

'Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you!'
St. Julie Convent, Busesa, Uganda



It was a wonderful day to walk in prayer with our mother, sister, friend, and patroness as we celebrated the feast of Annunciation in thanksgiving to our good God. It was a day of prayer, celebration, and reflection on our lives as followers of Christ in the spirit of the year of jubilee, pilgrims of gratitude and hope, and in the spirit of Mother Mary.

We could hear the same words that Mary heard: "Do not be afraid, for the Lord has looked kindly on you." Mary was ready for God and all the people of Israel. We felt challenged by these words, and they were an invitation for us to always prepare ourselves to receive Christ in our lives.

Sharing meals from a different culture prompts a deeper understanding of how cultural values, beliefs, and practices shape meanings and how these influence interactions and perceptions within and across cultures. We prepared a delicious Asian meal and, in sharing and enjoying the meal, we realized that cultural meals are more than just sustenance.

Food traditions include ingredients, preparation methods that our sisters in Our Lady of Visitation Province in Bangalore shared with us, and dining etiquette, which are deeply intertwined with a culture's identity. Traditional dishes, often passed down through families, serve as a tangible link to the past and reinforce cultural values and beliefs. Sharing meals is a powerful way to strengthen social bonds and create a sense of belonging. We felt very connected with our sisters in Bangalore Province and thanked God for them. Cultural meals often serve as a focal point for celebrations, gatherings, and important life events, bringing people together and reinforcing community ties. This was also our deep experience.

Sister Mary Phyllis, SND