

Signs of life

The newsletter of the Franciscan Missionaries of our Lady

The morning of a new day!



“Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple.”

(John 20, 1-2)

Early in the morning, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb! The darkness dissipated, and the light allowed her to see...the tomb was empty! She ran to find Simon Peter!

The light shines, illuminates. Saint Paul wrote in his letter to the Thessalonians 5:5 : “You are children of light.” What happiness! What joy the light gives us! The works of light are: love, joy, peace...

How beautiful are the steps of the one who proclaims peace!

These are dark times. War, hatred, revenge, violence...in short, darkness troubles us.

In this Franciscan Jubilee Year, Saint Francis of Assisi appears as a light! The man of Peace! “Where there is hatred, let me sow love...Where there is darkness, let me bring light...” He inspires our whole being! Christ permeates his entire life!

As we live in this Pascal time of grace, let us bear witness to the light of Christ that shines in our hearts.

It is up to each and every one of us to see how we can help our world move from darkness to light! Energized by the risen Christ, following in the footsteps of Saint Francis and Mary Magdalene, let us hasten to proclaim the new life!

We wish you a very happy Easter!

Great little women: Sister Mary Lawrence, a heroine of the Second World War



Sister Marie Lawrence (1895–1971), a Franciscan nun born in Ireland, was both a member of the French Resistance and a survivor of the Ravensbrück concentration camp. For her courage during the Second World War, she was decorated by General Charles de Gaulle.

Before the Second World War, she worked as a nurse for twenty-seven years. In the town of Béthune, in northern France, she set up a clandestine escape network and saved around 120 Allied soldiers by helping them reach England.

Arrested by the Gestapo in June 1941, she was sentenced to death. Her sentence was commuted to internment and then deportation.

Interned at Ravensbrück in 1944, she was assigned to the camp's sewing workshop, where parachute harnesses for German paratroopers were manufactured. There, she carried out discreet acts of sabotage: she deliberately made certain seams defective so that the parachutes would fail.

Each day, she completed her quota of twenty harnesses, seemingly perfectly sewn and approved by the guards. But in reality, every fifth stitch was subtly weakened to cause failure during its use.

Exhausted and severely emaciated, she narrowly escaped death several times after being selected for the gas chamber, notably by escaping through a window and hiding under bunks.

Upon her liberation, she weighed less than seventy pounds! She then returned to Ireland, where she became a Mother Superior and lived until the end of her life.

- [Click here](#) to watch the full video on YouTube, titled “The Nun Who Survived Gas Chambers By Sabotaging Her Own Work”
- [Click here](#) to read the transcript of the video.

Ethiopia: A new house to support vocations

In January 2026, a property was acquired to house a new formation house. Since March, it has been inhabited. Located near the capital, Addis Ababa, it offers a favorable environment for the **support and formation of young candidates called to consecrated life** within our congregation.



Upcoming: A visit to the United States for the general assembly

A visit to Louisiana in the United States is planned for April 2026, coinciding with the general assembly. This meeting will also be an opportunity to support and encourage the mission of the sisters there, who have been **dedicated to healthcare for many years**.

For over a century, the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady in the North American region have actively contributed to a work of care deeply rooted in the Gospel. Their faith, courage, and compassion continue to inspire the care given to communities today.

Through **FMOL Health**, one of the largest healthcare systems in Louisiana, their commitment enables them to serve a large portion of the local population.

A vast mission... carried out by a small number of sisters.



Upcoming: A visit to Mozambique for the regional assembly

A visit to Mozambique is planned for May 2026, on the occasion of the regional assembly.

This meeting will provide support to a rapidly developing region, brimming with vitality and full of promise.

The mission there is particularly diverse, with a special focus on education, serving young people and their future.

