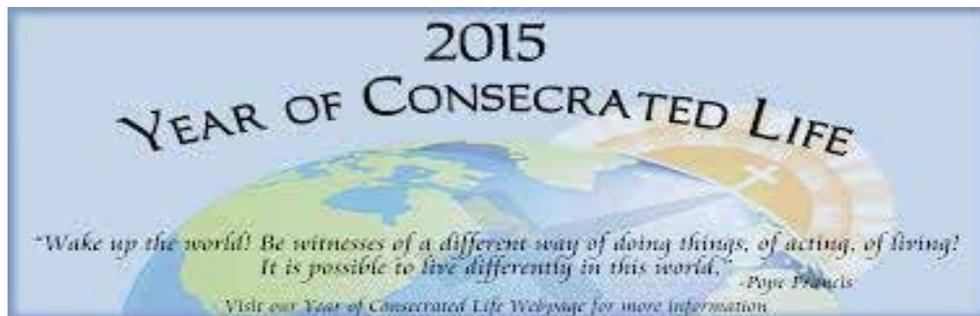




# WHISPERS OF THE SPIRIT

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## LIVING THE CONSECRATED LIFE

If our God became 'one of us' in Jesus for any reason at all, it was to tell us as unambiguously as possible who we truly are and what we can become. From the very first moment of existence, each of us is *truly* a son or daughter of God. Each of us comes into being through the loving breath, the Holy Spirit, of our Creator God, Who IS Life and Love.

*"Your imperishable spirit  
is in everything".  
"Our DNA is divine!"*

Living life as a 'consecrated woman' for more than fifty years, I have come to realise this tremendous Truth more deeply. Consecrate means 'to make sacred /holy' and we are this from the very beginning. We can only lose this sacredness through deliberate rejection of our giftedness.

So, what happens to us at our Baptism? We come into a Community of Faith that knows this Truth and wants to help us live it out. At his Baptism, Jesus, as a believing Jew, surrendered himself to the God he had come to know. The Holy Spirit "came upon him", and he heard his own tremendous Truth: "You are my Beloved Son". The Spirit within him overwhelmed him; people followed Jesus, marvelled at him, came to believe in him, shared him with others, and even died for him.

Through Baptism, the Community of those who publicly follow Jesus offer to all who desire it a share in this experience of Jesus – and the sacredness that is ours from the beginning is publicly affirmed and accepted. YOU truly are my beloved son/daughter.

When preparing to make our Religious Vows, we came to realise a profound truth. Our call was not to be set-apart from / or better-than our brothers and *sisters*.

It was rather to depth our Baptismal consecration and bear witness among the human family to "the Hope to which we are all called". And the source of that Hope is our innate sacredness, brought to light for us by Jesus, our Brother and Lord. We are all "born of God, sons and daughters of the Most High".

Through accepting the gift of our Christian Faith, we are invited to live our consecration wherever our lives may take us. Personally, I am tremendously grateful to have been called to live it out as a Servant of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit within us who makes us who we are, and who enables us to grow into the fullness to which we are all called. And I believe it is our particular Charism to help awaken our sisters and brothers to the treasures of the Spirit deep within every member of the human family – treasures that are enhanced through Faith in Jesus and acceptance of Baptism.

God's life-giving breath of holiness / goodness longs to 'come more alive' in each of us – and through us, in our world; longs to melt us and mould us more and more into the image of Jesus; longs to fill us and use us to share his tenderness, mercy, healing; longs for us to spread the Good News of a loving Father/ Mother God who breathed us into existence, created each of us as precious, and waits with open arms to draw us Home forever.

*Holy Sacred Spirit, breathe your  
breath on us. Holy Sacred Spirit,  
breathe your life in us!*



# My dream came true

When I was seven years old, I had a dream – I wanted to be a religious Sister, but I did not know why. One day, when I was in Secondary School, one of my teachers asked me about my goals – what I wanted to be in the future.

Without thinking, I said “I want to be a nursing nun. I want to take care of patients, to be there for them. When a nurse is with a patient, I think she is warm, thoughtful and compassionate.”

He laughed at me and said, “You have a beautiful dream, but I am not sure if your parents will agree.” I did not think about whether or not my parents would agree, because I really believed that they would.

In August 1989, with the blessing of my parents, I joined the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters in Hokeng on the island of Flores, Indonesia. It was the day my life changed completely. At that time, life in a monastery model was not as I had previously imagined. I started to learn about a life of prayer and community life. I also learnt about housework, cooking, washing, sewing, and also farming, gardening, and of course, there was more study. On the one hand, it was really fascinating and enjoyable; but on the other, it was so boring, sad and painful, because I felt I had lost my beloved family, friends and my freedom. Nevertheless, I believed that my Lord Jesus had a plan for me, so I could meet any difficulty and any challenges of the situation.

After my first vows in 1992, I had an experience of working in St Rafael Hospital in Cancar, Manggarai for two years. This is one of the hospitals conducted by the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters in Flores. After that, I studied in the Nursing Academy of St Vincent de Paul Hospital in Surabaya on the island of Java. This hospital and academy are also conducted by the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters.

After I graduated as a registered nurse, I returned to St Rafael Hospital to work as a nurse. It was a great time. I loved my mission. My dream had come true – but not for too long!

After I made my final vows, the Leadership Team in West Flores sent me to study again, this time to study medicine at the Trisakti University in Jakarta, the capital of the Republic of Indonesia. Deep in my heart, I whispered to Jesus: If this is your plan, please walk with me. I am only a servant, and a tool in your hands.

I studied medicine from 2002 to 2009. On graduating as a doctor, I returned to St Rafael Hospital. St Rafael is a modest hospital with 66 beds. It has a children’s ward, an adult ward, a post-surgical ward and a maternity ward. Also it has a major and a minor operating theatre. As well as a laboratory and pharmacy, it offers facilities for physiotherapy and radiology. The outpatients’ clinic meets the needs of emergency and ongoing care for patients, and provides facilities for visiting opticians and dentists. As the size of the hospital indicates, Cancar is a medium-sized town.

Whoever works alone as the resident general practitioner in a hospital is often challenged. I have learnt a lot from the experienced nurses, the midwife, pharmacist, radiographer, etc. Especially one of our SSpS Sisters, Sr Reginardis, a senior Sister who came from Germany many years ago, proved to be my dictionary of life when I encountered a difficult or critical situation with a patient. I am really proud of her, because, out of her life’s wisdom, she always knows the best for every patient. We also have a good relationship with the specialists in the local Public Hospital, as well as





with OSSA (Organization of Specialist Surgeons of Australia) who come twice a year to share their professional skills in orthopaedic surgery, plastic surgery and ENT surgery.

*I believe that Jesus  
is with me, blessing me,  
and the Holy Spirit guides me,  
and brings to an appropriate  
result any challenge  
that I meet.*

As I accept the mission to which I have been sent, from the depth of my heart I want to thank the Leadership Team of West Flores for the trust and professional preparation they have given me.

To them, and to our General Leadership Team in Rome and to the Provincial Leadership in Australia, I also want to express my gratitude for the opportunities given me. Here in Australia, I am able to gain a command of the English language which I need in my professional life at St Rafael Hospital.

I am now preparing to return to Indonesia. I know I have been enriched by sharing life with my Holy Spirit Sisters here in Australia, and I thank them for their love, kindness, and hospitality. I have been very happy to be a part of this province.

*Sr. Natalia S.Sp.S.*



## Jubilee celebrations

Monday 2 February dawned a beautifully clear day for the celebrations for our three Sisters – Sister Mary Thorn and Sister Clare Simon celebrating 65 years of religious profession, and Sister Patricia Naughton celebrating 60 years.

Each of the Sisters touched a deep sense of gratitude – a gratitude that had more depth than the surface words we use and which was the theme of the celebration.

On reflection over the past sixty plus years the Sisters became aware of how the God of Love, who is always so generous, blessed each one of them in the journey of their lives. From childhood, through the early years of religious life, which for them was pre-Vatican, and then the challenges and great blessings following the Vatican Council were all very significant events for each of them.

Terry Naughton MSC was the main celebrant assisted by Bishop John Gerry and four other priests. The choir of young sisters added beauty and solemnity to the celebration.

The theme of gratitude was very beautifully portrayed in the rendition of the Magnificat (hymn of thanksgiving) in a religious dance by one of the Sisters.

The presence and support of the Sister's families, friends and associates in ministry added to the joy of the celebration.

*As Sisters Mary, Clare and Patricia  
each face their future they gladly accept the  
Holy Father, Pope Francis', invitation  
to continue "The joy and beauty of living the  
Gospel and following Christ to the full."*



# My return journey

*Sr. Josapha S.Sp.S.*

The year 2015 began for me in a most remarkable way – so out of the ordinary that I felt my mind could not quite comprehend it! It took a great leap of faith and an aerial leap over land and sea to arrive back in the land of what I had come to regard as the place of my second birth – INDIA!

## How did all this come about?

When I received my mission appointment in 1959, it was an appointment for life and I never expected to ever return to Australia, therefore, a new country, a new way of living, of acting, of speaking, of learning and understanding, in short – a rebirth! The place of my assignment was Indore, a small township in Madhya Pradesh, Central India.

Over a number of years, I worked closely with one particular sister, Sr. Baptista Simons from the Nederland's, who had come to Indore some years earlier, and who was already involved in working amongst the poor women and girls outside of regular school hours. She became a real role model for me of my understanding of what missionary meant. Prayerful, compassionate, inventive, she wanted to make a difference in the lives of the downtrodden and to use all means within her power to lift them from their poverty by teaching them better ways of learning and earning, where they would give up begging and regain their own innate dignity as people, and women in particular.

She not only motivated me, but also others. A group of young women coming from underprivileged backgrounds expressed their desire to join in this venture. The then Bishop of Indore, Francis Simons SVD observed all this and went the further step of approaching our Superiors to receive permission to allow both Sr. Baptista and myself to be made free for the work so that it would be possible to do it on a full-time basis together with the enthusiastic young women also offering themselves.

His permission was finally granted and so on Wednesday, 13 January, 1965, Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, when Jesus began the time of his own public life, both Sr. Baptista and I moved out of the familiar life we had known and joined the young women after a simple ceremony of acceptance



into what would be known as the Sant Joseph Sevika Sanstha. We were offered a small house in the Church compound previously occupied by the parish priest, originally meant for one but now for six persons! It wasn't long before four orphan children came to us. Then followed some widows needing a home. Benefactors from Germany and Holland helped us with much needed funds, and after being offered land a couple of kilometres away, we began the huge task of building. One year later, we moved to the few rooms that were ready and then gradually sorted out place for the sisters, the children, the widows, a workroom for stitching and craft where poor women could be employed, then a small shop to sell what they had made, a store room for grain and supplies. We had low payback revolving schemes in place for the people to buy sewing machines, cycles, and beds. Later a home especially for the children was built and the children gave it the name, Hamara, meaning "Ours". A dispensary and medical centre followed, as also a home for the aged and destitute.

The lepers we served in their huts and by the roadside. Again benefactors came to our assistance by supplying the necessary funds for their medication. As the years went on, a project for building homes for the lepers came about and an SVD confrere, Br. Henry Dunk joined us in the work amongst the lepers and in the medical centre.



*Background image: Sadly, but still with gratitude and joy, we all remembered Sr. Baptista who had been a driving force throughout all the years. Sister died on 27 July 2009 in Holland. But her ashes were taken back to Indore and her grave is now in the grounds of the Centre in a beautiful Memorial Garden where many of the people come to pray.*

Expansion took on its own momentum as more young women joined the Sanstha, more children came to us and we found that a great deal of effort should be done in the field of education, both of the sisters and children as also the children from the poor families and the lepers. Other areas of apostolate followed, Mata Maria Samiti for catholic women creating a space for them for prayer, discussion, workshops, tuition for poor and street children, prison ministry, boarding schools, health centres, shelters, Grihini schools, family visits, farming (taken on in the villages, and one model farm run by our lepers), social centres where women could both learn and earn endeavouring to provide a thorough formation with true Christian charity to all without distinction of caste, race, creed or social condition.

In December of 1999, I returned to Australia sadly having to leave my beloved people in India.

**What was the event that made the beginning of 2015 remarkable for me?**

I received the most welcome news that I could return to India to take part in the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of the Saint Joseph Sevika Sanstha!

This was an unprecedented joy for me. I arrived back in Indore which was no longer a small township, but a thriving metropolis with modern airport, shopping malls, traffic lights, business

centres. The number of the Sisters had also grown, from the original four, to now 230! The children from our centre had also grown up, married with children of their own, and happily I was able to meet up with most of them and their now extended families.

Over the time of my visit I also met up with my beloved leper families and we enjoyed going over all our memories of ‘the early days!’ Many business people also came to express their thanks for help we had provided to them when they were struggling to survive, but because of methods regarding banking and business management which Sr. Baptista had taught them, were now well-off and able to provide employment to others.

*Who could have imagined 50 years ago of what was presently taking place? All the problems, heartaches, setbacks, disappointments were now forgotten and all were caught up in the joy of family and friends and now looking forward to the next 50 years.*

The actual days of the celebration were filled with both Church ceremonies and cultural programmes and a great number of guests attended.

God’s blessings have been shown to us in abundance, and we know that we trust in the message of Christ and live out that message in our own lives, the work will continue to grow.



## Prayer for Pentecost

*Beloved God, we give you thanks  
for your guidance And inspiration  
and the promise of Hope in our time.*

*You call us to love in a time of indifference,  
To non-violence in a time of injustice,  
And to life in a time of death.*

*You teach us not only how to live,  
But how to die; how to transform not only  
the world but our own broken hearts, as well.*

*Your Incarnation transcends all our dreams  
for a better world  
And declares your reign here and now,  
At this very moment in human history.*

*In Jesus, we meet you, our beloved God.  
We see your true face. From now on we know  
that you are not a God of despair but of hope;  
Not a God of wrath but of mercy;  
Not a God of condemnation but of compassion;  
Not a God of imperial power but of suffering;  
Not a God of domination but of loving service;  
Not a God of oppression but of liberation;  
Not a God who blesses injustice  
but the God of justice;  
Not a God of war but of peace;  
Not a God of violence but of non-violence;  
Not a God of death but of Life.*

*From now on we know that we all have  
been created. To share in the fullness of life,  
in your love and unending mercy.*

*We step forward into the future, supporting  
each other, Building community, making peace,  
practicing non-violence, Creating justice, and  
reconciling with our enemies, come what may.*

*We have met Jesus the Rebel. He is alive  
and goes before us. Summoning us to  
carry on the mission of justice and peace.*

*We have been changed forever.  
Beloved God, you have begun  
the transformation within us.*

*Amen.*

*Adapted from a prayer by Janet Chrisholm*

## *In loving memory*

**SR CHRISTINE HESEL SSPS**

21.10.1927 – 31.01.2015



Sr. Christine was born on 21 October in 1937, in Hamburg, Germany, the second child of Wilhelm Johannes HeSEL and Anna Leying. Christine's brother Wilhelm HeSEL, sister-in-law, their two daughters and their families live in Germany.

When she was four years old the Second World War broke out and brought about a sudden end to her family's happiness. Her father was forced to fight for his country and ended up in Russian imprisonment. He was later released from the prison, but she said that she did not recognise him when he came home. During the war she learned to live with the minimum. Although there was little money, her parents were very hospitable. It is no wonder that she became so hospitable to all who came in contact with her.

During her teenage years, her parents who were very prayerful, encouraged her to take an active part in parish life, which extended to the membership in the choir, the legion of Mary, the youth group and the table tennis club. Finally she accepted responsibility as leader of the different youth groups. This gives an idea of how she could do what she did in different parishes in Brisbane and in Sydney. She was truly a great motivator bringing out the best in people's lives.

She was also greatly interested in fashion design. At the age of 21 she got her qualification to work in a fashion salon.

She joined the Holy Spirit Sisters in Steyl, the Netherlands in 1958 and made her first vows in 1960 and final vows in 1967. Lively, independent and free as she was, she found all the rules and regulations at the convent in 1950s very challenging and confusing. But determined as she was, nothing could stop her from recognising God's call for her. She received a study appointment to the Australian Province in 1967 and mission appointment to India after her studies.



But God had a different plan and she was asked to stay in Australia as a teacher. Though it was hard for her to accept this decision in the beginning, gradually she found her home in Australian Province. After completing her diploma in Teaching she took up a teaching position in Petrie Parish. She enjoyed her teaching career.

After four years as Principal, she moved into being religious education coordinator and worked closely with the Parish Priests Fr. Denis Long and later with Fr. Leo Skelly in Petrie. Later she was involved in Pastoral Care in Holy Spirit Hospital, Brisbane and as Pastoral Associate in the Parishes of Nerang, Springfield, and Rydalmere, Sydney.

She received a Masters Degree in Pastoral Studies from the Institute of Pastoral Studies, Chicago, USA. As a Pastoral Associate, she worked with endless energy, enthusiasm and zeal. She was deeply compassionate, very committed, creative and reached out to all regardless of who they were or where they came from or their status in the society. Nothing could stop her from doing what she thought would be for the good of the particular group or person. Even if it demanded a few challenges or confrontations, she would go for it by all means!

In health and in sickness she tried her best to live her life to the full and motivated others to do the same. When we think of her life and especially the last few years as she was battling with leukaemia, the passage that comes to mind is the passage from the book of Timothy...

*“I have fought the good fight,  
I have finished the race,  
I have kept the faith and now  
a crown is waiting for me”.*

Journeying with Christine in the past years and while she was in the hospital during her last days, we feel that she has indeed fought a good fight in life as a person who is truly human. She did not want to feel sorry for herself instead she directed all her energy to care for the sick and the suffering until the last time she was admitted in Mater Hospital, North Sydney on 20th January. She had a delightful sense of humour which lasted right to the very end.

She kept the focus fully on mission while living the present moment fully. Gradually we could feel that she had won the race, she was at peace with her God and went peacefully into God’s hands on Saturday, 31st January at 4.15 pm.

We are sure that Christine is having a very good time with Jesus and might be sharing some good laughs and asking a few hard questions as she did many times! Of course being a good organiser, she must have already planned a few picnics for different groups too.

Sr. Christine’s funeral service was held on 6 February at 10.30am at our Holy Spirit Chapel in Carseldine. Fr. Leo Skelly who was a good friend of Christine for many years was the main celebrant.

Many friends and colleagues from different parishes where she worked as Principal and Pastoral Assistant, in Brisbane and in Sydney attended the funeral service, remembering her with gratitude as they shared their stories of life, friendship and experiences with Christine.

*We will truly miss you Christine.*



*The Holy Spirit Sisters invite you to our*

# PENTECOST VIGIL

23 MAY 2015

Holy Spirit Home, Function Room  
Cnr Beams & Gympie Roads  
Carseldine

Commencing at 2.30pm



We will be led through the afternoon  
by Fr. Denis Edwards

Theme

*Communion with God's Creation*

*First Talk: 2.30pm – 3.30pm*



*Break: 3.30pm – 4.00pm*



*Second Talk: 4.00pm – 5.00pm*



*Eucharist with Fr. Denis Edwards*  
5.30pm

**Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters**

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