

Dear Sisters,

we just left the Christmas time as the Church makes us enter into February ordinary liturgy, with the presentation of Jesus in the temple, and the Consecrated Life's day.

How many times we wondered how Simeon and Anna happened to be the right people, at the right place, at the right time?! One would say that they were guided by a celestial satellite ... " .. as moved by the Spirit, Simeon went to the Temple ...".

God has planned for them *then* and for us *today* new paths, events, occasions, opportunities; the pride of each of us lies in following the Spirit's signs. We have seen that God made use of unqualified, unknown, foreign people, and sent them to announce the most important thing: God's love for every man, as with the incarnation of his Son, He became one with humanity.

Even today He is relying on ordinary people, **on each of us, on you sister, on our small Congregation**, so that we may tell our experience of encounter with Jesus. And each of us, in her everyday life, should proclaim the joy of having met Him in Baptism, in the religious consecration as Luigina sister, Him who gives meaning to our lives. Religious life is a **radical** choice, which in its own word means the need of *special roots*. Where are *our roots*? Where are *the roots* of the feast of Jesus' Presentation at the temple, of our baptism, of our consecration, of our communities? *These roots* are in Heaven.

Moses with his arms raised, is every person's, every religious' icon. Each person is a tree with *roots in heaven*. " ...**it's the root that leads me... the sky that carries me.** (Cf. Jer. 17.7- 8).

Our bicentenary's slogan: " Roots of Langa and perfume in the East" is true, because Don Rubino is the son of that wonderful land, but our **real roots are in heaven**.

Baptism is at *the root* of the religious life: every day we return to the heart of this sacrament, because it is the key of an authentic, happy and prophetic religious life.

In nature we see *beautiful roots*; the majority of the roots are underground and make the plant grow: they receive nourishment from hidden, fertile ground, and they push the tree high towards the sky, the air, the light, the sun: from bottom upwards, from earth to heaven.

This is the reality we know in our countryside. In the East, huge trees can be seen strongly rooted in the ground, but with many other roots that descend from high in search of the ground, to give life to new seedlings, which will become themselves strong and big trees. In those lands most plants root in the soil, need humus to grow, but once they have reached a certain strength and power, they give life to lianas that descend from the top down, which touching the ground will give life to new young trees.

As in a circular movement *the roots* must first descend into obscurity, to feed the tree and other roots that will come down from high to return to earth.

Tough times are the ones in which we must **be rooted in the essential**, going deeper to nourish our roots, to allow the Lord to give life to other roots from our lives. The fullness of love that God bestowed upon us, must be poured out on all human relationships without distinction.

May this awareness make us humble, grateful and free in every relationship and human situation. A life revealing the beauty of an existence is possible, where Christ reconciles all and every one, the diversity of languages, cultures, traditions, peoples and nations. **Where are our roots, where our securities??**

*Which are the heights and where do we tend?* As plants we are connected to the sky with the leaves and the earth with the roots; we are a bridge between heaven and earth, we see distant visions beyond human eye from the top; host birds and nests, "we are as trees planted along the rivers of life ..". ( Psalm 1 ).

**We should look at the sky from the earth and at the earth from heaven;** this gives us the right size of the personal life, communities, peoples and nations and, at the same time, freedom of donation.

We live this month of February, with its celebrations and meetings' challenges as a means to allow God's Word to nourish *the roots of our lives*.



I remind you the February prayer meetings on 13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup>, at Acqui Terme; sure that all of you will be present with prayer, and others - hopefully many - with their presence.

A prayer and a hug from Sr. Angela