Malawi: Students and Staff Succeed in Caring for Each Other and for Creation
By Mr. K.D Mnkhwazo (Teacher at St Francis School)

1. The grade 8 candidates fully prepared for the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations

2. Grade 8 students receive meals during the examination

3. The St. Francis School staff continue to grow vegetables organically

4. Trees provide oxygen and fruit for sustaining good health

Issue 1: The grade 8 candidates fully prepared for the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations
A week before the Exams, each student ensured that he/she had all the needed materials for writing their examinations. They had their Mathematical instruments ready, enough pens and a ruler. During the start of the examinations, each learner was optimistic that he/she will make it come rain or come sunshine. The confidence came from their hard study and the hard-working spirit of their teachers that they knew would yield to their good results in the examinations.

2. Grade 8 learners receiving meals

During the grade 8 examination period, all the learners were given meals to make them strong and active before they sat for their papers. This is a different scenario from the public schools where learners do not get food from their school except the very few who can bring it from their homes.

3. St. Francis continues to grow vegetables organically

Organic vegetable garden

St Francis Primary School staff continued to work in the school garden throughout the period that the government closed the schools and other public places for fear of having the COVID 19 spread widely. The staff, including all teachers and other supporting staff from the kitchen and ground workers, took turns in taking care of the vegetable gardens. Some would go in the morning to water the vegetables while others could go in the afternoon or evening.
Apart from having the vegetables in the school garden, there are also fruit trees such as mangoes. Sister Beatrice from the United States planted her own mango tree in the garden so that apart from learners getting the fruit from the tree, the tree could also act as a remembrance to the school and the community of her stay and contributions to the school projects. The Sister encouraged the school staff to make sure that the school has as many trees as possible so that learners can be taking the fruits along with their meals to improve their health. Moreover, she said that the fruit trees around the school premises would be a source of fresh air for the people around and that the carbon dioxide from different source around the school premises would be sequestrated by the trees hence providing oxygen and preventing the people from suffering from different diseases that resulted from polluted air.
Father Augustine Kaliwu giving blessings to the candidates before they start writing their exams

Sr Raynelda with school children and parents in the community

Sisters enjoying the company with school children
Romania: Praise Be My Lord!
By S. Lydia Fechetă

.... Praise be my Lord!
This period of the pandemic is also for us, the sisters of Caransebeş and Timişoara, a time of new challenges as we search for new roads, so that the rhythm of our lives can be re-established in due course.

.... for St. Francis and Mother Clara

Due to the actual situation we are in, the feast days seemed like science fiction. Francis and M. Clara were celebrated in a small setting with our sisters from Timişoara. The Transitus and the feasts of St. Francis and M. Clara were for us days of spiritual joy, gratitude and blessing.

.... for those who said yes! Mission
This year, in October, we celebrated Mission Month. We prayed for missionaries and for the blessing of their work. Together, we pondered the beauty, gift, and joys of every continent of Earth, our Common Home. We entrusted to God the worries, concerns, and problems faced by the people of every continent, and through the missionary rosary we entrusted all missionaries to our heavenly mother. We also thought of the sisters of our congregation, who over time, have gone as missionaries to other countries and continents, and to whom we now owe the presence of our sisters in different lands.
.... for the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church

In March of this year, a training course was held on the theme: "Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church", which took place in the monastery of the Salvatorian Brothers in Timișoara. The course was organized by the Federation of Caritas Timișoara, attended by a group of 15 people working in different fields and social and religious projects in several localities. Sr. M. Tereza Cernic also presented this course in Caransebeș to our collaborators at St. Ursula's Kindergarten and from the Home Care Center of the Caritas Federation.

Social doctrine designates the Catholic Church's set of guidelines on social policy. It is a reflection in the light of faith and ecclesial tradition. The message of Jesus Christ is announced and updated in key areas of human life. The major themes of social doctrine are: family, workplace, economy, politics, the international community, environmental protection and the promotion of peace.

"DOATE" (Catholic Doctrine) answers the question: "What should we do?" It is a book that helps us change ourselves first with the gospel,

"DOCE" (Catholic Social Teaching) is a guide to the way of life. It is a new tool of formation in its social doctrine that "comes from the heart of the gospel, comes from Jesus himself."

"DOCE" is a training tool that challenges each of us to be a living social doctrine, as Pope Francis asked us to be. The world can change, with the people who give themselves to live with Jesus on the periphery and in the midst of misery.

I would like to conclude with the words of Pope Francis who says, "The Christian who in these times is not a revolutionary is not a true Christian."

.... Good God help us all.

PRAISE AND WELCOME TO MY GOD!
Indonesia: Season of Creation and Feast of St. Francis
By S Verena Sianturi

JPIC Community Visits
One of the JPIC Indonesia programs this year is a community visit with the aim of initiating the JPIC programs while providing an understanding of what JPIC is. Still, many people do not understand that JPIC includes all the sisters of the community. They think that JPIC is only related to garbage and planting trees. This is not wrong but it should be understood that JPIC not only takes care of garbage and environmental maintenance, but is also much broader than what they think. Therefore, Sr. Verena has started to make community visits since July 2020. She also conducted community monitoring related to the training provided by JPIC to be sustainable for the arrangement and preservation of nature with the manufacture of bokashi composte (organic waste processing) and its use. During the visit, Sr. Verena explained JPIC, what programs JPIC has implemented, and expects each community to be a partner in JPIC so that the program can be implemented by each community. Related to that, Sr. Verena also requested input from each community for a proposal for the JPIC Program for next year, so that the program that is planned will reflect the needs of the local communities.

There are four communities that have been visited so far and I was very happy for the openness of community members in receiving my attendance. The visits went very well. We sat together, sharing and giving each other feedback and even suggesting many new things for me as the coordinator of JPIC for the Province of Indonesia. From the communities I have visited, I asked that JPIC be able to assist their limitations to help very poor, malnourished and sick families in remote areas, such as Togizita and Pakkat communities. This input and application became the material of JPIC's thinking for advanced programs to pay attention to humanity. This visit program will continue until December 2020 so that all communities in Sumatra Province can be animated. Communities outside Sumatra will be thought of in other ways so that all communities working together get an explanation and understanding of JPIC.
Transitus Prayer Service

Transitus and St. Francis' feast day celebrations this year are very different from previous years. This situation is limited due to the coronavirus pandemic. During this time, the feast celebrations and Transitus were celebrated together. This year the parties were lively in their respective communities and the coronavirus did not diminish the spirit of the sisters. Everyone had to be more creative to make the parties festive so all could enjoy the party. In addition, together with the whole world, we also celebrated the Season of Creation, which added a more meaningful atmosphere. As a means of prayerful participation in the Season of Creation, JPIC made a devotional worship service available for each community. In it we prayed for the restoration of the earth as a shared home. On October 1-3, 2020, the Tridium was held ahead of Francis' feast with a special adoration, praying for the situation of the world ravaged by the Coronavirus outbreak as well as world peace and the restoration of the earth as a shared home. We attended a conference given by Pater Julius OFM Conv. On the eve of transistus the novices creatively made the transitus atmosphere very solemn. Also, a novice re-enacted how St. Francis greeted brother death and parted ways with his brothers. So transitus night can really help us to reflect on and feel the experience in the final seconds of St. Francis' life and his togetherness with his brethren. On the eve of the transitus, the sisters renewed their vows to the Father by reciting the text of St. Francis' evening prayer while holding candles in front of the Altar of God. This vow renewal reminds us of our vows promised to God.

Celebration of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

The feast of gratitude of St. Francis of Assisi on October 4, 2020 this year is quite unique and creative. The situation of the coronavirus outbreak is not a barrier for fcjm sisters of The Province of Indonesia to feel joy and gratitude. Any community with its own joy can make the party festive and even more creative. Although each community celebrated by itself, togetherness remains intertwined because in prayer and congratulations the party is delivered via our province WhatsApp group. In the group we can greet each other using this technology and give joy
to each other. In some communities Sisters made races or quizzes. Others made clothes created from used paper, newspapers, used plastic such as coffee wraps and so on, that are recycled. This is one of the expressions of joy that can be done to enliven the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. One example is the Gratia Community. S. Klara and the postulants, who are so creative, officially opened the party with a prayer by S. Emmanuela Sitorus FCJM.

As in the picture we can see as the jury, namely Sr. Cornelia Silalahi FCJM, Sr. Gabriella FCJM and Sr. Ursula FCJM. All the sisters take part in each activity and each group makes its creations. All seem to be very creative and active making the atmosphere very festive and happy. All can enjoy a joyful party atmosphere. Although this year's party had to be celebrated in the community or in their respective places because of the coronavirus outbreak, this did not diminish the sense of sisterhood and happiness of the parties.

Human Trafficking
The case of human trafficking in this pandemic is increasing for various reasons. The situation sometimes forces people to commit a crime in order to feed their families. For example, there is a case of a family where the husband forced his wife to sell herself to meet the daily needs of the family
because the husband lost his job due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In addition, children are one of the most vulnerable groups. The coronavirus pandemic that hit Indonesia is currently exacerbated by the increase in human trafficking. Assisant Deputy for Child Protection and Violence and Exploitation Ministry did a presentation based on the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (SIMFONI PPA). The data from January 1-June 26, 2020 counted 3,297 cases of violence during the pandemic. A total of 1,962 children were victims of sexual violence, 50 were victims of exploitation, and 61 were victims of trafficking. JPIC FCIM Indonesia works in cooperation with the TALITHA KUM network on anti-trafficking efforts. TALITHA KUM is an international anti-trafficking effort of the International Union of Superiors General—led by women religious around the world. In Indonesia, TALITHA KUM INTERNATIONAL (TKI) networked victims of Human Trafficking with TKI in Malaysia. Mira (not her real name) was saved from her bad luck after being trafficked to Malaysia. She spent 12 years at TKI in Malaysia with an obscure life. Thus, on Wednesday, August 19, 2020 Mira managed to return to Indonesia thanks to the cooperation of TALITHA KUM Indonesia network with the Malaysian government so that the victims could get to Medan Indonesia and be directly handled by TALITHA KUM Medan network, called Caritas Keuskupan Medan. Although the victim had nothing, Caritas Keuskupan Medan met all her essential needs. At Caritas the victim was accompanied, treated at Elisabeth Hospital to ensure her health with PCR/SWAB test for Coronavirus, which was negative. From the approach that is done, finally the victim was able to open up and admit that she was five months pregnant. She is still very traumatized to see a man because of her experience of suffering while in Malaysia. After the administration and all documents had been completed, the victim returned to her village after coordinating with The Deputy Regent of the area. Sr. Katarina FSGM as Chairperson of IBSI (Indonesian Nuns Association) said that the struggle to bring Mira back to her village took nine months and Mira's return resulted from a solid coordination with partners and networks both in Malaysia and in Indonesia. So, on September 9, 2020, Mira was escorted to her village accompanied by one of the staff of Caritas Keuskupan Medan. We are grateful that Mira was able to return to her hometown healthy and was reunited with her family. Based on the Legal Protection of Women and Children as found in article 356 of the Criminal Court, article 44, witnesses and victims are entitled to confidentiality of identity. In connection with the above regulations we have kept the identity of the victim confidential.

**Germany: Season of Creation and Franciscan Feasts Bring Blessings to All**
By Sr. M. Alexandra Völzke

**Season of Creation 2020 in Salzkotten and elsewhere**

The niece of one of our sisters is the directress of a kindergarten St. Franziskus in Warendorf, a two-hour drive from Salzkotten. She and her colleagues had introduced the life of St. Franziskus to the children and taught them the Canticle of the Sun. Now the children - and also the women - of course
had many questions to us sisters, which we were able to answer via video conference due to the Corona pandemic.

Our Franciscan hand puppet named Brother Tom then led by camera through the rooms of the novitiate so that the children had a good impression of how we live. At the end they recited the song "Laudato si". On October 5th the children then celebrated with their teachers a prayer service in nature and created a big poster with self-painted pictures of the Canticle of the Sun.

Since the Bible Circle is currently meeting online to share the Bible, not all seniors can participate via the Internet. Therefore, they were invited to a meditative walk through the Motherhouse Garden. Certain locations of the garden became stations to the elements of the Canticle of the Sun, e.g. Mother Earth at the herb and flower beds, or Brother Death at the cemetery cross. There they could take up and reflect on the beauty and vulnerability of life.

From September 26 to October 4, 2020, people were invited to participate in a digital prayer novena to the Canticle of the Sun, which was available in text and pictures on our website and Facebook page. The intention was to combine amazement at the beauty of creation and awareness of the vulnerability of our earth with prayer and action. The people were invited to pray together and to change their attitudes, as Pope Francis also called for in his encyclical "Laudato si—On Care for Our Common Home".
Of course, we sisters and some young guests also celebrated the transitus and the feast days solemnly and liturgically and were even allowed to receive the first blessing of a newly ordained priest - of course all under Corona conditions. This time the feast of St. Francis also coincided with the Thanksgiving Day, which was very appropriate in terms of theme. The blessed fruits were given to sisters and residents of our nursing home to enjoy. Many sisters, especially in St. Clara, watched the service in Assisi and the signing of the new papal encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* on TV - and were pleased to discover Sr. M. Magdalena who was present at the event representing the International Third Order Regular Franciscans.

We are very grateful for all the encounters and inspiration during these days.
France: Anniversary of Laudato Si
By Brigitte and S Timothee

At the invitation of Pope Francis to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the publication of the encyclical Laudato Si', our "small community" wanted to respond by organizing a prayer vigil. The Sisters met in the chapel on May 29, afternoon, and, on the basis of the document proposed by our Diocese, we sang, "How beautiful your works are Lord," and prayed and meditated on the rosary. This was followed by a time of silence where we decide in our own heart a personal resolution. Our physical strength is diminishing, but our prayer power can only increase.

Praise be you, my Lord, with all your creatures,
Praise be you, my Lord, to our sister, Mother Earth, that carries us and feeds us, which produces herbs and a diversity of fruit, with the dying flowers.

My ideal garden—what does it look like? The Garden of Eden in - Genesis 2, 8 - 10 and 15 - 17
The Lord God planted a garden in Eden...The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow from the ground with desirable and tasty fruit; there was also the tree of life in the middle of the garden—the tree of knowledge of good and evil. A river came out of Eden to irrigate the garden...humans were placed to work and keep the garden.

Time of personal meditation: Introduction to the meditation of the biblical text—
From this text, what is the tree of life?
What is the tree of knowledge of good and evil?
What is the commandment to work and keep the garden?

We’re going to take a time (1/4 hour) to draw our ideal garden.
We will present our drawing in one sentence:
What does this ideal garden look like?
What does it feel like?
Finally, what would be the word that would best characterize it, which is for me its essential function?
Almighty God, who are present throughout the universe and in the smallest of your creatures, 
You who surround with your tenderness all that exists, shower on us the strength of your love 
so that we protect life and beauty. Flood us with peace, so that we may live as brothers and 
sisters without causing harm to anyone. God of the poor, help us to serve those in need and 
ever give up. Let us never forget the leaves of this earth that are worth so much in your eyes. 
Bless our lives, so that we may be protectors of the world and not predictors, so that we sow 
beauty and not pollution or destruction. Touch the hearts of those who seek only profits at the 
expenses of earth and the poor. Teach us to discover the value of everything, to contemplate, to 
awaken, to recognize that we are deeply united with all the creatures on our way to your infinite 
light. 

Thank you because you are with us every day. Support us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, 
love and peace.

News From the Sector
The death of 4 of our Sisters and the placement of 3 others created a great void within the community. 
In order to safeguard the 9 sisters of the BAN ST MARTIN and still make "community", we had to 
reorganize and take on new habits of living. All the sisters have been very cooperative and accept the 
changes with great serenity. Of the two previously existing communities (Ste Claire and the 
Motherhouse), we are now united in one community. Some sisters have changed rooms, to regroup, to 
look out for each other but also to save on heating and maintenance of the premises. The virus is still 
very active. No sister went on vacation and we organized, in August, a week of "vacation on site." We 
shifted the schedules of common prayers, leaving breakfast schedule free, and organizing activities of 
recreation during the afternoons. It was a real week of relaxation and sharing.

A 3-day retreat was also organized to end on the feast day of St Francis. Everything was organized taking 
into account the age of the Sisters and the state of health. Beautiful, prayerful and lively meditations 
in the chapel were the support for these days.

Thank you, Lord, for these beautiful moments that we can still live and share.

USA: US Province Now the Saint Clare Regional Community
By S. Beatrice Hernandez and CC Jeanne Connolly

This year has been a year of new experiences. As our country prepares for new national elections on 
November 3rd, systemic racism continues to oppress many people in our country and political leaders 
seem intent on fomenting discord as part of a “divide and conquer” strategy. We pray that the elections 
will bring healing not only within our country, but between the US and its neighbors and friends around 
the world. (this publication was written before the November 3rd US elections)
Celebrating the Season of Creation

From September 1st-October 4th we joined with people throughout the world in celebrating the Season of Creation. Because of the global coronavirus outbreak, many activities could not take place in person. However, we were able to participate through our livestream liturgies in this special liturgical season initiated by Pope Francis 5 years ago. A globe was placed near the paschal candle in chapel to remind us of our commitment to care for our common home. Icons representing the Genesis story of creation were placed among the beautiful plants in front of the altar, which was draped in green. Special prayers of the faithful called all of us to care for the earth and for the poor, especially those suffering COVID-19 worldwide. Our chaplain, Father Phil, used a special Eucharistic prayer throughout the season, and ended each liturgy with a solemn “Season of Creation blessing.” Although we greatly missed being with each other and members of our faith community in the chapel, we felt strengthened by the love and warmth that was tangibly present as we prayed together.

USA Province Becomes the St. Clare Regional Community

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the US in March, during the final preparations for our last Provincial Chapter. By March, at our pre-Chapter gatherings, we had already made the decision to become a region due to our small size and our desire to have more flexibility in creating a new governance structure that could better serve our needs as we live into the future. We had already decided to elect a regional leadership team of 3 who would serve for a three-year term. So, when our Chapter had to be cancelled in April due to our inability to meet face to face (as required by canon law), we petitioned the General Council to name us a region on the feast of St. Clare. Our new name is the St. Clare Regional Community.

From August through September we met as a regional assembly via Zoom technology. Over 50 sisters and covenant companions participated in sharing the meetings. We were able to have conversation in randomly assigned groups of 5-6 people, as well as sharing in the larger group with everyone participating. Through zoom we were able to have powerpoint slides when needed for information sharing and for prayer. At other times we could see each other as we spoke and listened to one another. It was wonderful to be together, even in the midst of COVID-19.
During our first regional assembly, the Sisters met to complete the necessary preliminary work needed to become a region... discerning a new leadership team, affirming new recommendations for governance, and renewing bylaws and statutes. With business taken care of, we then gathered as the entire Wheaton Franciscan Community, vowed members and covenant companions, in our collective role of inspiring, supporting and fostering the ongoing evolution of our new St. Clare Regional Community. Together, we developed and affirmed our vision prayer for how we choose to live, work, and be in our world today. We concluded our celebration of the feasts of Transitus, St. Francis and Mother Clara with the installation of our first regional leadership team. S. Alice Drewek represented the general council in blessing the team. In the photo below on the right is the regional leadership team:
(from left to right) Sisters Rose Mary Pint, Glenna Czachor and Melanie Paradis.
Brazil: Serving the Poor In Times of Crisis
By S Ivone Barbosa

In Brazil, our congregation has the “Peace and Joy Novitiate” in the community of Urumanduba, a peripheral neighborhood of the city of Santarém. The sisters and novices visit the homes of families in Urumanduba, where they visit sick people and take Holy Communion to the sick. The sisters also animate them with bible readings and reflections during the visits, bringing hope, joy and peace to families who are going through illness or injuries that make it difficult or impossible to go to church and who lack adequate medical assistance.

There are signs of hope in this difficult time that the world is going through in the middle of a pandemic. We sisters participate in a partnership with the Federal University of Western Pará, in the distribution of basic baskets to those in need during the pandemic. This project was initiated by a group of professors from the university, who gathered and raised money to make the food baskets. The project aims to help local farmers by purchasing the food they grow. It also assists families in various neighborhoods of Santarém by providing much needed food for poor people. We sisters organize the delivery to the needy families in the neighborhood of Urumanduba where our novitiate is located. This project is being of great help to needy families because the time of the pandemic has left many families without jobs and are suffering hunger and many needs.

Peace and Good!
Netherlands:
By Mirjam Wolthuis

We had a beautiful summer with a little more peace on the Corona front. We could receive visitors again and even the annual summer trip to the sea was possible for those who could not go out on their own and have been alone on the estate for months. It was wonderful to go to the sea by bus.

What was also special was that a young man reported that he was going to walk from Haarlem via Assisi to Rome in the summer. This pilgrimage is named *Pellegrino Dei Francesco*. He had discovered that Franciscans lived in Aerdenhout, so he asked to come for a travel blessing and a first stamp in his pilgrim's passport. Sr Auxiline gave him both. It was agreed that he would come back to tell about his hike to Assisi.

In the Netherlands from June onwards groups of up to 30 people were allowed to come together again. Then the chapel was used again for the lauds and vespers. The Sunday celebrations remain in the Atrium, where more people fit in at 1 ½ meters distance from each other. When it is full downstairs, sisters and residents also sit on the open second floor from which they can view the atrium.

So there was a joint celebration on Franciscus Day. In this bizarre Covid era in which loneliness and lack are so lurking, the renewal of vows was an emphatic sign of interconnectedness. The interconnectedness and fidelity to each other and the religious ideals were palpable. Sr. José had made a particularly beautiful memorial table, which formed the center for the day. Every day since April the Dutch sisters include a special prayer in lauds for everyone who has to deal with Covid 19:

(Note from the newsletter editor: You may want to print the last page of this newsletter and join the Dutch Sisters and Associates in praying this prayer daily.)
Let us pray for all who are suffering the consequences of the current Corona pandemic:
may God give comfort and healing to the sick,
hope to those who live in fear or in distress,
strength to those who assist the sick,
Insight to scientist looking for treatments,
wisdom to those who take measures for society,
and the eternal light to those who succumbed to the virus.