

NOVENA TO THE IMMACULATE
2020



MARY,
GUARDIAN
OF THE
MISSIONARY
FRATERNITY

(Rupnik – Mosaic in the chapel of Monza)

... Mary lifts her cloak, with a gesture that takes up an oriental feast: the feast of Pokrov, feast of the veil of the “Mother of God who protects”. As if Mary wanted to protect her Son who will take leave from her to die on the cross. But it is exactly there Jesus will extend the motherhood of his Mother to the whole human race, so that all of us can feel her mantle full of maternal love that protects us.

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate - Rome

Dear all,

Mary Immaculate, Queen of the Apostles, is the inspiring icon of our missionary family. As every year, in preparing for her feast, we entrust ourselves to her through the Novena. This is a moment dear to all in which, ideally, we gather from every corner of the earth to celebrate with gratitude the foundation date of our Congregation.

At this present moment, filled with uncertainty and difficulties for everyone due to the persistence of the pandemic, we invoke MARY as GUARDIAN OF THE MISSIONARY FRATERNITY.

We all have a great need to be protected: we wish that our communities, the people we love, the people with whom and for whom we live the mission be protected. Mary guards us by praying for us with her Son and proposing to us her lifestyle, a journey of daily holiness that, gradually, moves us to go out of ourselves to learn to be sisters among ourselves and with everyone, particularly in difficult moments.

The Novena is prepared with the contribution of the sisters from different communities. Each community has read together a “Marian” passage from the Word of God, has grasped its message by choosing an attitude that characterizes the life of Mary and has tried to reap the fruits of the Word prayed in the daily life and in the missionary experience of one’s own community.

These sharing allow us to know each other, they console us, and they encourage us to continue our journey in faith and to savour the beauty of our vocation in an exchange of gifts that are at the heart of the missionary fraternity.

As you can see, next to the name of the community, there is an email address, so that it is possible to send a greeting, a resonance, a wish to the sisters who have written.

May Mary Immaculate teach us to manifest the newness and freedom of relationships generated by the Spirit, which carry within themselves the presence of Christ (cf. C 66).

Happy Feast of the Immaculate, in hope!

29th November – DAY 1

Taking care of the other, free of charge, forgetting oneself, at the cost of any sacrifice



From our Constitutions

Seeking the integral wellbeing of the person, our activities become a concrete expression of the salvation we proclaim. We are attentive to new forms of poverty, above all where life is more fragile and threatened. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice, the defence of human rights, the promotion of peace and the care of creation. (C 22)

From the Gospel of St. Luke (1:39-42)



During those days Mary set out and travelled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."



Guardians of fraternity

The inner gaze of the Virgin Mary is oriented towards the other. «Votre charité se donne de la peine!» (Your charity is taking the trouble!) - *1Thes 1:3 according to the translation of the new lectionary, the 29th Sunday.*

Our desire to build a missionary fraternity in our community and around us must be guided by the Spirit of God. The example of the Virgin Mary urges us to go out of ourselves to go towards others, especially our Muslim brothers and sisters. The Holy Spirit reaches us through different people, whom we do not know, but whom we meet while visiting families or greeting them in the streets of Hammam-Lif. They

are often a valid help for us, because they spontaneously come to meet us to learn about situations of loneliness, poverty, sadness and misery. During the first phase of the pandemic, a Muslim doctor named Mohammed came to our home to ask us if we knew migrants and poor people living in our neighbourhood. The goal was to help them materially and to support them morally.

His repeated visits have strengthened our mutual trust and the fraternal sharing of our presence in this land.

Recently this doctor told us about a neighbourhood where many poor, abandoned, sick, isolated people and families live. They are victims of violence, prostitution and alcohol. They come from different regions of Tunisia to work. We asked the doctor if he thought we could visit these people.

He readily accepted our wish, called his housekeeper, Madame Sabah, and together they accompanied us to these people.

We were very happy to visit them immediately, despite the COVID-19 health crisis.

We saw an ancient abandoned palace, called - in Arabic - “Dar Bey”, built during the Turkish domination in Tunisia, where many “homeless” have found their home in recent years.

Our community then began to visit these people, together with Madame Sabah; in this, we feel supported and moved by our charism and by the passion for our mission.

We understand that the Holy Spirit, through other people, moves us and calls us to build missionary fraternity with all people, without distinction.

In the same way, we live the desire to build a universal fraternity through our visit to the families and elderly people around us. Our beautiful experience makes us recognize God's providence where we are lucky enough to find open-minded people. They lead us to the poor in whom Christ suffers.

May the Immaculate Virgin help us to be attentive and maternal like her.

“The Spirit will lead you on new paths.

Go; do not be afraid, I am with you! ”

The sisters from Hammam-Lif - Tunisi (srrekhamssi@gmail.com)

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER

Shortly after its account of the creation of the world and of man, the Bible takes up the issue of human relationships. Cain kills his brother Abel and then hears God ask, “Where is your brother Abel?”



O Lord, make us listen to this question of yours: may it shake us from indifference and open our heart to a different culture, in which we resolve our conflicts and care for one another.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 57)

30th November – DAY 2

Joy



From our Constitutions

We try to become all things to all, being close to the daily life of people and communities, in the missionary joy of sharing the life of the Gospel. (C26)

From the Gospel of St. Luke (1:43-49)



“How does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

And Mary said:

*“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my saviour.
For he has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness;
behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.”*



Guardians of fraternity

In the MSI community of Ranchi, we the elderly and the young sisters from the various cultures and traditions live together in harmony, as one family united in the name of Christ. The joyful experience of the Lord intensely felt in our fraternal living is being radiated in our apostolate.

October, being the month of the Holy Rosary, gave us an opportunity to be among the people and to share our solid experiences of faith. For the first time, in our parish we conducted the Missionary Rosary in different units on alternate days. It was indeed a moving experience to listen to the parishioners' joy of witnessing to Christ and their devotion to our Blessed Mother.

Mrs. Kanthi is an illiterate poor widow, a mother of two school going children and a nature worshipper. Poverty was her only companion. She had ruminated about putting an end to her life due to extreme poverty and many hardships.

When she was about to end her life, one day she had a vision of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, giving her the Holy Bible and asking her to read the First Letter of St. John 5:14 (*And this is the confidence which we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*). She responded that she was illiterate. She said that Jesus taught her to read the Bible and had assured her that He would provide everything that she requires in her life.

To everyone's surprise, she was able to read the Bible from the next day and was blessed with the gift of healing. From that time, she left the 'nature worship' and turned to Jesus.

On another occasion, due to the lack of funds, her uncle who was suffering from brain tumour was not able to undergo the surgery. So she prayed over him and he was miraculously healed. Later, she along with her entire family received the Baptism and became Catholics.

Even at the threat of being ostracized from her own community, she stands with a 'rock like faith' in Jesus. Today she prays and helps many people who are struggling for their daily survival. Like our Blessed Mother, when these simple people magnify the Lord and share their 'joy' of belonging to God, we do exult the Lord in 'joy' for His bountiful goodness to our people.

*The sisters from Ranchi community – Siliguri province - India
(susanamaringmei@yahoo.in)*

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



Life without fraternal gratuitousness becomes a form of frenetic commerce, in which we are constantly weighing up what we give and what we get back in return. God, on the other hand, gives freely, to the point of helping even those who are unfaithful; he “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good”.

We received life freely; we paid nothing for it. Consequently, all of us are able to give without expecting anything in return, to do good to others without demanding that they treat us well in return.

Father, help us to share with joy the precious gift you have given us: that of having known you.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 140)

1st December – DAY 3

Supportive, sensitive to others



From our Constitutions

In our apostolic activities, we have a special attention to the poor. Our attitude of respect and sincere love towards them is the first witness of evangelical poverty. (C62)

From the Gospel of St. John (2:3)

When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.”



Guardians of fraternity

When India’s public transport system halted during lockdown, the migrant workers in the twin cities swarmed highways and roads within a few days. It was heart-breaking to see the exodus of thousands of migrant workers, old, young and children

walking in groups, hungry, thirsty, tired, huddled together on the Nagpur Highway (NH 44) to reach their homes miles away.

Like Mother Mary being sensitive to the needs at the wedding at Cana, our communities in the twin cities: the Provincial House, the Retreat House and the Novitiate community in Medchal have decided to extend the helping hands.

The novitiate community was sensitive to provide with cooked food, snacks and drinking water as they were walking for many days under the scorching sun without food and water. The retreat house community found joy and satisfaction in making the necessary arrangements to supply them with water for bathing and washing cloths and provided dishes to cook their food. The community of Provincial House visited the railway station and offered them the food they needed for their journey.

It was an opportunity to network with parents, Lay Associates and friends in providing groceries and other utilities to alleviate the starving brethren in neighbouring slums. Seeing the pathetic situation around like Mary our Mother, it was a moment for us to be sensitive to the urgent needs of the suffering humanity, through the distribution of material things, which helped us to become the guardians of missionary fraternity in order to keep alive the spark of hope in people who were in need.

The sisters from the communities of the provincial house in Hyderabad and Medchal - India (leenafds@rediffmail.com)

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



The Samaritan who stopped along the way departed without expecting any recognition or gratitude. His effort to assist another person gave him great satisfaction in life and before his God, and thus became a duty.

O Lord, make us feel the responsibility for the wounded, those of our own people and all the peoples of the earth; helps us to care for the needs of every man and woman, young and old, with the same fraternal spirit of care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 79)

2nd December – DAY 4

Patient and trustful listening



From our Constitutions

By welcoming in faith and loving one another in charity, we live the specific demands of the missionary vocation and move forward together on a journey of community holiness. This fraternity is an expression of the newness and universality of the Kingdom and it is the condition for the credibility of the Gospel that we proclaim. (C65)

From the Gospel of St. Luke (2:41-51)



Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him.

After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers.

When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.”

And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

But they did not understand what he said to them.

He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart.



Guardians of fraternity

In the biblical text, one understands that Mary went through a strong emotional experience that involved the whole of her being as Mother: the search for the lost son, the anxiety before finding him, the incomprehension in front of her attitude and her words.

This small contextualization is important to bring out Mary's attitude of listening, a patient and trustful listening, which allows us to keep in the heart what we do not understand and continue to walk in faith, in peace, even in the midst of difficulties.

In the annual Community Project, we had decided to dedicate time so that each sister could share her life and mission experience with the others.

Every fifteen days, during the community meeting, each sister was able to introduce herself, talk about her origins, her vocation, and her human and spiritual journey. On the same day, prayer was offered for her and to the extent possible, a typical food of her country or region of origin was prepared.

All of us perceived how important it was to revisit one's own history, but even more significant was the quality of listening to the sisters while they were sharing. These stories, did not lack examples of pain experienced, difficulties encountered, challenges that could overcome. Each sharing made us travel in time and space: an authentic missionary outing in a time of pandemic!

This experience helped us to realize the richness that each one carries within itself. The difficulties of community coexistence have not disappeared, but certainly, a greater space has opened up to keep each sister in the heart, with her wealth and her limits.

May Mary, guardian of the missionary fraternity, help us to keep in our hearts, with patience and trust all that the other is and lives.

*The sisters from the provincial house community in S. Paulo – Brazil Sud
(provregmdi@gmail.com)*

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



A home with open doors. The Church is a home with open doors, because she is a mother. And in imitation of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, “we want to be a Church that serves, that leaves home and goes forth from its places of worship, goes forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation”. Father, make us like these bridges; make us able to listen to the people and to bring communion among them.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 276)

3rd December – DAY 5

Doing God’s will



From our Constitutions

The desire to do what is pleasing to the Lord in everything, sustains us in the humble and steadfast search for God’s will, certain that only His will counts; the rest is nothing. We listen to the voice of the Spirit that guides us through inspirations, events and choices, in a journey of discernment where the Spirit acts through human mediations. (C7)

From the Gospel of St. Mathew (12:46-50)



While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers appeared outside, wishing to speak with him. Someone told him, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak with you.” But he said in reply to the one who told him, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

Guardians of fraternity



Jesus identifies His sisters and mothers as those who do the will of God. We are all God's children, whom He desires to shape and mould into disciples of His love. By knowing the will of God for us, we give God's love and compassion to others especially the poor, marginalized and vulnerable people.

We the sisters of Boldipukur would like to share an experience of Mother Mary.

In the beginning, when Covid-19 was spreading across the country, people were scared and closed behind the doors. We also stopped all our activities and remained inside, spending more time in front of the Blessed Sacrament. There were so many patients suffering without medicine since our dispensary was closed. We felt that at this difficult time we must be sisters to our people through our service.

When we watched the videos of Pope Francis praying in front of the statues of Mother Mary, we too bought a statue of Mother Mary, which we kept in front of our dispensary, and re-opened the dispensary, which was closed for few weeks.

It was miraculous to say that there were some Covid-19 patients in the nearby houses who got healed and many patients started coming to our dispensary and they all started to pray near our Lady. In our community, also we kept few hours only for the rosary and adoration for all doctors, nurses, health workers and all the people of the world.

We are continuing this practice. We can say that everyday there are hundreds of people are coming to our dispensary with various kinds of sicknesses. Most of them are Muslims and Hindus, but all have faith in Mother Mary as we pray our morning prayer in front of Our Lady. By the grace of Mother Mary, so far here at Boldipukur dispensary, in our community, in our province and in the nearby villages nobody is affected by Corona virus. We believe that by doing the will of God we become the sisters and mothers for our people and when we turn to Mother Mary for assistance, she will never leave us alone.

*The sisters from Boldipukur community - Bangladesh
(ani_kalap@yahoo.com)*

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



Holy Spirit, as you did with Mary and the saints, give us, too, the openness of heart, which knows no bounds and transcended differences of origin, nationality, colour or religion. May we too contribute to the universal brotherhood in the name of Jesus.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 3)

4th December – DAY 6

Mary takes care of her children



From our Constitutions

(Mary) always intimately united with her Son, she participates in his mission and sets out on a journey of faith, of service and of love that leads her to the foot of the cross, where her motherhood assumes universal dimensions. (C15)

From the Gospel of St. John (19:25-27)



Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.



Guardians of fraternity

In the community and apostolate, we are really attentive to the different groups of children, young adults who come to us and whom we serve in different ways: by taking care of them, teaching them and reaching out to everyone following the example of mother Mary as guardian of our missionary fraternity.

The experience of one of our children made us understand in a new way what it means for Mary to be under the Cross of Jesus today too, desiring the salvation of her Son and concretely interceding for one of her youngest children on the islands of Papua New Guinea.

“I was saved by the rays of grace flowing from the harms of the Immaculate mother, Mary.”

The little Binel Charles Austine was only six years old, when he first experienced the saving grace of our Lady of the miraculous medal.

It was the morning of Wednesday, July 22, in 2017 when Binel Charles pulled down his canoe to the river and started to paddle across the mighty flowing river at his own village. The weather wasn't favorable but he decided to paddle across the river to pick up his friend Wesley, who got stranded on the other side of the river which had flooded with very strong current and fast flowing water. Binel maneuvered the canoe in the midst of the river and all of a sudden, the sheer force of the mighty current hit the side of his canoe and it turned forward and the current buried the canoe in the deep water, and the little boy was carried away by the flood flowing down towards the sea. The boy swam almost 3 kilometers. While he was floating, he held his paddle before his chest and he began to pray, “Mother Mary save me!” He began to feel that his body was very numb, and he was feeling cold and weak. He put his paddle below his head as if it was his pillow and closed his eyes. In few seconds, he opened his eyes and saw a lady dressed in white linen and she started talking with him with smiles.

This is what he said. “The lady was so beautiful and dressed in white; she was talking with me, and there was no sound coming out but I could understand her very well what she was telling me”.

The meeting between Binel Charles and the lady lasted for couple of minutes and the lady let him floating in the middle of the rough sea with his paddle below his head. In their conversation, the lady had told him that there was a canoe coming and when the little boy opened his eyes he saw a man named Dilan coming to rescue him with his canoe.

The boy was floating in the sea with no hope; his little prayer that he offered to Mother Mary saved him.

*The sisters from Alotau community – Papua Nuova Guinea
(marilenamsi54@gmail.com)*

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



The journey of fraternity also has a Mother, whose name is Mary. Having received this universal motherhood at the foot of the cross, she cares not only for Jesus but also for “the rest of her children”. In the power of the risen Lord, she wants to give birth to a new world, where all of us are brothers and sisters, where there is room for all those whom our societies discard, where justice and peace are resplendent.

O Lord, listen to the prayer that Mother Mary addresses to You for us all.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 278)

5th December – DAY 7

Fidelity to prayer



From our Constitutions

Mary, disciple of the Word and teacher of prayer, attracts us through her life that was entirely open to the Spirit. She welcomed the Word of God with faith and praised the Lord for the marvels accomplished in her and in history. She silently treasured everything in her heart. She interceded with concern so that no one would lack abundance of life and joy. She watched over the community in an atmosphere of prayer.

We turn to Mary that she may teach us to contemplate with her the face of Christ and we entrust ourselves to her maternal intercession so that our life may find fulfilment like hers, according to the Word. (C89)

From the Acts of the Apostles (1:14)

All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.





Guardians of fraternity

April 19, 2019 was an unforgettable day for our Ambam community.

It was Good Friday; All of us went to the church and the celebration lasted more than three hours.

Upon returning home, the community leader realized that the front door had been broke opened. She rushed to see the situation; great was the fear to see that two rooms had been looted and all the money from the dispensary was stolen.

We were all informed and immediately we called the parish priest who in turn informed the administrative authorities and the police. As soon as they arrived at the scene, the authorities opened an investigation following which our driver and our cook were taken for questioning.

We were personally interrogated and later the authorities asked us to come back on the following day with the rest of the staff.

Around midnight we returned to the police, accompanied by the parish priest to free our employees. Following all these investigations and interrogations without a solution, we had decided to withdraw our complaint, with the consent of our leaders, who had arrived on the spot.

During those days, though we were traumatized and annoyed, we found comfort and hope in prayer, the recitation of the Rosary and the Word of God.

God had allowed this suffering to be lived with him during the Easter Triduum. We were truly of one heart and one soul together, without accusing each other.

*The sisters from Ambam community – Camerun
(mechirackal@yahoo.com)*

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



We believers are challenged to return to our sources, in order to concentrate on what is essential: worship of God and love for our neighbour.

O Holy Spirit, foster in us sincere and humble worship of God that may “bear fruit not in discrimination, hatred and violence, but in respect for the sacredness of life, respect for the dignity and freedom of others, and loving commitment to the welfare of all”.

(Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 282.283)

6th December – DAY 8

Surrender to God in hope



From our Constitutions

In Mary Immaculate, woman full of grace, we find the fulfilment of the hope, which we proclaim. The new creation, which is the plan of the Father for the whole humanity, shines forth first in her, among all other human beings. With her unconditional response to the grace of God, Mary becomes the luminous example of holiness to which we are called. (C3)

From the Gospel of St. Luke (1:26-38)



In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?”

And the angel said to her in reply, “The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.”

Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.



Guardians of fraternity

In the Immaculate Conception, we recognize a woman who surrendered to God in hope. Her unconditional ‘yes’ brought down upon her the Grace of the Lord for all humanity.

Our community has recently lived a beautiful experience of accompanying Sr. Pavani during her first period of insertion in our mission in Hong Kong. A challenge in which she and we were able to perceive something of what it means to “surrender ourselves to the Lord” as Mary did. Sr. Pavani, from Hong Kong Delegation, describes her experience as follows:

«I am glad indeed to share my experience of finding favour in God’s sight when I surrendered my life to God’s will.

Though there was social unrest in HK and uncertainties due to the pandemic, somehow I completed the study of the Chinese language and was very eager to begin my ministry in the Church of Hong Kong. When everything was almost ready, there was the third lock down and all my hopes and plans went in vain. I was discouraged and disappointed. Besides, I felt lonely and faced some misunderstandings. Many questions began to rise in my mind: What is my future? How long I would have to wait before being called back to the parish? Do I need to look for another parish? Whom to turn for help ?

When I saw the sufferings of people, I realized that compared to their sufferings at this time of the pandemic, my difficulties and struggles were too small. Henceforth, I started praying for the world and at that moment I turned to the Lord and I began to surrender myself to Him

like Mary our Mother. I earnestly prayed: “Lord, come what may give me the grace to accept your will in my life”. While I received a lot of strength from prayer, the Word of God and the experience of 22 long years of waiting, which our Foundress Mother Igilda underwent. I was hopeful and began to experience the support from various people of good will and encouragement from our community and delegation sisters and friends. On 18th of October, Mission Sunday night when I was in personal prayer, without my knowledge tears started rolling down my cheeks and I surrendered myself to the Lord. To my surprise on 19th morning, I received a message from the parish priest that very soon I can start my service in the Church. We were happy with this good news and I strongly believe that when I surrendered my life to the Lord, He found favour with me and granted me the hope to carry on His plans in and through my life and mission. »

*The sisters from Fanling community - Hong Kong-Cina
(anieddula@gmail.com)*

UNITED IN ONLY ONE PRAYER



*Mother, we come to You,
We desire to encounter your gaze:
since there, as it were, is reflected the gaze of the Father,
who made you the Mother of God,
and the gaze of the Son on the Cross,
who made you our Mother.
It is with that gaze, o Mary, watch us today.*

*We need your tender gaze,
your maternal gaze, which knows us better than anyone else,
your gaze full of compassion and care.
Mary, today we want to tell you:
Mother grant us your gaze!*

*Your gaze leads us to God,
your gaze is a gift of the good Father,
who waits for us at every turn of our path,
it is a gift of Jesus Christ on the Cross,*

*who takes upon himself our sufferings,
our struggles, our sin.
And in order to meet this Father who is full of love,
today we say to you: Mother, give us your gaze!*

*Your gaze, Mother, helps us
to look at one another as brothers and sisters
to look upon one another in a more fraternal way.
May we learn to look upon one another in a more fraternal way!
Mary, you teach us to have that gaze
which strives to welcome, to accompany and to protect.
May we may learn to look upon one another
beneath your maternal gaze!
Mother, grant us your gaze,
which is full of tenderness, which gives us strength,
and builds solidarity among us.
Mother, grant us your gaze!*

(Cf. Homily of Pope Francis, Shrine of Our Lady of Bonaria, Cagliari -
Sunday, 22 September 2013)

7th December – DAY 9

Celebration of the First Vespers
on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception