

Gathering at Mylasandra-Bangalore, Oct. 8, 2013

(translation)

The meeting took place at the ashram "Sevasadan" of the Little Brothers of Jesus, where Claire made so many visits lasting at least 3 days, especially in recent years, for talking with the little brother Michel de Sainte Beuve (one year older than Claire, in 1964 he was part of the team of little brothers in the service of leprosy patients to Alampoondi near Polambakkam, and after became Prior General of little brothers).

The initiative for a meeting of the "Friends of Claire" in South India was taken by Miss Nalini Nayak Trivandrum (who was also known to Claire for many years, and who initially was like a member of the AFI-ICA in India; she is well-known for her activities with the poor fishermen along Kerala coast). Eighteen people attended the meeting : little brothers Michel, Ananda, Mani and a young friend from Alampoondi, Nalini with friends from Vagamon / Kursimala Father Sebastian, Tom and Mariakutty two little sisters of Jesus (now in Kamanahalli - Bangalore), Sangeeta (Switzerland, working at Kiran-Varanasi, a center for disabled), Jyoti Sahi (painter) with his wife Jane (their daughter Lavanya created the mosaic with the figure of Dr. Hemerijckx on the wall of the hospital in Polambakkam), Georgina (from Silvepura, specialist in allopathic medicine), Gabriela Dietrich (whose husband – a Lutheran - taught liberalist theology in Madurai) and Shilanand Hemraj (son of Dr. Hemerijckx, since 50 years in India, as a younger brother of Claire) and his wife Kavari (social worker in projects Setukaran / Setubandhanam in Allahabad and then Bangalore - with Claire as co-founder) and their daughter Dr Sudeepta (granddaughter of Dr. Hemerijckx and feels directly inspired by Claire). Shilanand had prepared a summary of the life of Claire in 4 pages, and all participants signed it, together with the text published in her honor in The Hindu newspaper.

We started the memorial service at 4 pm. in the chapel (such as the "rotonde" of Polambakkam), and Father Sebastian presided. There were songs in Hindi and Malayalam, personal testimonies including Nalini and p.fr. Michel and a few spontaneous prayers, readings (from the Gospel of St. John ch.15 and of "The Prophet" of Khalil Gibran) and then joining Claire's dedication to that of Jesus, there was a blessing of the bread and the chalice that we shared among ourselves. Finally, at 6 am we appreciated a snack buffet and p.fr Mani presented a new book on the life of Charles de Foucauld. Everyone was pleased to have once again met Claire in this meeting, and we will always remain impressed, inspired, encouraged by her wonderful personality.