by the choice, since you can find an infinite number of them, in many languages!

Two tips to find the most suitable song for you on YouTube: the channel of Canossian Official Daughters of Charity or the playlist "Magdalene's Songs".

COLORED BIRTHDAYS

Magdalene, Mission, World



"I would be happy if we should spread all over the world." s. Magdalene of Canossa

2024 will be a very important year, with many birthday candles lit: St. Magdalene will be 250 years old (March 1, 1774 - 2024), and it will be 164 years since the beginning of the Canossian missionary experience in the world. In fact, on April 12, 1860, the first Canossian missionaries reached Hong Kong after a two-month journey that began in Pavia. It was the inspiration of Magdalene of Canossa that nourished the passion to make Jesus known and loved: "Let us go, Sisters, to any more remote country... Jesus is not loved because he is not known." Even today, this story of availability and enthusiasm continues in 32 countries around the world. Next year will also mark 20 years since the creation of the Canossian Foundation for the Promotion and Development of Peoples, now the Canossian Foundation VOICA.

From black and white to colors

The photos of the first missions in Asia give us a glimpse of the reality encountered by the first Canossian missionaries: **photos in "black and white", as dry and concrete as the situations they illustrate.** No room for sha-

des of colors, no hesitation: do or don't. Those who left knew they would not return. Behind you is a road, a closed door, but beyond it boundless expanses of unexplored poverty and needs opened up waiting for concrete answers. Today technological evolution has equipped the mission with precious and useful means of communication: the poor are virtually closer, and the **"color" photos paint us and describe a more complex and global reality**, rich and at the same time nuanced. The stories of the Canossian presence in the world continue to be written, day after day, in the 32 countries where the pioneer Mothers established the residence of their lives and hearts. Today, as over 160 years ago, the photographs fix the fragments of the colorful Canossian missionary mosaic and tell us, more than a thousand words, a story of passion for Christ and for mankind.



IGNITE LIFE: a gift of love and freedom

Waiting to light the candles for these "color birthdays" in 2024, as the Canossian Foundation VOICA we continue in our commitment to "light up life" for children and mothers who live in very difficult socio-economic conditions. **Health and education: these are our "gifts of love and freedom" in the name of Magdalene**, which we would



like to realize for her birthday party and which represent the concrete response to her invitation: *"I commend to you my beloved poor"*.

"Saving lives, healing wounds, helping babies to Sisterbe born". The new **Health Center "Santa Maddalena di Canossa"** in Sotouboua (Togo), once completed, will represent an effective and indispensable response for the protection of the health of the population living in a large rural area. Its construction is also a precious opportunity for the recovery and conversion of an existing abandoned diocesan school building: unused classrooms are being transformed into places of welcome to the new life and protection of maternal and child health for the inhabitants of 7 rural villages in the center of Togo. At their side, the local Bishop and 5 Canossian mothers including 2 nurses and a Sister trained in administrative management. However, the hospital is not just suitable spaces that comply with national health provisions, but also equipment and qualified personnel who will work in close connection and synergy with the **"Hôpital Ste Joséphine Bakhita"** of Lomè, always managed by the Canossian Sisters. There, where public health does not arrive, the private initiative of humanitarian and religious organizations makes up for it. From the public **"pay or die"** system to the private religious system **"pay what you can"**.

Education and nutrition are fundamental rights for a child's healthy growth. In 2004, the Canossian Mothers

started the first educational activities for the children of the Barrio Pacu Cua slum in Encarnación, where more than 3,000 people live in precarious hygienic-sanitary conditions and without basic educational services. Day after day, month after month, at the **"Santa Maddalena di Canossa" Children's Educational Center** in Encarnacion (Paraguay) the life of about 90 boys and girls aged 3-5 years continues thanks to the tireless commitment of the Canossian Mothers and their collaborators who ensure a dignified and welcoming place to carry out basic literacy activities, offer nutri-



tional support with breakfast and a meal and take care of the children's hygienic and health needs. A study support service is ensured on Saturday mornings right there

in the slum thanks to some young local volunteers always with the presence of Canossian mothers.

There is no resignation where there is no loneliness.

As the VOICA Canossian Foundation we are therefore committed, in the name of Magdalene, to be **a gift of love and freedom**.

With everyone's help, including yours, the "gifts" for Maddalena will be ready in time!

Each of your donations will help to light a candle for a "birthday in color": **Together we can do it!**

Giancarlo Urbani,
Project Manager - Canossian Foundation VOICA

PROJECTS “IN THE NAME OF MGDALENE”

A gift of love and of freedom

While waiting to light the small candles for the birthday of Magdalene, as the Canossian Foundation VOICA, we continue to “light life” for the children and mothers who live in very difficult socio-economic conditions. **Health and education: these are our “gifts of love and of freedom”** in the name of Magdalene, who **together with You** we want to fulfill in celebrating her birthday and that represent the concrete reply to her invitation:

“I entrust to you my beloved poor” (*Saint Magdalene of Canossa*)

Every donation you make will contribute in lighting a small candle for a “BIRTHDAY FULL OF COLOUR”.

New Health Centre “Saint Magdalene of Canossa”, Sotouboua (Togo)
“Save lives, heal wounds, assist to give birth”. The new **Health Centre “Saint Magdalene of Canossa”** of Sotouboua (Togo), when completed, will represent a fundamental health centre for the care of mothers and their babies, as well as for the population that lives in this vast rural area.

- € 10 Stethoscope Pinard
- € 30 Speculum in stainless steel
- € 100 Set of birthing instruments

REASON FOR PAYMENT: Magdalene Health Centre_Togo



Infant Education Centre “Saint Magdalene of Canossa”

Encarnación (Paraguay)

Every day at the **Infant Education Centre “Saint Magdalene of Canossa”** almost 90 children, between the ages of 3 and 5 years old, are provided with a dignified and welcoming place in which they can receive early learning activities, a healthy breakfast, a meal and promotional activities at the service of infant health.

- € 18 health care for one year
- € 20 Breakfast and and lunch for one child for one month
- € 80 1 Kit of teaching materials + breakfast and lunch for one child for one year



REASON FOR PAYMENT: Magdalene Education Centre_Paraguay

Canossian Foundation Voica For a better life...

Address:
via della Stazione di Ottavia, 70
00135 Roma

email: fondazione@canossian.org
C:F: 08069261009
Telephone: +39 06 308280676

How to make a donation:

BANK TRANSFER IN EURO

Banca Popolare di Sondrio – Roma
Code IBAN:
IT83 E056 9603 2110 0000 5128X88
BIC/SWIFT: POSOIT22
In favour of:
Fondazione Canossiana VOICA
Reason for payment:
(Name the project or Mission to support)

CREDIT TRANSFER IN US DOLLARS

BANCA POPOLARE DI SONDRIO – Roma
CODE IBAN:
IT53 D056 9603 211V ARUS 0005 128
Code BIC / SWIFT: POSOIT22
In favour of:
Fondazione Canossiana VOICA
Reason for transfer:
(Name the project or Mission to support)

POSTAL ORDER: N. 62011531

In favour of:
Fondazione Canossiana VOICA
Reason for Payment:
(Name the project or Mission to support)

BANK CHEQUE non-transferable

In favour of:
Fondazione Canossiana VOICA

SEE YOU SOON



After reading this issue of Vita Più, here are a few questions to help interiorize in life and concretely deepen the ideas for reflection stimulated by reading the articles in our Canossian magazine.

Magdalene's testimony has outlived different years, centuries and eras, until today. Which one of her Words is still alive in me? A simple word is capable of moving mountains, if it becomes authentic and intimate. Which thought has touched me the most?

Life is made up of action and contemplation, on the other hand Magdalene's actions still live on in us: which verb do I feel most mine? And which verb do I need in my daily life?

Magdalene is still among us today, but how can I make her presence among us, in our life situation, even more alive? Which new verb can I invent to make my presence new?

MAGDALENE OUR SWEET MOTHER

Magdalene, our sweet mother!

Magdalene, oh bold woman!

Magdalene, oh humble servant of the poor!

Magdalene, oh guardian for the vulnerable!

Magdalene, oh custodian of the orphans and widows!

Magdalene, oh consolation for the sick and comfort for the dying!

Magdalene, oh guide for young people and children!

Magdalene, oh zealous teacher for the teachers of the Church!

Magdalene, oh tender educator of the three "Rs"!

Magdalene, oh courageous warrior who has fought for the sanctification of souls!

Magdalene, oh worthy spouse of Christ Crucified!

Magdalene, oh intelligent and wise virgin!

Magdalene, oh star that touched the Divine!

Magdalene, oh vibrant disciple who lived for God alone!

Magdalene, oh untiring apostle who worked for God's glory!

Magdalene, oh great visionary who walked with the times!

Magdalene, oh fervent missionary who made Jesus known and loved everywhere!

Magdalene, oh heroine who walked on unknown paths!

Magdalene, oh strength for the wavering hearts!

Magdalene, oh lighthouse that directs our lives!

Magdalene, oh humble saint whose charity was your distinctive attitude!

We love you! We thank you!

Jubo Odisha

**CASA GENERALIZIA DELLE FIGLIE
DELLA CARITÀ CANOSSIANE**

*via della Stazione di Ottavia, 70
00135 Roma - Italia*