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Dec. 15, St. Maria Crocifissa Di Rosa

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NCR Today

Today is the feast of St. Maria Crocifissa Di Rosa (1813-1855), who founded the Handmaids of Charity in 1836, when cholera struck Brescia.

"In the years immediately after the cholera epidemic, while carrying out works of charity involving: social outcasts, deaf and dumb girls, girls at risk, needy and exploited women, she came to a definite and conclusive decision with her friends: to look after and care for the sick in the town hospital."

Today, the work of the Handmaids of Charity "includes assistance for the elderly, for people with psychiatric problems, immigrants from outside the EU, for the treatment of people with AIDS and assistance in the re-integration into society of ex-prisoners and women who have been saved from a life on the streets. In these fragments of humanity which bear the greatest resemblance to Christ, every service carries the clear imprint of evangelical charity, compassion and human improvement."

"They work in Europe (Italy, Croatia and Germany), Latin America (Brazil and Ecuador), and Africa (Ruanda and Burundi)."

Beginning in 2010, American students from the http://www.bismarcktribune.com/news/local/article_a1f091c8-e5d4-11de-b277-001cc4c002e0.html University of Mary, selected to study in Italy, will live at Al Casaletta, the Handmaids of Charity guesthouse in Rome.

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