



On The Edge

Editorial

Turn over the page

Danielle Julien, Editor

That's it, we have turned over the page, and we are in 2011. The calendars have been changed on the walls and some new diaries serve to jot down our appointments, our meetings, our diverse activities.

The page is turned over and for all that, is there anything new? We still hear the same news of natural or political disasters: floods, earthquakes, perturbed elections, threats of war. We could say that the old wise man Qohelet was right: "Vanity of vanities, says the teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. What do people gain from all the toil at which they toil under the sun? A generation goes, and a generation comes but the earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun goes down, and hurries to the place where it rises." Ecclesiastes 1: 1-5

Once again, I must write this editorial. For weeks now I have seen the due date, and I have nothing in my head but a desperately white page! It is not easy to write, even if only four times a year, a significant editorial for a bulletin whose title is "On the edge". Here am I confronted at the edge: I must write this editorial today!

How are we to cross over the frontier of the passage to a new year? What if this passage into 2011 came to challenge us in our rapport with time? I remember having read a passage in a book of which I don't remember the author (maybe Henry Newman), saying that there are two kinds of time, two concepts coming from the Greek: *chronos* and *kairos*. The *chronos* time is the one that we are most familiar with, it is the one of calendars, diaries, the linear time with our past, our present and our future. The *kairos* time is very different; it is the time of God, of grace, of gift, an eternal present. We pass most of our time in the *chronos*, while we are called to live in the *kairos*. Here would be a good frontier to cross during this new year: to learn to surpass our trap in the *chronos* to live in the *kairos*!

If we could learn to live in the *kairos*, maybe what does not seem to be new, not to have changed on the night from December 31 to January 1 – this news that ends up not being new anymore- could be seen in a new way. Maybe we could discover there a "miracle". In these first days of January, the texts from the liturgy are packed with miracles: a star leading the Wise Men, a whole series of miracles accomplished by Jesus and for a bonus: the multiplication of the bread and the walk on the waters.

I was just reading these last few days the magazine *Message*, the magazine of the lay Franciscan Movement in Switzerland. I found some articles linking miracle, the advent of the Lord at the heart of each event and the overtaking of a limit. The miracle is not so much the overtaking of normal physical limits that we could not explain; the miracle consists in the discernment, the capture of the presence of Jesus which transforms and allows us to go beyond the limit... In the face of what seems to be an insurmountable limit, the miracle tells us that an issue is possible. Beyond Jesus' act of healing, of multiplying the bread, of walking on the waters, one needs to discover what is decisive: confront our doing to what Jesus does to surpass the limit and open up to a possibility, a liberation, a healing.

I believe that I'm telling you about a small miracle: I had no idea about what I was going to write as an editorial. I providentially came across this magazine containing articles about miracles as a means of

surpassing limits thanks to the advent of Jesus; for it was the right moment with its appropriate content. Such is the advent of God which allows me to go beyond the limit to which I was confronted, and due to the very fact, to place myself in the *kairos* rather than in the *chronos* – furthermore, while respecting the due date of *chronos*!

I imagine that, having received but two articles for this issue, many other sisters, MFIC associates and affiliates find it difficult to write for this bulletin, that wants to allow us to share how we are called to cross over some boundaries and go beyond limits... I hope that this editorial will give you again courage, that I will receive so many articles that I will not be able to publish them all in the next issue and I will have to keep some for the following issue!

The page is turned over: I take the liberty of wishing you a good, happy and holy year 2011! Another page is still to be turned over : let us learn to enter God's *kairos* rather than searching to trap God in our *chronos*! Peace and all good!

Outreach to Refugees

Sister Josephine Rush, mfic



From every part of the globe we hear of refugees, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, boat people. Their lives were quite distant from mine until I began volunteering at the refugee Claimant Support Services where I came face to face with real people who had suffered both physical and mental trauma before they fled their country of origin, sometimes by spending countless days hidden in the hold of a ship. They come from countries anywhere in the world where there is conflict and oppression.

I volunteer at the Refugee Claimant Support Services each week, so have come to know quite a few asylum seekers, single men, men with wives and children, all of whom fearing persecution in their countries of origin have escaped to a safe country. They come seeking asylum and protection from conflict, oppressive regimes and personal persecution. The Centre is a haven for them where they know they are accepted and can access the particular help they are in need of whether it be accommodation, food, English lessons, health care, assistance with transport and emergency relief of some other kind. In Australia until their claims are processed, refugees have few legal rights and depend largely on community and charitable organisations.

The RCSS is a non-profit community organisation that was established in Brisbane in 1995. Its mission is to assist refugee claimants while they await the decision on their application to the Federal Government for protection. While the Centre provides claimants with access to computers and English lessons, my work is in administration—answering the phone, processing the amounts of money the caseworker has deemed necessary for each client, responding to offers of donations for the refugees and sending the thank you letters.

I meet many of the skilled and compassionate volunteers who like myself give time in various ways. Some are involved in seeking employment opportunities or housing for the refugees, while others source grants and fundraising possibilities, as the Centre does not receive any Government funding and so relies heavily on ongoing fundraising and donations, as well as the dedication of the volunteers, to

maintain its work and services. Volunteers also make sure that the Food Bank is well supplied and the clients are free to take what they need. It operates on a point system so as not to disadvantage anyone.

Initiatives have been undertaken to offer a sense of belonging to these people. One such was a CD “Scattered People” which features the music and stories of the different countries and cultures. This CD is a money raiser for the Centre. Another initiative is a community garden that also has the potential to offer a sense of belonging to people where the opportunity to nurture their own culturally-familiar vegetables and fruit have benefits for the clients of the Centre. Our sisters gave the funding to get this project underway, and already the garden is producing results.

The Shekina Health Centre Saved one Family

Victims of Sexual Abuse

Lidia Cristanto

The Center of Integral Health “Shekina” lodged Mrs. Ester Juárez Litano, her four year old daughter, Rosemary and Maria, 18 days old, who are originally from Olmos. The mother’s job required that she leave early for work each day. She was leaving her four-year-old daughter in the care of her sister. The uncle took advantage of the child, who made this known to her mother who went to the health providers, who in turn reported the abuse to Mindes (an agency for women in emergencies). This organization sought shelter for this family at Shekinah until a safe situation for Ester and her daughters could be found.

Finally the public prosecutor found a job for Ester. At this job, Ester can take her baby and leave her in the daycare while she does her work of house cleaning. Rosemary, the four-year old, can come to this house for lunch and after school, and the family can return to their own home after the work and school day are finished.