



Sisters
Hospitallers

CONTIGO

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

“The main goal of the «Hospitallers of Africa» project is to create one or more canonical structures to strengthen the hospitaller presence on the African continent”



Sisters from the Hospitaller Committee of Africa (CHAF) together with the superior general, Anabela Carneiro

The current presence of our congregation in Africa extends to nine countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: Mozambique, Togo, Ghana, Liberia, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Angola. **The welfare activity is developed through 16 social and health care centres**, in which comprehensive and rehabilitative care is offered to people with mental illness. **Also, we have a general hospital, a children's hospital and an association dedicated to the assistance and care of people with HIV.**

Sisters and collaborators

The number of sisters in Africa, as of 31 December 2016 is: 46 sisters with perpetual vows, 34 with temporary vows, 17 novitiates and 9 postulants. There are also pre-postulants, candidates and other young women interested in hospitaller life. Out of the 46 sisters with perpetual vows, 22 are from other countries such as: the Philippines, France, Spain, Poland and Portugal.

People who collaborate on the welfare projects: workers, volunteers, etc. They are making strides in the identification with the history, values and culture of our institution. **To carry out this training work, in the hospitaller identity, we have a large and motivated group of collaborators** who we call: 'Friends of St. Benedict Menni' or 'Brothers and Sisters of St. Benedict Menni', depending on the centre or region. Without them, we could not have gotten where we are, since we are trained and encouraged together. Currently, these groups exist in many of the countries where we are present, and in some of them even since the first sisters' arrival.

The people who are helped and their families, in general, are very grateful for the service that they receive at our health centres. More and more, we notice a substantial increase in the demand for care at many of them. **The authorities trust us.**

They call on us from many places on the continent, and we are convinced that 'the light of hospitality' must reach all the corners of the world because **hospitality has no limits or borders.**



Welfare activity of the Sisters Hospitallers in Africa

"The people who are helped and their families, in general, are very grateful for the service that they receive at our health centres. More and more, we notice a substantial increase in the demand for care at many of them"

'Hospitallers of Africa' Project

The Hospitallers of Africa project is not an isolated initiative. It is part of the life and mission of our congregation, the restructuring and revitalisation process of which began in 2007 and was confirmed at the XX General Chapter, held in 2012.

With a view to initiate this restructuring and revitalisation process in Africa, from 5 to 18 December 2014, the 'First Africa Hospitaller Meeting' was held in Elmina, Ghana. During the meeting it was agreed: **'to design new paths to revitalise our life and mission in Africa'**. After this meeting, and after consulting with the provincial superiors, the general government considered it an opportunity and a duty to create a committee to promote this path **from an 'African perspective'**. This is how the Hospitaller Committee of Africa was born that, in line with the previous restructuring committees, abbreviates its name with the letters CHAF.

The sisters of CHAF held the first meeting in Douala, Cameroon, from 4 to 6 January 2016, and the second meeting in Maputo, Mozambique, from 22 to 24 March 2017. The sister from the general government responsible for coordinating the project, and a member of the committee itself, is Andrea Calvo, fourth general councillor.

Since CHAF, we do not make decisions alone. We are in constant dialogue with the provincial superiors, and they, in turn, are in dialogue with the sisters of each province.



"Our wish for the future is «to keep the light of hospitality on». We long to move forward with faith, confidence and hope, always listening to the Spirit of God, to do his will"

CHAF's Goal

From the beginning, this process has been well received by all the sisters. We feel like part of the same congregational body, daughters of the same family, and through this project, we dream about getting to know each other more, among us, as well as our different realities and activities in Africa.

We still cannot talk about the date when the process will end since there are many aspects to be considered in the life and mission of the congregation on this continent. As of now, the most important thing is to begin to share a series of actions and seek ways to cooperate in different areas such as training, the exchange between sisters from different countries and others. **Our goal is to be able to find a way to join forces and, in the future, create one or more canonical structures on the African continent.**

Currently, the African communities depend on their 'Mother Provinces': England, France, Spain and Portugal.

CHAF's Actions

During this awareness-raising period, the actions that we have put in place to develop the project are based mainly on communication and are:

- **Information at all levels:** for this, we send information about our presences to the provincial superiors and their governments, local superiors and African communities, trainers and key people in this process on a monthly basis.
- **Holding CHAF meetings in different places,** to promote awareness and knowledge of all of the presences.
- **The development of study and discernment materials,** with the enlightenment of the icon of the



Welfare activity of the Sisters Hospitallers in Africa

patriarch, Abraham.

- **The creation of a microsite** to share information about this process with the sisters of the congregation and all the hospitaller community.
- **The organisation and holding of meetings** between the sisters from different structures and responsibility areas in Africa.

We believe that at the next General Chapter, we will be able to make specific proposals.

A wish for the future

Our wish for the future is 'to keep the light of hospitality on'. We long to move forward with faith, confidence and hope, always listening to the Spirit of God, to do his will. We ask for the intercession of our elder sisters and our founders in order to someday be able to create one or more African canonical structures. We know that to achieve it we must be cautious, not hurry and take 'small steps'.

Elisabeth NGO MOUCK, Reine ALEKI and Hortense MAYELA, Sisters Hospitallers of CHAF

INSTITUTIONAL

Feast of St. Benedict Menni in Latin America



Our institution, faithful to its origins, develops the hospitaller mission derived from the legacy of St. Benedict Menni, our founder, who distinguished himself by having and promoting:

- A vision committed to the reality at the time.
- A comprehensive view of the human being.
- Efficient management focused on the good of people.
- An enriching collaboration in favour of a health and care policy.
- A model of care in which science and quality are joined.

He enriched the Church, as well as the way of approaching mental health, of his time. Seeking the best for the ill, in his care model he combined the latest advances in medicine together with a humanitarian and Christian practise.

Following his example and looking to the future, today we find ourselves facing new challenges that demand that we have a more open mind. **Preparing for the future means working responsibly in the present, open to facing these new challenges that allow us to provide solutions to suffering, in different places and cultures in the world**, always with great sensitivity and availability to serve the most disadvantaged.

On 24 April, we paid homage to the life of this great founder, in all corners of the planet where there is a hospitaller presence. In this context, users, sisters, collaborators, relatives and friends of the centres of the Province of Latin America have carried out various activities such as:

■ **Triduum:** Congregational hymn, presentation of videos alluding to the life of our founder, reflections on the values of St. Benedict Menni, reading of some of his letters and the performance of a theatrical play that, starring the users themselves, highlighted different aspects of his life and work.

■ **Eucharist:** specifically on 24 April, a Eucharist was celebrated for all the hospitaller community where everyone who was there shared moments of unity and celebration.



Feast of St. Benedict Menni Celebrations



INTERVIEW

“At the *Association Benoît Menni*, we promote the adaptation and development of our centres, in favour of the residents’ well-being”

Corinne Barennes



Corinne Barennes, secretary of the ‘Association Benoît Menni’, in the French Province explained to us what this organisation is and how it works.

When was the association created and with what purpose?

The Benoît Menni Association is non-profit organisation, founded 23 October 2010 by the Congregation of the Sisters Hospitallers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to join together the French centres in a new management entity, always under the auspices of our core value, HOSPITALITY.

What is its relationship with the French Province?

The provincial superior of France is a member of the different bodies of the association and has the right to vote. She is invited to

all the meetings, or appointments, with people outside the association.

And its geographical reach?

As of today, the association comprises two centres: the Sainte Germaine home in Paris, which takes in 80 people with physical and/or intellectual disabilities; and the Saint Raphaël centre in Marseille, with 70 users with intellectual disabilities, including 10 at the day centre. We hope to be able to integrate other centres in the province in the near future.

How is it organised?

The association’s government holds an Annual General Meeting and a Management Meeting (three to four times per year) where the accounts are approved and the budgets of both centres are established. On a monthly basis, a meeting is held to study the development of the association and the situation of the centres. There are also different committees to address specific topics such as: finances, human resources, development and ethics.

All these bodies are made up of sisters from the congregation and several lay member volunteers. The managing directors of

the centres can be invited to the association meetings, depending on the topics to be discussed.

What are its functions and what services does it offer?

The essential role of the association is to ensure the cohesion of the centres in the province, knowing that each managing director is independent and in charge. We aim to develop networking activities and to strengthen the spirit of the hospitaller community. We also take care of talking with the authorities and other entities in France, with the aim of providing structural stability to our centres, enhancing their adaptation and development, always to support the residents’ well-being.

What are its main characteristics and activities?

The association has several activities: providing support to managers in the financial area; encouraging technical/legal communication and the exchange of information among the centres; organising training and reflection meetings jointly among the centres; promoting volunteerism and pastoral activities, supporting the development of alliances with other institutions; as well as fos-

tering innovation and the implementation of new social health care practices adapted to the needs of our users. All of this within the framework of the Christian values and ethics of the congregation, which guarantees respect for the dignity, diversity and privacy of the people we serve.

What are the future prospects of the association?

We plan to develop, either by coming together with other associations to be able to share some managerial functions or ensuring the management of other centres. Additionally, we are studying the possibility of doing up the facilities of the two centres, to try to adapt them to the residents' needs and provide them with better care. On the other hand, we will try to progressively incorporate new competences and responsibilities for the members of the government of the association.

Silver jubilees of two sisters in Ghana

English Province



Sister Georgina Donzing's vow renewal ceremonies in Takoradi, Ghana



Twenty-five years ago, our first two Ghanaian sisters, Georgina Donzing and Florence Adevor, made their first profession at the St. Joseph's Catholic Church, now Minor Basilica in Elmina, Ghana.

During these years, specifically last 24 April, Sister Florence in Monrovia, Liberia; and Sister Georgina in Takoradi, Ghana, renewed their consecration to the Lord.

In Takoradi, the main renewal of vows ceremony entailed the celebration of a Eucharist at the Christ the King Church. The ceremony was attended by the sisters of the community: Georgina, Margarita and Anastasia, who were accompanied by Sisters Isabel Cantón and Ana María

Oroz, who travelled from England; relatives; and friends who wanted to be there at such a meaningful moment.

Throughout the day, affection and gratitude were shown to Sister Georgina by all the attendees for her life of dedication and devotion to God in caring for the ill and people in need in Ghana. Sister Isabel presented an overview to everyone who was there of the history of the congregation in general and of the history the Sisters Hospitallers in Ghana, a country to which they arrived over 50 years ago.

It was a very happy day, which was marked by simplicity and a family spirit!



"Say Ability" project is born

Spain Province

The Purísima Concepción Foundation, located in Granada, Spain, debuts the project: **'SAY ABILITY'**. This initiative has been able to be carried out thanks to the collaboration with the city council, which has handed them over a kiosk to manage for three months.

The project, which began on 11 April and is scheduled to end on 30 June, involves **giving visibility to the work that the Sisters Hospitallers carry out to improve the quality of life of people with functional diversity**, among other vulnerable groups, through inclusive educational, rehabilitative, occupational and leisure activities.

Through this kiosk, users, collaborators and volunteers of the foundation show the creative work done by the users themselves, while providing information about the work and mission of our institution. In addition, for those interested in collaborating, it is possible to make donations that will go towards:

1. Contributing to providing means for the rehabilitation of people with physical and/or intellectual disabilities at the Sisters Hospitallers centres in Vietnam.
2. Raising funds to provide food and health care to the team of 'therapy greyhounds' with which our institution works, in several centres in the



The Sisters Hospitallers' kiosk in Granada

Province of Spain.

3. Raising funds so that the foundation's sports club can attend championships during the coming year.
4. Obtaining equipment for the foundation and funds so that the users can participate in different types of national meetings throughout the year.

The foundation estimates that more than a million people stop by the stand, located in the nerve centre of Granada (specifically in Bibrambla square).

The laying the first stone celebration

Spain Province

The San Miguel Clinic, located in Madrid, Spain, held the 'laying of the first stone celebration' due to the project to renovate, adapt and expand its facilities. The project began last February and its estimated duration is 20 months.

The event, which took place on 24 April, was attended by the provincial superior of Spain, Matilde Porras; the Minister of Health; and the Minister for Social and Family Policies of the Community of Madrid. All of them were accompanied by users, sisters, collaborators and friends of the clinic.



Sisters, collaborators and authorities at the celebration

"All united by Mocoa"

In Colombia, during the night of 31 March, a natural disaster occurred in the municipality of Mocoa, the capital of the department of Putumayo. The heavy rains caused the Mocoa, Mulato and Sancoyaco rivers to overflow, creating an avalanche of water, mud and stones that devastated 17 neighbourhoods in the city, five of which were completely destroyed.

Tragedy in Mocoa

As a result, more than 312 people lost their lives, 400 were hurt and 300 are missing.

Due to the multiple landslides caused by this natural disaster, the telecommunications and city streets collapsed, leaving Mocoa completely cut off and without potable water. The avalanche also destroyed the electricity grid and left not only this municipality but also other areas of the department like Medio and Bajo Putumayo with no energy.

The great needs caused by this event led to the declaration of a state of emergency and forced them to seek resources from a number of national and international sources. Faced with this situation, several of the country's institutions organised different solidarity campaigns to raise



Campaign slogan and image

and ensure appropriate use of funds.

Solidarity Campaign

On our part, the Latin American Province, through the Inmaculada Clinic located in Bogotá, decided to promote solidarity actions by providing an account number. To carry out this action, they used the words of John Paul II about solidarity as a guide: *'Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all'*

Fourth 'Desktop Project' Meeting



On 21 and 22 March at the San Juan de Dios Provincial House, the fourth 'Desktop Project' meeting took place in which the French and Portuguese provinces participated.

At this meeting, the positive progress of the project was confirmed and it was agreed that each participating centre should organise a local event to announce the activities and their results in its own territory.

The 'Desktop Project' aims to provide people with intellectual disabilities with a better quality life. All this, through an educational environment and the integration of mobile applications in their daily lives that help them to have more independence and autonomy.

Hospitality without borders...



Sisters and users of the Psychosocial Rehabilitation Centre in Mahotas



The Psychosocial Rehabilitation Centre in Mahotas (PSRC), located about 30 km north-west of Maputo, Mozambique, began its activity in 1997 in the **treatment, rehabilitation and social/family reintegration of adults with mental illness**, in collaboration with the State Psychiatric Hospital.

In 2002, the centre inaugurated a children's area dedicated to the care of **children with multiple illnesses** such as cerebral palsy, autism, mental illness, severe sequelae caused by malaria, HIV/AIDS, Down syndrome and psychomotor development delay as a result of malnutrition.

Capacity and complementary activities

As of now, the centre serves 75 users, although its standard capacity is 100 during the day-time, between the two age groups: adults and children.

In the adult's area, clinical care,

nursing, psychology and occupational therapy are also provided to the patients.

While in the children's area, the activities are focused on developing psychomotor stimulation, physical therapy, as well as teaching and educating children, and supporting the maximum development of their abilities, to try to achieve their greatest possible level of independence in their daily activities.

Next to the main building, the centre also has a space of arable land that is used for agricultural work. This activity provides financial benefits while contributing to the rehabilitation of some adult patients.

Management

The Maputo community is made up of six sisters, two of whom are junior sisters; one is a student and the other is currently in Ciempozuelos (Madrid, Spain) discerning her

perpetual devotion to the Lord, within the Hospitaller life. They also have a candidate who is studying.

In addition to the regular workers, the centre has the collaboration of an international volunteer who arrived in October 2016 and will finish volunteering 1 June of this year.

People served

Since it was founded, **2,025 users have been served at the day centre and 17,169 medical consultations** in psychiatry, psychology and child psychiatry have been carried out.

In addition, more than **1,710 people were attended in the out-patient consultations**, including children, teenagers and adults. Most of them were provided with the necessary medications for their treatment, due to the lack of financial resources of their families.

50 years of Consecration to the Lord



Eucharist celebrating Sister María Camino Agós' 50 years of consecration to the Lord

On 20 April, Sister María Camino Agós, superior of the Philippine Delegation, celebrated her 50 years of consecration to the Lord. That same day, three sisters from the delegation renewed their vows.

For the commemoration of this very special date, a Eucharist was celebrated, presided over by Rev. Fr. Eldy de Castro, priest of San Juan de Dios. During each act, Sister Camino said: *'I am very grateful to God for the gift of the hospitaller vocation. Throughout my consecrated life, I have surrendered all of my being to the Lord through those in greatest need. I pray for our young sisters, so that they may be a living and faithful witness to our charisma.'*

Important dates: May and June

- Canonical Visit of the Superior general of the General House, 22 to 27 May 2017.
- 136th anniversary of the foundation and Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 31 May 2017.
- 50th anniversary of the founding of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Quito, Ecuador, 24 June 2017.

For more information and contac:
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