Sr. Patricia Rediu, who is responsible for Vocational Pastoral Ministry in the Romanian Province, has kindly sent us this encouraging article about her work:

In 2005, the Provincial Superior appointed Sr. Patricia Rediu CJ and Sr. Monica Cojan CJ to take care of the vocational pastoral ministry. Since then, we have organized two or three human formation meetings every year for girls from the Catholic Diocese of Iasi. Almost all of these meetings have taken place in our formation house in Luizi Calugara, near Bacau in the north of Romania. Some of the girls have followed the formation course for the whole 2-3 years.

Since my working companion, Sr Monica Cojan CJ was sent on mission to Cuba last year, I decided to continue formation in spirituality with Sr. Lucia Boasa CJ. Last year we began an Ignatian course "Integration of Life and Faith" with three meetings a year. The first meeting was attended by 31 young people. The next meeting will be in May. Even if in these last years the number of vocations in Romania has decreased, we continue to believe that vocational pastoral work will help young people to find their way in the Church and in the world.

In 2006 an inter-congregational Vocational /Pastoral team was founded in Romania to:

- introduce training in vocation promotion;
- to promote collaboration between congregations;
- to deepen the meaning of vocational pastoral ministry;
- to be at the service of the Church;
- to be a support for those living the religious life.

and in 2010 I was elected as the leader of the committee. As a team of Vocation Promoters we have organized two courses every year since 2006: one for the sisters who are working or want...
Young people meeting at the formation house in Luizi Calugara (Sr Patricia is on the right) to work as leaders, and the second for young people who are searching for meaning in their life (vocational discernment, or, in the last three years we have suggested that they make the spiritual exercises). In Romania only sisters and priests have the opportunity of retreat days and we would like to encourage this practice of making a retreat to be open to all, especially to young people. We know that young people need true and deep experiences. The last two years we have been helping them deepen their understanding of some biblical characters. I am glad to say that the meetings with many religious congregations present are a great opportunity for the Roman Catholic Church and for our people.

The last challenge was when a Marist Priest said to me: "Why do we not do something for young people in Bucharest? I think they need a more powerful experience! There are many students who want something more in their lives. Let's do something". Taking up his challenge, we made this proposal to all the Religious congregations in Bucharest, and with the Sisters who responded to this challenge, we formed a team who work in the field of pastoral/vocation ministry. Together we are like a family. Recently we met as a team for formation because it is important for us to have a common vision.

We have studied together the document “New Vocations for a New Europe”. This autumn we are going to propose to young people a monthly meeting and a way forward involving seven stages of vocational discernment. We ask your prayers for this project and entrust ourselves to God.

Delhi Province - Nirmala

Sr Deepa Madathumpadickal CJ writes about a Vocation Camp in conducted in Nirmala Convent in April:

Seventeen young girls along with our eleven candidates participated in the vocation camp that was held from 1st-3rd April here in Nirmala. The girls came from Delhi, Mauranipur, St. Anthony’s parish, Prem Nagar and from our boarding school. It was organized by Sr. Deepa, Vijayaand, and Tomsy. The first day began with a short prayer through a power point presentation followed by a note of welcome and then introduction by each participant. The resource persons were Sr. Deepa, Fr. George SDB, Fr. Paul and Sr. Manjusha. The whole programme was geared towards ‘Call from God’ - Who am I? Why am I here on earth? These were questions for reflection. Basing the theme on the Bible and on the lives of saints the participants were motivated to listen to and respond to the call of God in their lives. The movie, “Marcellino del Pane Vino” touched their hearts and they were inspired to do little acts for Jesus thus to love him in their lives.

The girls responded well. They were eager to learn, to know and to understand what the Lord is telling them. The meals were served in the refectory along with the sisters and they helped out with the cutting of vegetables, washing up and cleaning. They were happy and returned to their respective places with a renewed attitude to life. We shall keep praying so that the spark within them may grow into a flame thus they may recognize their call and let there be one or two to follow the path of Mary Ward.

Vocation Camp at Nirmala
Middle European Province - Hanover

The CJ sisters from the Friedrich Spee House in Hanover have kindly sent this article about their work in giving the Spiritual Exercises in everyday life with an ecumenical dimension.

In our parish area there are three Catholic and three Protestant churches. There are many common events provided for the Christians of both communities; however, for the first time this year, during the Lenten period of prayer and penance, we laid on a common programme of Spiritual Exercises in everyday life. Twenty people who were interested turned up to the information evening. The Protestant pastor, the Catholic priest, and Sr Raphaela Leurer CJ each accompanied one group. Each group was a mixture of ages and religious denominations. Everyone had the same desire to have an intensive experience of preparation time for Easter. We chose the neutrality of the CJ house and community as the place for our common gatherings.

From the start of the preparation the exchanges among the three group leaders were very enriching; and as a result we took the theme ‘thirst-quenching’ in its various aspects to bring us into the light. Particularly fruitful were the four weekly group meetings which enabled us to engage in a very honest exchange. Many things gave us strength and encouragement: the yearning for a deeper relationship with God through the daily, silent time of prayer; the awareness of a loving attentiveness in prayer and loving accompaniment; but most significantly, the security and mutual strengthening gained in fruitful exchanges within the group. The multi-sided contributions from the participants that they shared with each other in the final week were very enriching.

Just how close the members of both Christian communities have grown together is evident from the fact that eight of the twenty-two participants have resolved to meet monthly under the guidance of Sr Raphaela for a meditation evening. In this way we will become an ecumenical prayer cell in the heart of the community.

Nepal - Biratnagar

The new St. Mary’s school building in Biratnagar, in south-east Nepal, was blessed on 18th April by Fr. Jacob SDB, the priest in charge of the local deanery. The structure is in place, a few classrooms are ready for the students, but there is much more to be done to flow life into the school. The little CJ community of three has been working very hard to see to the completion of the building before the new academic year. The number of students has risen to 176.

Sr. Clotilda Puthenpurackal CJ lights a candle at the opening of the new school building in Biratnagar.
Delhi Province

Sr. Kanula Joseph CJ along with three of our students attended the historic K2K campaign for Peace at Kathgodam. She describes the event as follows:

K2K JAGO YUVA BHARAT: To Lead, To Serve, To Shine.

K2K is a nation wide drive which was flagged off from Kanyakumari and went right up to Kashmir culminating in the National Capital of New Delhi. The journey started on 12th January 2011, which is National Youth Day.

A group of 25 young people travelled from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, for 61 days, covering 18 states, 367 districts, 30 cities, 120 towns, more than 4,000 villages, visiting 100 Institutes, and presenting 150 public programmes. This was the first ever on-road campaign in India, organized by young people and they travelled over 12,578 Kilometers. The event was organized by the ICYM (Indian Catholic Youth Movement) to create a network for potential youth leaders to teach them how to take responsibility for building a better future for our country and world.

The Catholic diocese of Bareilly hosted this event at Kathgodam at St. Theresa’s School on the 3rd-4th March 2011. The event began with welcoming the team members of K2K while the youth stood on either side of the road, as a gesture of welcome, followed by the vehicle bearing banners, with the caption: K2K JAGO YUVA BHARAT - PEACE JOURNEY by YOUTH.

All were provided with a tee-shirt and a cap with the same caption. It was a very peaceful rally, though it happened to be in the peak hours. The bystanders seemed quite interested as they took time to stand and read what was written on the banners.

Rt. Rev. Anthony Fernandes, Bishop of Bareilly, inaugurated the programme by lighting the traditional lamp. The Eucharistic celebration was made very inspiring and lively by the dance troupe of the diocesan Bible Institute. In the evening a Taize prayer was conducted, during which the youth with great devotion knelt in front of the big cross and offered their heart’s desires. The hall was lit with numerous candles, making it more prayer-conditioned.

On 4th March the day began with Bishop’s Mass concelebrated by several priests. After breakfast the youth in ten groups discussed various questions on poverty. Through this discussion the youth were made aware of the Millennium Development Goals. The evening was made colorful with the cultural programme. The dance drama on Environment and Climate Change spread the message to take measures to preserve and protect the natural environment.

Zimbabwe - Tree Planting

The sisters of the Zimbabwean Region have planted a tree together as a symbol of their commitment to mission and also to celebrate the end of the Jubilee year. The picture below shows them planting their tree in the garden of the Regional House in Harare.

From left to right: Srs Tabeth, Veronica, Mary Mercy (Regional Superior) and Elizabeth.