

Dear Sisters and Associates/Companions -- Today, on this ninth week (March 11) of our 2024 Global Coordinating Group calendar, we are invited *to listen to the heart of the world* and hold in our prayers the Sisters serving in **Chad** as well as all of the people in that African nation.

The Istituto Suore de San Giuseppe was formed in 2006 when the Congregations of Turin, Novara and Susa joined to form the Sisters of the San Giuseppe Congregation (in English, the Institute of St Joseph).



Today, the Institute of St. Joseph is one of five congregations that comprise the Italian Federation, and began its work in Chad in 2017 in three small communities: two in the south in the town of Laramanaye (Diocese of Goré). Today in

Laramanaye, the Institute's Sisters serve in education, primary care and social work. In fact, [this article](#) and image (see left) describe a recent teacher-training workshop for regional primary educators which was held at the Laramanaye Institute. And, [this interesting article](#) recounts the fall 2022 meeting of African Sisters from the Annecy, Aosta, Chambéry, Cuneo congregations as well as the Institute at the first-ever 'Pan-African Encounter'. The purpose of the gathering was to "share the Charism and to best embody it in the African fabric".



Country Background: The Republic of Chad is the fifth largest country in Africa with three distinct regions: a desert zone in the north, an arid belt in the center and a more fertile zone in the south. Lake Chad, after which the country is named, is the nation's largest wetland and the second-largest in Africa. With a growing population of 18.8 million (2024), Chad is home to more than 200 distinct ethnic and linguistic groups. Historically, the region has been inhabited for millennia with human populations having moved into the Chadian basin in great

numbers beginning in the 7th millennium BCE. By the end of the 1st millennium AD, a series of states and empires had risen and fallen in Chad's Sahelian strip - each focused on controlling the trans-Saharan trade routes that passed through the region. Since 2003, the Darfur Crisis in Sudan has spilled over the border and destabilized Chad, with hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees living in and around camps in the east of the country. As noted by the United Nations Human Rights Commission, “Chad hosts more than one million forcibly displaced people, including 580,000 refugees from conflicts in neighbouring Sudan, the Central African Republic and Cameroon ...”. Today, the nation is beset by political violence and recurrent attempted coups d’état, with the World Food Program estimating that 2.1million people “were acutely food insecure in 2023”. (Sources: Institute of St. Joseph Congregational website, International Centre website, Human Rights Watch, United Nations Food Program, United Nations Human Rights Commission, Wikipedia, Worldometer)



United in prayer, the Global Joseph Family, 7850 Sisters, 5700 Associates, 34 Agrégées in 45 countries, listening to the heart of the world.