



Sr. Aprilia Untarto, SSpS & Sr. Helen Remedya Saldanha, SSpS at VIVAT International.

From September 3 – 6, 2019, I had the opportunity to learn about the work of VIVAT International. After spending a few days with VIVAT by attending meetings, presentations and discussions, my understanding of social justice has been broadened. As Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, social justice is something we have embodied for a long time through our faith and life experience. It has been shaped by our ministries, events and people we have encountered. Like Jesus, we seek out the lost, excluded and voiceless. I realize more and more that social justice is our lifestyle, our habit and our spirituality. It is about praying with our hands, feet and whole body. It is not only by kneeling in front of the Blessed Sacrament, but by being and working with others, building the Kingdom of God in this world.

In our work to promote religious missionary life, we collaborate not only with our two other Congregations: the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters and the Society of the Divine Word, but also with other Congregations and vocation service agencies. Through such collaboration, we try to promote, cultivate and introduce the spirit of social justice, bringing about the Kingdom of God through our ministry and witness as religious missionaries.

In our conversations with the young women at our retreats or any other gatherings or programs, we promote right and loving relationships with all people, especially the poor and disenfranchised. They learn how to pray and listen to God's voice in their lives. One of our aims in the vocation ministry is to help the young women to be the best they can be and to have courage to make a difference in our world. We give young women the opportunity to practice what they have learned about building the Kingdom of God. They are invited to participate in our Summer Peace Camp program where they stay, work and pray with our Rogers Park community Sisters in Chicago. In addition, they are expected to collaborate their works with the lay volunteers in the Center. There they learn not only intercultural community living, but also how to work together with others to help the children in the camp grow in values like faith, peace and harmony.

Vocation work is not just about recruiting new members to our own Congregation, but also teaching new candidates how to listen to the voice of Jesus and go to the places where they are called to serve. We encourage them to model their life journey after the Spirit of Jesus, who clearly loved all people, regardless of their culture, faith, social status, or gender. Even though they may be having their own difficulties and challenges in life, we encourage them to be aware of and share their blessings.