



## CASA LORETO

Via Massaua 3 • 00162 ROMA • Italy  
Tel: +39 06 863 99701 • Fax: +39 06 863 99709 • gensec@ibvmgen.org

January 6<sup>th</sup> 2016

Dear Sisters

In Rome we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany today and I know that in some places you have already celebrated on Sunday last. It seems like a fitting feast on which to wish you all every blessing for 2016, a year filled with graces and blessings, and a year where our world may receive the blessing of peace and justice.

Our first Christmas in Casa Loreto was filled with joy and blessings and we are grateful for all the greetings, prayers and gifts that came to us. Rome was busy and full of pilgrims for the Year of Mercy and we were blessed with sunny warm days.

In the coming months we will continue our familiarisation visits to provinces and regions. At the end of this week Judy and I will visit South Africa and Zambia, and Macarena and Igora will go to Mauritius, to begin the consultation process for a new Province Leader there. We hope to have all the informal visits over before the ELM, which takes place in Llandudno at the end of May.

On January 1<sup>st</sup> Jane Frances began her term of office as Province Leader in Eastern Africa. We wish her well in her new role.

One of the commissions to Institute Leadership at GC 14 was to look at our communications capacity and to establish a central communications office to enhance communications throughout the Institute and to upgrade technology and skills in the parts of the Institute that require support.

Following our research and many conversations around this we have asked a small committee to work on this and to design a plan to help us to take first steps towards doing this. Aurora Moreno from the Spanish province Communications office will co-ordinate this small committee and she will be assisted by Roseline Ayienda (Eastern Africa), Una Coogan (England), Kathleen MacLennan (Ireland), Clotilde de Maroussem (Mauritius), and Eloise Hahn (Australia Communication Office). They will have meetings via Skype and will report back to us in time for the ELM.

At present members of the Spanish province are engaged in a discernment and conversations with the Bishop about the future of their mission in Morocco. There is an understandable reluctance to make a decision about leaving Morocco, as this mission has a very significant witness in today's world, the presence of a religious community in a Muslim country. Following discussions with Isabel, the Province Leader in Spain, we have decided to open the

discernment to the full Institute, inviting you to pray along with the Spanish province at this time.

If you feel called to this mission I would be delighted to hear from you before January 25<sup>th</sup>. Asilah is a small town by the sea, an hour's journey from Madrid by air. The Christian community there is small and Isabel describes our presence as "silent", with a lot of listening, respect and tolerance. Project works, such as empowering women, are already well organised, and the real need is for a community who would be a presence, who would live simply with and among the people, also working within the structure of the local church and connecting with other religious in Tangiers.

The needs are great all around our world, and in this very unsettled time, politically and environmentally, we are aware of all those whose lives have been uprooted in the last year and who have been forced to move from their homes and country. At this time as we contemplate the Holy Family, forced to flee to Egypt, let us pray that 2016 will bring relief from war and violence, and that our hearts and the hearts of our leaders will be open to welcome the many refugees in our world, wherever they may land.

Brenda, Igora, Judy and Macarena send greetings and good wishes.

With love and every good wish

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Noelle".