

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°66 – NOVEMBER 25TH 2019



Dear Sisters,

Once again we are dealing with migrants in this issue of INFO which has gathered together some apostolic experiences from the Territories. We will be able to appreciate how the creativity that always moves us to seek new forms of service, and the missionary zeal that does not allow us to fall asleep in the face of the suffering of our brothers and sisters, has us inventing ways to welcome, accompany and integrate among us those who have come from afar, sometimes in a massive scale.

Migration as a current problem that has thousands of people of all ages and cultures suffering, does not leave us indifferent. It makes us uncomfortable, it hurts us, it impels us to look for ways of collaboration so that the life of those who have just arrived may be a little less hard and have hope for the future. Listening to their stories we allow ourselves to be moved, we get involved and invent ways of being with them. Sometimes, we can welcome someone in our house, at other times we participate in an integration programme, we visit them, we welcome them in our schools and when possible, we give them work, ... but we can always do something to alleviate in part the hard times they are experiencing.

Pope Francis, who has sometimes had harsh words to describe the indolence of society in the face of the suffering of migrants, is categorical in pointing out that “for the Christian community, the peaceful integration of people from various cultures is, in a sense, a reflection of their catholicity, since unity,

which does not annul ethnic and cultural diversity, constitutes a dimension of the life of the Church which, in the Spirit of Pentecost, was opened to all who wish to embrace it” (Interview with the *Libertà Civili* magazine of the Italian Ministry of Internal Affairs, *aciprensa*, April 7, 2017).

The community in the General House constantly has a “cable to earth” among the migrants who have arrived in Italy. Our sister Mercy brings us news every week of the women prisoners in a detention centre in Ponte Galeria (Rome), because they were caught on the street “undocumented”. They spend days, weeks or months there, while they are being tried, which usually ends with deportation. Mercy visits them together with some sisters from other congregations bringing them a little joy, a listening ear and support. Then, she tells us about the lady from Angola who arrived in a dinghy, or about the young Panamanian woman who is very afraid to return to her land. They nourish our prayer and allow us to experience a little this priority of the Apostolic Plan that governs us at this time.

Sacred Scripture provides us with many texts for our reflection on the subject. The people of Israel from the beginning are an immigrant people. “My father was a wandering Aramian” is a phrase that is repeated in the Bible to express the origin of the people and to teach the youngest their history. God's Law has many references to the treatment, welcome, and care that the children of Israel must have with immigrants. Along with orphans and widows, foreigners are the paradigm of the marginalized, and the Law defends them. “The stranger who lives with you will be regarded as one of you and you will love him/ her as yourself...”, says Leviticus (19,34). And Jesus himself, when he identifies himself with the helpless, includes among them the stranger (Matthew 25:35).

There are plenty of reasons to continue looking for new ways to accompany migrants. It is a question of humanity, justice, mercy...

Affectionately,