



OPINION PIECE

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40)

Anabela Carneiro, General Supervisor, reflects on the humanitarian crisis currently affecting thousands of refugees, and our Institution's stance.



The plight of refugees and migrants has been a constant throughout human history, but in recent decades - and particularly these past years - the extent of this reality has been increasing at an alarming rate, with consequences that cannot be met with indifference. On a daily basis, the media bring us scenes and eye-

witness accounts that "speak to us" of the vast numbers of brothers and sisters of ours who are fleeing their countries because of war, destruction, hunger, persecution, and the lack of prospects for the future. In one of these accounts we hear that: "We are not escaping in search of a better life; we are escaping in search of the life we do not have here." Faced with this reality, we cannot and do not wish to remain indifferent.

Message from Pope Francis

In the Angelus of 6 September, Pope Francis addresses us with these words: "Faced with the tragedy of tens of thousands of refugees fleeing death through war or hunger, and those who are journeying towards the hope of life, the Gospel calls us to be-

come the 'neighbours' of the small and the abandoned. To give them concrete hope. It is not enough to simply say: "Best of luck, be patient!" Christian hope is spirited, with the tenacity of those pursuing a steadfast goal... In the advent of the Jubilee of Mercy, I call upon parishes, religious communities, monasteries and sanctuaries across Europe to express the Gospel in concrete reality and take in a family of refugees - a more specific gesture in preparation for the Holy Year of Mercy."

Message from the Chairman of the UCESM

The Chairman of the UCESM (Union of the European Conferences of Major Superiors), Fr. Giovanni Peragine, joins in Pope Francis' call, inviting "all religious

communities to 'awaken Europe' and live out the Gospel in a concrete way, preparing themselves to welcome as many refugees as come knocking at our door, supporting a culture of solidarity and respect, and committing these same migrants to integrate and live peacefully alongside the many cultural identities."

Open the door of hospitality to Jesus

With this message, I would invite all Hospitaller establishments in Europe to welcome this request from Pope Francis with generosity and open the door of hospitality to Jesus, "who spends each day in the form of a poor man, a sick man, a pilgrim" (Cf. Dir. 60).

We must do this with a great deal of generosity, but also with responsibility, and in coordination with the organisations responsible for managing this crisis: Caritas, the Refugees Service, the Red Cross and others.

This may be truer in some cases than others, but many of us have empty houses, available spaces, and guest rooms we use very few times a year, or other spaces we could use to welcome these people who are arriving "with nothing; only the hope of finding peace". I am obligated to remind you that these spaces must comply with legal requirements in order to be inhabited.

"Let us ask for this Hospitality without borders that so characterised the life of our own Founder"

Given that this is an emergency situation, it is for the various regional Governments to make decisions regarding the provision of the most appropriate spaces in response to this necessity.

Let us leave the times we live in in God's hands, and let us ask our government to do the right thing in resolving the conflicts that lie at the root of this whole situation. And for those of us immersed in this situation in Europe, let us ask for this Hospitality without borders that so characterised the life of our own Founder.

"It is time to recognise the other, as an equal, with the same rights"



Humanitarian Crisis

The terrible accounts to which we have borne witness at the Borders of Serbia, Greece, Hungary and the rest are caused by a lack of cooperation and development policies, forgetting that behind every decision to abandon a house, a job and a life, there is an expelling factor (war, lack of opportunity, etc.), and human beings whose Human Rights must be assured.

We cannot and must not be alone in our emergency response for all of those who truly need our protection.

It is time to recognise the other, the one who is different, not as an invader but rather as an equal with the same rights, as a positive contribution to our society; as a brother in need for whom we must find a place, even if we are stretched thin.

Europe cannot miss this opportunity to rethink the policies it has implemented until now, to protect the people trying to travel to our lands, to invest in policies aimed at development and integration.

CONFER,
Spanish Conference of Religious Bodies



INSTITUTIONAL

International Congress for Young People in Consecrated Life



Young Hospitallers participating in the congress



This 15-19 September, the first international congress for Young People in Consecrated Life was held in Rome under the motto **"AWAKEN THE WORLD!"** Around 5,000 people in consecrated life gathered for the occasion, from 500 congregations in 125 countries.

"Gospel, Prophecy, Hope" was the thread that united the congress, in which our Institution was represented by a group of sisters from the Italy Province, who experienced these few days as a period of true grace.

Experience and memories

We would like to thank the Congregation for giving us the opportunity to participate in this wonderful event, during which we deepened our vocation as Sisters Hospitallers and were able to share with others in consecrated life our experiences,

dreams, difficulties, hopes and availability in dedicating our lives.

Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, the Archbishop José Rodríguez Carballo and other participants in the congress were always available to answer any queries or questions we put to them.

In the mornings, we reflected on: **"Listening to the call"**, **"In the heart of brotherhood"** and **"The anxieties and hopes of the world"**.

In the afternoon, we participated in workshops that followed the same thread as the topics covered in the morning.

This method was useful both in terms of the discussion that arose within the group and in sharing our experiences, discovering and touching the very heart, which is what moved us to make our

commitment.

The support and trust of Cardinal João Braz and the Archbishop José Carballo were fundamental to this process.

Reflecting on the experience

Reflecting on the experience, we believe that in order to "awaken the world" we must first awaken ourselves. The various speakers talked about the need to BE because the DOING comes after; only when we are capable of being will we be capable of doing, of bearing witness for others in a meaningful way.

The manifestation of leading a life committed to certain values, of manifesting the joy of our lives, is what attracts others to approach our Lord...

**Sisters Hospitallers
who attended the Congress**

"This prize encourages us to continue fulfilling our mission of Hospitality and, as Pope Francis says, to continue caring for the fragility of the world"

Miguel Ángel Varona Alonso



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Miguel Ángel Varona Alonso OH, Chairman of the Fundación Juan Ciudad, speaks to us about the concession of the **Princess of Asturias Award for Concord 2015 to the Order of Hospitallers.**

What does it mean to the Order of Hospitallers to receive this award?

First of all, I would like to say that the Princess of Asturias Award for Concord is a prize that took us somewhat by surprise, because although we knew that we had been nominated, the official notification of the concession of the prize reached us 15 minutes after it was announced by the Princess of Asturias Foundation.

With that said, there is no doubt that for us this award represents

a recognition and an accolade for the work that the Order carries out throughout the world, or better put, it is a recognition of the work of so many people who have made it possible for the Order to carry on and remain faithful to its charisma for Hospitality across the world, primarily those making up the Family of St. John of God: Brothers, Workers, Volunteers, Benefactors...

At the same time, this prize encourages us to carry on fulfilling our mission of Hospitality and, as Pope Francis says, to continue caring for the fragile of the world, building bridges of hope and promoting JUSTICE and HOSPITALITY as the driving forces of our society.

This prize is recognition of "the work carried out to combat Ebola, but also of the care service provided over the course of more than 500 years and the struggle to protect those less fortunate."

In the wake of the Ebola crisis, what is the feeling with regards to receiving the Princess of Asturias Award? What is the current condition of the Order in Africa?

Thinking about the events we experienced a year ago in our

hospitals in Liberia and Sierra Leone, with the eruption of the Ebola epidemic in those countries and the news of the Princess of Asturias award being awarded to our Order, there is a sort of bittersweet feeling about it all.

On the one hand, we still feel the loss of our Brothers and remember the painful times we endured; but on the other, the blow was greatly softened by the knowledge that their act of martyrdom in favour of those less fortunate will live on. In sacrificing their own lives, they have helped to secure longer lives for others in those young African nations that so recently gained their independence, and in those towns and villages with such a joyful culture, filled with spirituality but branded by slavery, poverty and disease.

This bittersweet feeling is undoubtedly compounded by the satisfaction of seeing that, for months now, our Hospitals in Liberia and Sierra Leone have been back in the breach, tending and responding to the most urgent health needs of those who were severely impacted by the Ebola virus.

It is true that the painful events that took place there were a dif-



difficult blow for all of our operations in the continent, but at the moment the Order is continuing to increase its presence in Africa.

What do you think were the primary achievements that led to the Order receiving this prize?

I think these are essentially explained in the Certificate awarding the prize:

- **History of aid:** "in recognition of exemplary aid work over five centuries"
- **Sphere of influence:** "present in over 50 countries."
- **Action against the sensitive issues of our time:** "focuses on the difficult times the world is currently facing, on such sensitive issues as the Ebola epidemic, migrant crises..."
- **Overall objective of the Mission of the Order:** "...and, in general, the protection of those less fortunate and at risk of exclusion."

Aside from all of this, there is no doubt that being awarded the prize was influenced by the events we experienced a year ago in our Hospitals in Liberia and Sierra Leone as a result of the Ebola epidemic. 18 health workers there gave their lives in an act of supreme generosity; 4 of these were Brothers of St John of God and 1 was a Sister from the congregation of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception.

Today in particular, one year on, we remember our Brothers Miguel Pajares and Manuel García Viejo, whose sickness served to ensure that, in Spain and in Europe, our "developed" society became aware of the fact that, beyond our borders, millions of

human beings, brothers and sisters of ours, remained immersed in extreme poverty and acute vulnerability.

What advice would you give to those of us who take part in the same charisma for Hospitality, so we can commit ourselves to live out the values of humanisation and solidarity with those most in need?

Well, this is something of a "compromised" question, because I believe that we are all involved in developing charisma for Hospitality; we try to do the best we can, and always in a way that is faithful to the spirit and connotations of Charisma itself.

So, instead of giving advice, allow me to reflect a little. I believe that Hospitality is eminently humanity, humanisation, solidarity, acceptance... But even in practising all of these Values, Hospitality would remain powerless if we did not put to work other values such as:

- **QUALITY:** as the essential foundation of service and management.
- **RESPECT:** for all those who come to our Centres, and especially for the person being cared for.
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** as a fundamental element of the development of service and management.
- **SPIRITUALITY:** to guide all those who are today in search of meaning, of something transcendent, of their religiousness.

This is the challenge: to continue renewing our Charisma for Hospitality to ensure that it adequately meets the needs of today's society.



Princess of Asturias awarded 2015

First aid centre in Martorell to be recognised with the AMED certificate

Hospital Sagrat Cor

The Hospital Sagrat Cor de Martorell, Barcelona, has become the first aid centre in the municipality to receive the AMED accreditation for promoting the Mediterranean diet.

This certificate highlights the fact that the centre offers a dining service for 40 workers who can enjoy Mediterranean meals on a daily basis, based on healthy and varied dining options.

The recognition was awarded on 18 September in the hospital's educational classroom by Cristina Pérez, director of Barcelona Regional Services, part of the

Public Health Agency of Catalonia; and accepted by José María Peña, manager of the Hospital Sagrat Cor de Martorell, and Roberto Corcuera, regional director for the northern Health division of Serunión, the company in charge of the Centre's restaurant services.

The Hospital Sagrat Cor de Martorell carries out a variety of initiatives with the aim of promoting healthy living among its workers, including, for example, the Martorell solidarity walk and race, in which the majority of the Centre's professionals take part. On the one hand, this



Issuance of the certificate

sporting activity promotes healthy living through exercise, and on the other, it helps to raise awareness in society of the importance of combating stigma in mental health.

A visit that has left its mark

Clínica San Miguel - LRHP



José Luis Arroyo

José Luis Arroyo, technical director of the Psycho-social Rehabilitation Division in the Madrid Province, recounts his experience of the General Superior's visit to the Clínica San Miguel - LRHP from 5 to 9 September.

This experience has allowed each of us to recognise our own role as an integral part of a wider reality called the Hospitalier Community. Users, families, collaborators, sisters and volunteers have once more joined hands to open the doors of our house to the General Government and eagerly share our convictions, but also our doubts and concerns, regarding the projects and activities we carry out.

It has been a very interesting few days of meetings and exchanges, during which we have been able to put a face to the name and get closer to the heart of a governmental team

that, because of the scarcity of opportunities for interaction in day-to-day operations, runs the risk of becoming to our minds an intangible concept or reality. In this sense, it has been a very enriching experience, to be able to see that they are close by, that they are sensitive, have a sense of responsibility and a "big-picture" outlook when it comes to seeing the Congregation's situation from a very open perspective.

Essentially, **this visit has strengthened and nourished us to help us continue pushing forward with this hospitality project that has been entrusted to us.**

“Evolution in psychiatric care in Spain. Benedict Menni and the first psychiatric care specialist”



Presentation of the book about St. Benedict Menni



In attendance at the presentation

The XVIII National Psychiatry Conference, held in Santiago de Compostela on 25 September, included the presentation of the book: **“Evolution in psychiatric care in Spain. Benedict Menni and the first psychiatric care specialist”** by Dr. **Rodrigo González-Pinto López**.

The book was edited by the Fundación Benito Feijoo, and discusses the figure St. Benedict Menni and his role in the modernisation of Spanish psychiatry in the late 19th and early 20th Century. In particular, the publication tells of the founding of the Hospital de San José, in Ciempozuelos, and of the relationship between St. Benedict Menni and Dr. Rodrigo González-Pinto, grandfather of the author and the first medical director of the Hospital. In fact, the biographical elements of both personages are the most interesting and innovative part about the book.

Presentation

The presentation highlighted the special connection between the Saint and the González-Pinto family; as such, the task of writing this book has been passed down through three generations,

culminating in the publication of the manuscript by the son and daughter of the author, Drs. Rodrigo and Ana González-Pinto, both psychiatrists, whose father left the book to them in a state of near-completion when he passed away last year. The Congregation of Sisters Hospitalers has supported the publication process by revising the manuscript, leading to its current format.

During the Presentation, speeches were heard from Drs. José Luis Mediavilla from the Fundación Benito Feijoo, José Ramón Villamarín, Chairman of the Centre, and Rodrigo González-Pinto, son of the author. Cipriana Cía, Superior of the Centro Pai Menni de Betanzos, also took part.

In addition, other professionals linked to the Sisters attended the presentation, including Dr. Antonio Pacheco Palha, medical director of the Casa de Saúde do Bom Jesus (Braga, Portugal), Dr. Manuel Martín Carrasco, director of the Institute of Psychiatric Research (Fundación María Josefa Recio), and Dr. Manuel Sánchez Pérez, coordinator of the Geriatric Psychiatry unit of the Hospital Sagrat Cor (Martorell, Barcelona).

Inauguration of a new unit

Casa de Saúde de Santa Rosa de Lima

On 27 August a new medium-stay and rehabilitation unit was inaugurated in the Casa de Saúde de Santa Rosa de Lima in Belas, Portugal. This unit, which is part of the National Continuous Care Network, deals with addressing the transitional needs of those who have sustained cerebro-vascular injuries, trauma or neuromuscular or neuromotor injuries, among others, with the aim of achieving their rehabilitation and autonomy.

The unit is equipped with a multidisciplinary team composed of specialists in internal medicine, physics and rehabilitation, as well as nurses, a social worker, a psychologist, a speech therapist, a physiotherapist, occupational therapists and more. This new service will have a capacity of 30 beds, distributed throughout double and individual rooms.

This newly-created structure was financed thanks to a Programme following a Tripartite Model, receiving contributions from the Ministry of Health, the City Chambers of Sintra and the Institution of Sisters Hospitallers.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Chairman of the Institute of Sisters Hospitallers, Maria do Sameiro Magalhães Martins, B. Th., the Honourable Health Secretary Dr. Fernando Leal da Costa, the Honourable Mayor of Sintra Dr. Basilio Horta, the Regional Coordinator of the National Network for Integrated Continuous Care Dr. Carlos Regina and the Honourable City Counsellor for Health and Social Action for the City Chambers of Sintra, Dr. Eduardo Quintanilha, who were accompanied by the users of the service and their families, as well as collaborators and other friends of the centre.

Gold Medal of the City of Palencia



Presentation of the gold medal

Sisters Hospitallers Health and Social Centre

The Palencia City Council has conferred the Gold Medal of the City to the Sisters Hospitallers Health and Social Centre - previously known as the San Luis Hospital Complex - in recognition of a 125-year journey of constant devotion, and of its contribution to improving quality of life, with particular focus on the most vulnerable members of society.

The medal was awarded on Thursday 1 October in the Main Theatre of the provincial capital of Palencia, and was attended by approximately 400 guests and presided over by Alfonso Polanco, the city's Mayor. The ceremony was attended by workers, families, volunteers, providers and users of the health and social centre, as well as the management team and sisters from the religious institution, which has been based in Palencia since the 19th Century, and representatives from a variety of local, regional and national social and corporate actors.

"This is a very special acknowledgement of the Institution as a whole. The community of Sisters Hospitallers of Palencia is grateful to accept, especially as it comes from those in our immediate community - our neighbours and our city - and values the work we have carried out for 125 years, remaining faithful to the Mission of our founder St. Benedict Menni and focusing on a model of Integrated Care which deals with biological, psychological, social, human and spiritual issues," comments Fuencisla Martín, Provincial Superior of the Sisters Hospitallers of Palencia.



Hospitality without borders...

Dining service St. Benedict Menni



Dining service St. Benedict Menni

In the year 1999 the Sisters Hospitallers Institution held the spontaneous and informal inauguration of a dining service for 22 children in the city of Florencia (capital of the department of Caquetá in southeast Colombia), more specifically in the neighbourhood of Circasia, in response to the condition of malnutrition presented by the children in the area.

This dining service, named after St. Benedict Menni, currently has three centres located in different neighbourhoods (Circasia, Idema and Palmeras) in the city of Florencia, all of which are managed by two sisters, two collaborators and the children's parents, who provide organised volunteer assistance.

Each of these three locations shares the same **objective of improving the conditions essential for Early Years development in children.**

The Sisters Hospitallers are currently catering for over 120 children in Florencia, varying in age between 6 and 17, **who not only receive nutrition support but also psychological attention** intended to help them become responsible citizens capable of dealing with the harsh social and personal reality they are faced with.

The social work carried out by these centres also involves families in the children's development, providing them with the knowledge necessary for this purpose and encouraging the youngest among them to attend educational institutions, because the **two fundamental pillars of this initiative are nutrition and education.**

The majority of these families are victims of the armed conflict currently affecting the country, and they have very little in the way of resources and employment opportunities.

If interested, you can contribute to this project through this link to our main website:

www.hospitalarias.org/en/index.php/donations

In Colombia, the national chronic malnutrition rate among children is 13.2% and in some regions reaches as high as 34.7%

Chronic malnutrition has a long-lasting impact on the overall health and development of children, particularly in cerebral growth, which affects their cognitive and learning abilities, translating into greater poverty in the long term.

Colombian Paediatric Society, 2014

Metropolitan Disability Congress



On 4 October the Chilean St. Benedict Menni Mental Health Network (Red de Salud Mental San Benito Menni de Chile) took part in a congress organised by the Department of Differing Abilities.

During this congress, which followed an open format, they had the opportunity to raise awareness of our Institution and the work carried out for our service users throughout the various workshops. They also provided information to those who asked for it.

Sport and Healthy Living Congress



On 7 October, a group of service users from the Chilean St. Benedict Menni Mental Health Network attended the "Sport and Healthy Living Congress" and took

part in various competitions such as football and athletics.

The event also received a very special visit from none other than the Chairman of Chile, Michelle Bachelet, who conveyed a message of inclusion by joining in with all of the attendees and stood for a photograph with one of our service users, Patricio Asenjo.

Featured dates: October, November and December

Provincial Evaluation Assemblies

- Portugal Province: 23-28 October 2015
- United Kingdom Province: 3-7 November 2015
- France Province: 10-15 November 2015
- Spain Province: 21-27 November 2015
- Italy Province: 13-17 December 2015

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