

Dear Sisters and Associates -- Today, on this thirty-eighth week (October 2) of our 2023 Global Coordinating Group calendar, we are invited *to listen to the heart of the world* and hold in our prayers the 3 Sisters and 6 Associates serving in **Sweden** as well as the people of that nordic nation.

The Sisters belong to the **Chambéry Congregation** which began various missions throughout Scandinavia in the last century: in Denmark (1856), Sweden (1862), Norway (1865) and Iceland (1896). As documented in a Lund University paper, “Chambéry was the second female religious congregation to be established in nordic countries since the Reformation and the most successful... The congregation developed a broad range of activities in the fields of health care and school education... [and as a Catholic religious order] represented a new form of women’s culture in society...”. In 1962, the Sisters responded to the call to support the needs of French-speaking immigrants,



and opened a mission in Stockholm as well as in the north of the country. This [December 2016 article](#) by Sr. Leda Tomazini (see image) described the mission of Srs. Beatriz and Lina in Sundsvall (in the north) hosting new immigrants, “refugees, young people, and families in their apartment, some for weeks, others for months”. You can also read about their important ministry in this 2020 Chambéry newsletter article (on page 10) entitled: [Only Sisters Remain](#) in

which they were thanked by the Sundsvall Caritas group and the Sankt Olof Parish members for having been “around all the time to help, support, encourage, pray and also to solve practical problems...”.



Country Background: Between 8,000 to 6,000 BC, Sweden was extensively populated by hunter gatherers, although dwellings and graves have been found to date back to the Stone Age. During the early Iron Age, the population of

Sweden became settled and agriculture began to form the basis of the economy and society. While an independent Swedish state had already emerged during the early 12th century, by 1397 it formed part of the three-state monarchical ‘Kalmar Union’ comprised of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. Today, the sovereign state of Sweden is a constitutional and parliamentary democracy with a population of 10.6million (2023) - of which approximately one fifth are newcomers. Sweden is known globally for its comprehensive social welfare system that provides universal health care and tertiary education to its citizens. It has the world's eleventh-highest per capita income and ranks highly in numerous metrics of national performance - including quality of life, health, education, protection of civil liberties, economic competitiveness, equality, prosperity and human development. With that said, however, the nation is not

without criticism as noted in this recent [Amnesty International report](#) which pointed out that: “Sweden failed to take adequate action to decarbonize its economy. Civil disobedience activists were convicted of a serious crime. Inequalities in the housing market further deepened. Sámi reindeer herding lands were threatened by mining. A draft law on gender recognition fell short of human rights standards. A UN panel of experts expressed concerns over racial justice in the context of law enforcement. [And] two oil company representatives stood trial for alleged complicity in war crimes.” (Sources: Amnesty International, Chambery Congregation website and journal, CSJ International Centre website, [Lund University](#), Wikipedia, Worldometer)



United in prayer, the Global Joseph Family, 7850 Sisters, 5700 Associates, 34 Agrégées in 43 countries, listening to the heart of the world