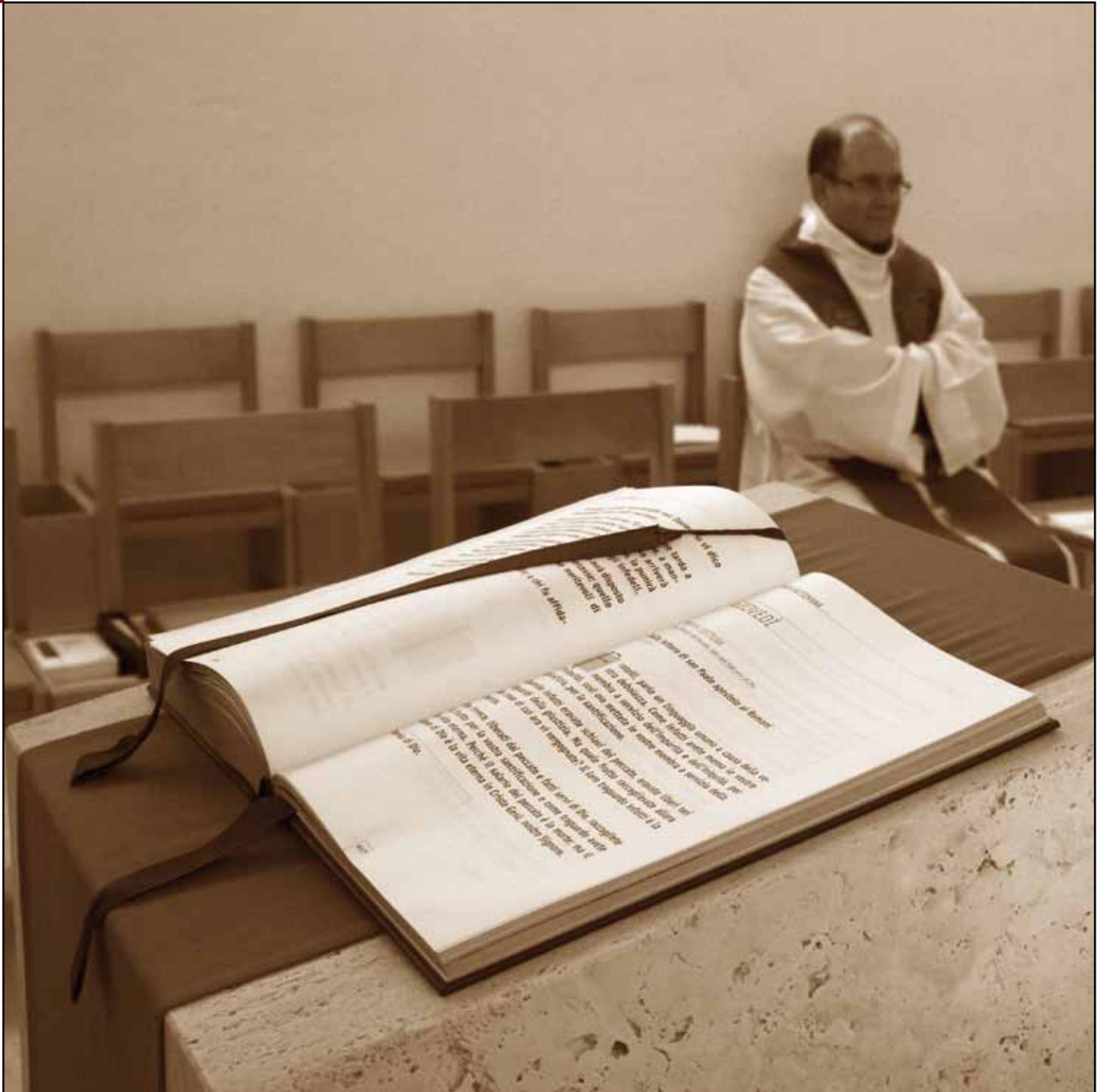


# A News of the Assumption



**EDITORIAL**

## **The joy of announcing**

*The Assumption was founded  
To announce the Kingdom of God*

# Calls, nominations, changes...

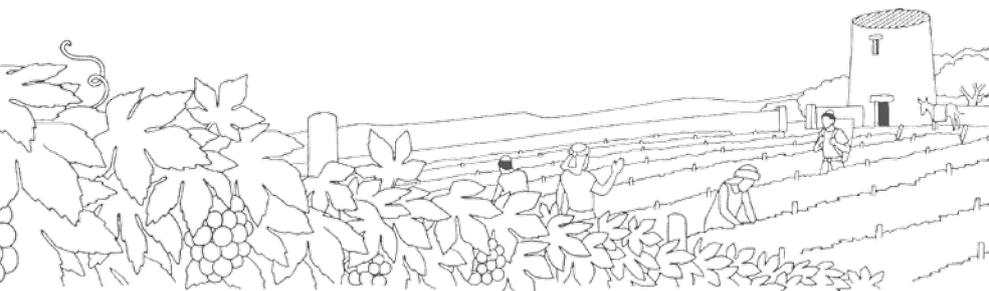
**F**ather Benoît Grière, Superior General with his Council has called:

■ **To ordination as deacon:**

Bro. Jean-Rémi Elysé RANDRIANJATOVO (Madagascar) (11/14/2013)

■ **To ordination to the priesthood:**

Bro. PALUKU WICONGO, Patrick (Africa) (11/12/2013)  
Bro. YARRA, Ludovic Sriman (Madagascar) (11/13/2013)



■ **Nominations**

**F**ather Benoît Grière with the consent of the Plenary General Council of December, 2013, has named as **Superior of the Scholasticate of Manririsoa of the Province of Madagascar** Father **Jean Bosco Manambe.**



**F**ather Benoît Grière with the consent of the Plenary General Council of December, 2013, as **Master of Novices of the Province of North America-Philippines, Father Baudoin Ngoa-ya-Tshihemba,** replacing Father Richard Lamoureux in August 2014.



■ **Openings**

**F**ather Benoît Grière with his Plenary General Council of December, 2013 gave his consent to opening:

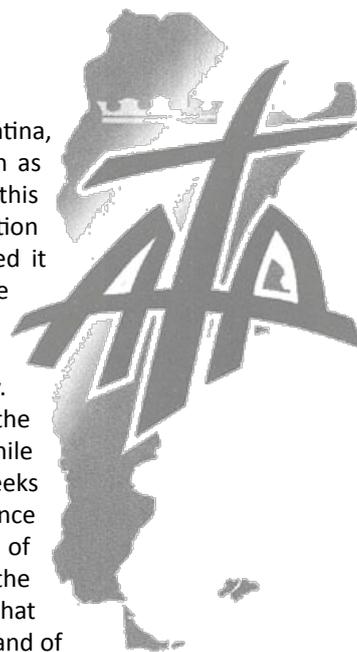
**The parish of Murutunguru** (Diocese of Bunda - Tanzania)

**The parish of Saint Augustine of Digodigo** (Archdiocese of Arusha-Tanzania)

**The parish of the Emmanuel** (Diocese of Goma – RDC)

■ **The Andean Province**

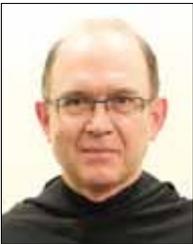
**T**he Province that covers Chile, Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador will now be known as the Andean Province. The Provincial submitted this request to change the name for the approbation of the PGC of December, 2013, that approved it unanimously. After a consultation of all the communities of the Province, an inclusive name that embraces the four countries was desired to better respond to the Andean reality. Why the appellation “Andean”? The name “of the Andes” was not retained because there is in Chile a place called “Los Andes”. This new name seeks to symbolize a greater communion in the Province and to better accompany the new project of the Province. This step also manifests that the structures are at the service of life and of a life that moves, carrying a greater missionary mobility and of a will to work together.



■ **Telephone for Rome**

**T**he telephone number for the General House has changed. It is now: **(0039) 0666 35 017.**

# The joy of announcing



**P. Benoît Grière**  
General Superior  
of the  
Augustinians of  
the Assumption

**T**ime Magazine, an American weekly, has chosen as its person of the year Pope Francis. I would not want everyone to believe that I am unconditionally devoted to the Pope, but once again I want to speak about him in my editorial. Quite recently we received the post-synodal exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. This text that should be discovered in all its richness is an urgent call to pursue the work of evangelization. In the line of the encyclical of Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, the pontifical document is marked by a new inspiration. I also had the joy of very recently meeting the Pope on the occasion of the Assembly of the General Superiors. For three hours the Pope played the game of questions and answers in all simplicity. It is very stimulating to hear him speak of the mission.

As you know, the Assumption was founded to announce the Kingdom of God. We are deeply apostolic in the sense that our vocation is missionary. Perhaps we have lost some evangelizing dynamism in a context that invites Christians more to bury themselves and be discreet than to an explicit announcement. We must honor, however, the quality of the work accomplished during those years of discretion that was also the time of sowing. The work has continued and Christians have wanted to witness in proximity with their contemporaries the Good News. Less triumphalist than in the past, the missionary action has been real. When we examine the foundations of the Assumption between 1960 and 1980, we see that we are more marked by a withdrawal. The great phase of expansion is over and we leave countries where we present such as in North Africa

and Central Europe.

For a few years now, the Congregation has undertaken a great effort to plant itself in new territories. That move was, especially after 1989, a progressive return to Eastern Europe, then the foundations in Asia as well as our installation in Ecuador. Since then we have returned to West Africa. And we continue also our development in East Africa with a foundation in Uganda and two new implantations in Tanzania. That can give the impression of acceleration, but each of our foundations was decided in prayer after a long discernment. Certainly, it all remains fragile, but we have good hope that the roots will be solid.

The world is changing quickly and it is difficult for us to follow the evolution of mentalities and behaviors. The Gospel remains more than ever the Good News for our times, but we must be courageous apostles for the context is delicate. The mission is also in the countries of old Christianity. I think we have an important work to do in renewing the Christian presence in Europe and in North America. Times have changed and the Christians are a minority. But we must not be afraid to proclaim the Kingdom of God welcome or unwelcome. The Province of Europe that will be born will have to take up the challenges of the mission.

The Pope insists also on the necessity to have homilies “that enflame hearts”. The call to conversion goes through the witness of men and women with strong convictions, rooted in the message of Christ. Perhaps we can renew our way of preaching? But the principal witness is that of our life. May the new year give to all joy, peace, and health. ■

# Agenda

## Ordinary General Councils

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- February 3-7, 2014
- March 3-7, 2014
- June 19-28, 2013
- September 11-22, 2014
- November 10-14, 2014

## Agenda of the Plenary General Councils

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- June 7-15, 2014
- December 1-11 or November 30 to December 10, 2014

## Travels

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- **Meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption**, 20-22+23 January 2014 (Paris) for the Superiors General

## Benoît

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- Canonical Visitation in Spain (Benoît and Emmanuel): **February 8-20, 2014**
- Meeting of the Asian Coordination in Manila (Philippines): **March 8-16, 2014**
- Canonical Visitation of Kinshasa and of Goma **end of August, 2014** (accompanied by Didier, notably for the Provincial Assembly of the Province of Africa at Butembo)

## Didier

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- Trip to Latin America: **March-April, 2014**
- Trip to Africa: Provincial Assembly of Africa: **end of August, 2014**
- Meeting at Bayard (Paris): **22 September**
- Meeting of the Trustees of Assumption College (Worcester): **24-25 September**

## John

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- Meeting of the Office of Preparation of the Congress on Education in Rome in **May 2014**
- Retreat in the United States: **July and August 2014**
- Chaplaincy of the two groups of students from Worcester in Rome (**January-May and September-December 2014**)

## Emmanuel

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- **January 27-30**: Commission on Europe
- In Spain with the General: **February 8-20**
- Inter-Assumption Commission to prepare the international session of the formators: **April 23-24**
- Chapter of Europe (Valpré) : **April 27 - May 2**

## Other meetings

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- **Session for the Masters of Novices**: May 8-21, 2014
- **Visit to Kinshasa and of Goma** by Didier and Benoît + **Provincial Assembly** at the end of August in Butembo.
- **Local Chapter of the Rome Community**: Sunday September 14, 2014
- **Session of the return** in October

## The 33<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter will be held in Valpré

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At the request of the Ordinary General Council, the Plenary General Council has decided that the next General Chapter will be held at Valpré (France) in May, 2017. Since 1981, the General Chapters were held in Rome. For its 33<sup>rd</sup> assembly, the Chapter comes back to France. It is for financial reasons that this choice was made. It was after examination of various cost estimates of a Chapter in Rome that this option was retained, but this decision has also a symbolic aspect, for at Valpré we will be “at home” and the proximity of Nîmes will give the chapter members the possibility of going to visit the tomb of Fr. d’Alzon during their stay.

Of the nine General Chapters under the direction of Father d’Alzon between 1852 and 1879, eight took place in Nîmes and the last one was in Paris, rue François Ier (1879). The four following ones, under Fr. François Picard took place regularly in Nîmes (1880), in Paris, rue François Ier (1886) and at Livry (1892 and 1898) and the three following ones under Fr. Emmanuel Bailly in Belgium with the same regularity: at Louvain (1903, 1906) and at Limpertsberg (1912), the two following ones in the interim of Fr. Joseph Maubon (end of 1917-1922): in the Vaucluse (France) at the Shrine of Notre-Dame des Lumières (1918) and the next one in Rome (1921-1922) was invalidated by the Holy See because of invalid elections of the delegates, after which the Holy See named Fr. Gervais Quenard in 1923. Under Fr. Gervais Quenard, the Chapters were held in Rome (1929, 1935, 1952) and in Paris, at a rue François Ier recovered, (1946), under Fr. Wilfrid Dufault in Rome (1958, 1964, 1969), under Fr. Paul Charpentier at the Essarts (1975), under Fr. Hervé Stefan in Rome (1981, 1987), under Fr. Claude Maréchal in Rome (1993, 1999) and under Fr. Richard Lamoureux in Rome also (2005, 2011). Of all the General Chapters of the Congregation 16 were held in France, 2 in Belgium, 1 in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and 13 in Rome of which the first, that of 1921-1922 was declared invalid by the Holy See, as mentioned above.

## Augustin and Jackson ordained priests

by Jean Guillaume KASOVO

**C**lément is a word that that evokes goodness, sweetness and leniency. We are on November 23, 2013, on the day of the feast of Saint Clement of Rome, the third successor of Saint Peter. It is 11:00 A.M. in the parish of Saint Pio V of Rome. The date is not a coincidence to celebrate a priestly ordination. To be ordained in Rome, as was our Founder or also as was Bishop Kataliko, the former Bishop of Butembo, and so many others, can only provoke enthusiasm. The singing in Kinande of the choir of the Congolese Chaplaincy and of the Sisters from Butembo-Beni resounds in the high arched roof. A procession of some forty priests ending with the two deacons: Augustin Kambale Tasi and Jackson Mumbere Kanzira accompanying Bishop Emery Kabongo, progress towards the altar. It is a great moment for all the Assumption family present in Rome.

Father Lwanga came from Florence to animate the ceremony. In his homily, Emery Kabongo, Archbishop-Bishop emeritus of Luebo, will insist on the close relationship that links the religious state and the priesthood. Another special moment of the ceremonial was the prostration during the litany of the saints with the names of the Congolese Blessed Bakanja and Blessed Anuarite associated with the Assumptionist martyrs Kamen, Pavel and Josaphat. At the end of the Mass, Father

The Assumptionist community lived a moment of grace on the occasion of the ordinations of two Congolese brothers



General, Benoît Grière thanked Bishop Kabongo, all the concelebrants, the Congolese community and all the invited guests, without forgetting our sister the rain that joined the celebration for the whole day. The joy would not have been complete without a dance to the sound of the tam-tams. The next

day the first Masses of the new priests took place in the family joy for the feast of Christ the King in the community chapel of Due Pini. The following week, it was in accompanying the Provincial of Africa that the young priests called us to enter into Advent and to begin the new liturgical year. ■



## Spiritual direction in the Assumption

As a line that would be proper to us: have we not to rediscover Augustinian discernment and the examination for the Kingdom?

by Bernard LE LEANNEC, a.a.

Two subjects that are intimately imbricated were broached during the last PGC, that of spiritual companionship of the young in formation and of new priests on one hand and on the other formation and spiritual companionship. How can we be formed to do spiritual companionship?

In June 1996, in the form of a modest booklet, a practical guide to spiritual companionship published by the Province of France gave some guidelines to aid in the ministry of companionship. However, it was a question by this contribution to help both the companioned as the accompanier as active partners in one spiritual relationship. There can be no companionship without companions who walk together in the manner of the disciples of Emmaus who are met on the road

by Him whom they seek together. This solicitude was again presented to the last Plenary General Council of December, 2013 and the discussion that took place on this theme, was prepared by a note from the CIF (International Commission on Formation) that was in effect only a first outline of the work to be done.

### Accompanying the young in formation

In the study of the dossiers that arrive in Rome as requests for perpetual professions or ordinations, a very special attention is given to the spiritual companionship of the candidates and its place in the formation. How is the accompaniment done today in the Assumption? How can we give to the young the means to be accompanied adequately? The Ratio of 2005 indicates the role of the one who accompanies.

### He is a formator

Our *Ratio Institutionis* sees him as a formator (30) charged with elaborating a program of formation for the candidate, meetings to know him better, enlighten him on his personality and his pathway “attentive to his life, his history, and his sociocultural environment, understanding his personality, in brief an aide to better discern his vocation (54). Having become a postulant the young man freely chooses his spiritual companion and his confessor (63) preferably in the Assumption family, this companion intervening on the personal level and for the internal forum.

Surely during the novitiate, it is the master of novices who is the first spiritual companion, but with his agreement the novice will choose another companion and, in any case, his confessor

who will not be the master of novices” ({111, 125).

### Becoming a companion

On becoming a deacon, the accompanied religious becomes himself a companion remembering well that we cannot “companion”, if one is not himself “accompanied”. First of all it is as question of learning to be a “listener” ({148) and seek to continually realize the unity of his whole person through daily conversion and the incarnation of the charism of the Assumption ({176). Companionship is not improvised. One must be formed ({184), be able to witness to and transmit the passion of Jesus that inhabits one. That supposes proximity to the realities that the one who allows himself to be accompanied lives and holds his hand.

In the Assumption the accent is placed on accompaniment by an elder (a trait that comes to us from the oriental tradition, that of the starets) ({43). For the new Assumptionist priest, it is an older brother designated by the Provincial Superior ({157) for the time of his first years of ministry. ▶



## A distinguished humiliation

A young lady of the Southern France aristocracy, who died a religious a few years ago, had placed herself under the direction of Fr. d’Alzon. She was heading for perfection with zeal, with impetuosity even. One day she told her director: “I pray you to impose a good humiliation on me.” The Father listened without answering. A few days later, she came to the Assumption to give the sacristain a lace cloth of great value, a point-lace a few meters long, that she had accepted to repair. In the first courtyard she met Fr. d’Alzon who asked her what she wanted. “Show me this lace,” he asked.

After having looked at the point-lace for a few moments, the Father shook his head as if in doubt, than he said to the young lady, astounded by his silence and his manners: “Follow me.” He went into the teachers’ library. Unrolling the lace, he began to measure it carefully on the edge of the table, as merchants do on the measure marked on their counter. After he had measured its length, he stopped and thought, shook his head and measured again. After the second measurement, the irritated young lady said to him: “But what are you trying to say? Do you think that I kept a piece of the point-lace?”

Silence, another shaking of the head and another expression of doubt and he measured for a third time.

The irritated young lady explodes and shouts:

“I am not a thief; that is too much!” She runs to the door, opens it, slams it and disappears, furious. The next day, she came back and threw herself at the feet of Fr. d’Alzon:

“Ah! Father, forgive me! Yesterday I did not understand the lesson you were teaching me. I had asked you for a humiliation; I did not expect that one!”

The Father smiled and said:

“Know my daughter that the best humiliations are those that are unexpected and that we have not chosen. Have you not been served according to your wishes?”

(From Croquis du P. d’Alzon by the Chanoine Galeran (p. 19-20).

*(1) Lace without backing in which the motifs are separated by big empty spaces.*

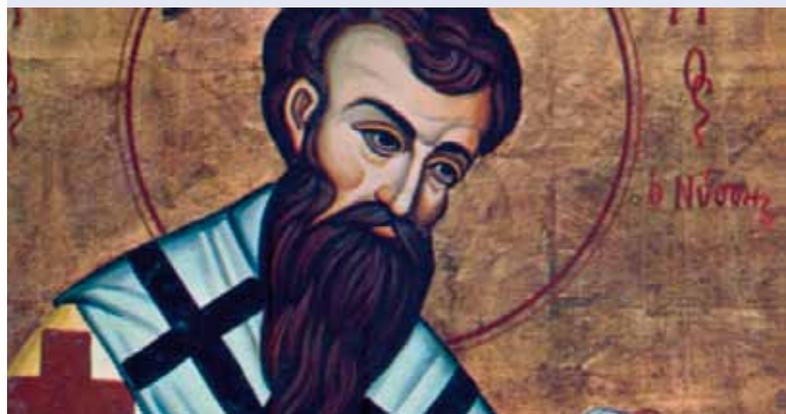


The General Chapter of 2011 did not skip over the importance of spiritual companionship and desired that each religious might benefit from it (8 of the Acts of the 2011 General Chapter). The spiritual companionship that we give is narrowly linked to our vocation ministry (109) without forgetting that it corresponds to the expectations of many lay people who, to share in our charism, count on this specific accompaniment.

Companionship is thus a mission that must allow the psychological capacities of patience and listening to the other. It is at the same time an art and a gift: an art to become disciple, to listen in order to receive, a gift, that of humility that allows the other to reveal himself and to exist to discern fully the gift that the Lord gives to each one (Is 43/ 4-5) for one's spiritual growth, one's equilibrium, and the full blossoming that God desires for each person.

### A specific line

In the matter of spiritual direction, there are many schools, the Ignatian school, the French school, or that of the Carmelites. But is there not in this area a specific idea attached to our Assumptionist identity? What is it? It is never too late to discover or rediscover it for ourselves so that we can share with others. It is in the Augustinian tradition that leads the accompanied and the companion to the discovery of the "interior Master of the interior man": "Your true master will always be this interior Master that you will listen to in your soul" (Letter to Florentine, no. 266) and to revisit our life at the school of the Confessions, but also at the school of the experience of the spiritual companion that we find in the rich correspondence of the founder and his correspondents. Does not the examination for the Kingdom that we find in Fr. d'Alzon echo the particular examination of Saint Ignatius? That would deserve to be better reflected upon and better known as Fr. Edgar Bourque suggested in his day. The renewal of our vision of spiritual companionship requires a rediscovery of our roots: Augustinian discernment and the examination of the Kingdom that Father d'Alzon left us. ■



### The language that we learn from another

"The person who really wants to learn the language of a people is not a master sufficient for himself, but he learns from people who know it and makes his the language of those who express themselves in another tongue. It is also thus for this way of existing that does not progress according to the order of nature but that it is foreign by the newness of the mores, we cannot learn its exact discipline except by allowing oneself to be led as by the hand by the one who has successfully practiced it. And all the rest, in which we occupy ourselves in this manner of existing, would be practiced with more rectitude by the one who searches if, for each of the objects of his zeal, we requested the science from masters rather than undertaking the thing by oneself. In this kind of effort, we do not see clearly enough to rely on ourselves for judgment of the decisions, when it is not without danger to boldly experience the unknown. Just as men discovered through experience the previously unknown medicine and that they found revealing itself progressively through certain observations, so much so that the useful and the harmful, recognized by the witness of experience, entered in that way in the doctrine of that art, and that the observations of the precursors serve as precepts for the future; thus now the one who undertakes that art is not obliged to judge by his own experience the usefulness of the drugs, if it is pernicious or medicinal, but after having received from others the knowledge, himself practiced his art with success; thus is it also in the art of healing souls in which we learn the therapy of all the passions that touches the soul: it is not through structures or suppositions that we must learn this science but by a great capacity to learn from the one who has acquired this disposition by a long and rich experience."

(From the Treatise on Virginité of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, chapter XXIII, 2)

# The Ordination to the Priesthood Of Fr. Pierre Tran Duc Long

by Viktors JERMAKOVICS

Under the gray and already wintry sky of the Russian capital, while the city was quietly preparing for Christmas, a light shone on this Sunday evening of November 17, in the church of Saint-Louis-des-Français of Moscow: Brother Pierre Trần Dục Long was ordained a priest. The church was packed and half the assistance was composed of members of the Vietnamese community for whom Brother Long had exercised his diaconate. It is not necessary to say that the hymns in Vietnamese were not lacking to give to the ceremony a festive atmosphere. The other half of the assembly was composed of Russian faithful and those of the Francophone community whose most visible members were the children of the choir who gave to the Litany of the Saints a particularly telling place in the ordination liturgy.

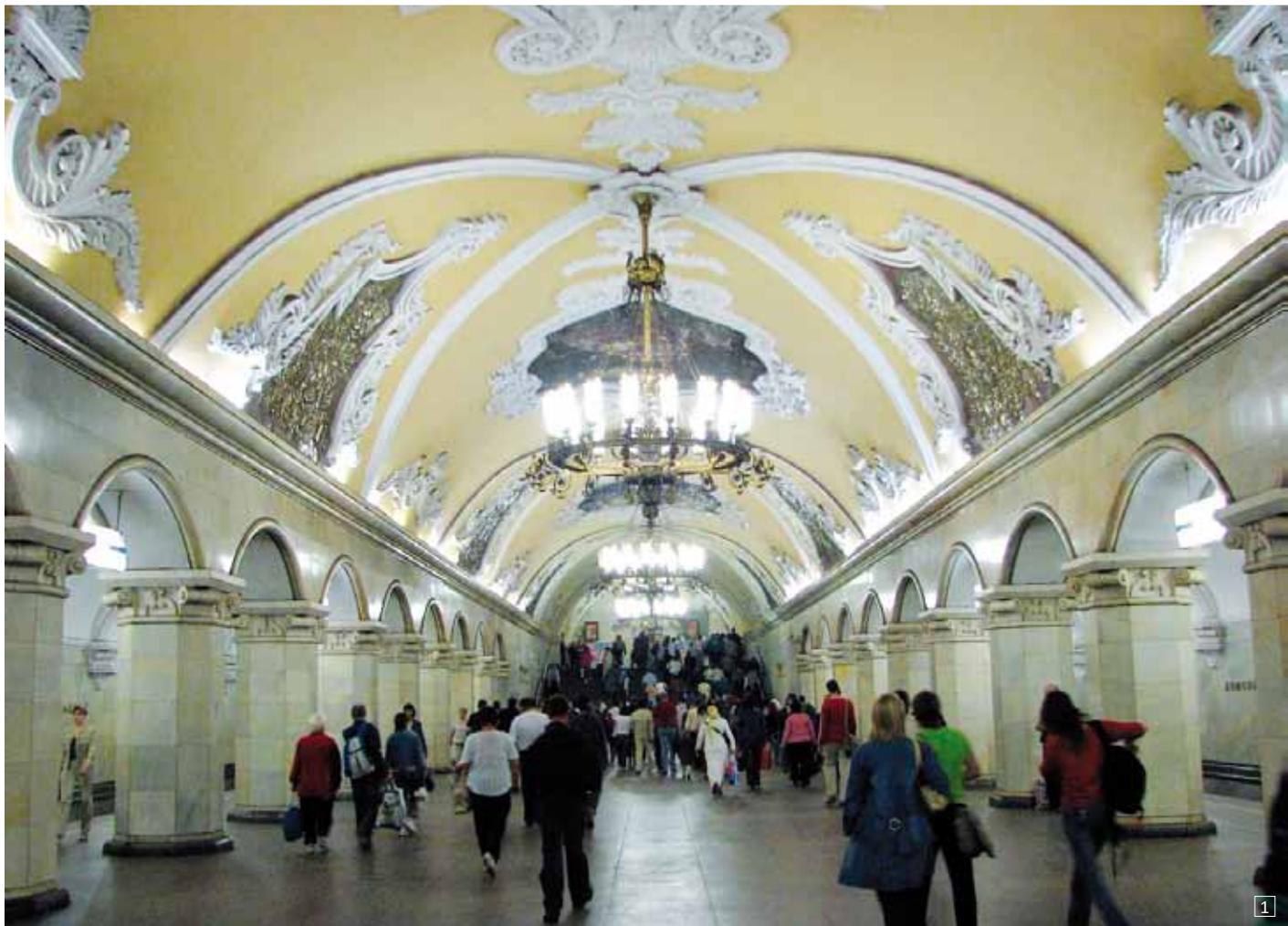


Among the Assumptionists, besides the two brothers of his community, there were three other brothers from France (among whom Fr. Vincent Cabanac, Treasurer and Assistant Provincial) to surround Pierre, as well as three Oblate Sisters. And from his family, Pierre was supported by the presence of his two brothers (one of

whom is a Benedictine monk). It was Archbishop Paolo Pezzi, Archbishop of the Mother of God of Moscow who presided the celebration. In his homily in Italian and translated by Fr. Celeste, the Archbishop insisted on the grace of the vocation that Pierre had received to walk in the footsteps of Christ and on the spirit of service that the ministry requires of the new priest.

For this cosmopolitan and colorful assembly, the thanks of Pierre were multilingual: in French, then in Vietnamese but also in Russian which provoked thunderous applause in the whole church. Before going to the buffet, generously prepared by the Vietnamese community in the church courtyard, Fr. Long received his first apostolic nomination: to the community of Moscow, at the service of the Vietnamese and Francophone communities. ■





## Lost in Moscow

by Marcelo MARCIEL, a.a.

To get to the Assumptionist mission in the Russian capital, one must first of all board a plane and rise above one's daily occupations before landing on the tarmac of one of the Moscow airports. The adventure is not ordinary. It is marked, most of the time, by significant signs... To get there many of those among us who have undertaken such a trip, were dragged into a real adventure. For many it is by a marathon of administrative steps before obtaining the sesame, the famous visa that allows access

to the biggest country in the world. But the Chilean citizen is overjoyed to be able to travel to Moscow as in his own home without other procedures and confirm his visit, as if he were going to the supermarket. Is it not amusing to enter Moscow as in a big box store to buy something typically Russian... and come upon an unbelievable display of Chilean wines? It is impressive and surprising! Even today the arrival in the Russian capital always reserves surprises. So as when we leave the airport and see a welcoming face appear, that of "Father Celeste". Yet it is another surprising thing, but reassuring.

Even more than the fraternal Assumptionist accolade, is that it is accompanied by an Italian accent that shouts with a histrionic genius: "Such a big suitcase for a short week!" It was impossible to get a taxi for a good price, so we have to run through all the long corridors of the airport to jump into the last midnight train that will drop us off in Central Moscow. My first preoccupation when the brothers had left the house for their various responsibilities was to face the problem of the community door lock, a most complex system of opening and closing... At the least, I spent 15 minutes trying to learn how



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- (1) A Moscow subway station. "This Palace of the People is truly monumental".
- (2) Fr. Marcelo Marciel in Red Square in front of Saint Basil's.
- (3) A general view of the monastery of the Trinity-St. Serge.
- (4) Saint-Louis des Français Church in Moscow.

to open and close it and after a week, I cannot even tell you if I really achieved it. Anyhow, after a week, it did not appear clear to me if the problem was with me or with the door... I hope it was the door.

After having overcome this first enigma, the Moscow subway appeared to me as one of the seven marvels of the world. It is truly monumental, this Palace of the People, as Lenin said. It is fascinating to wander through, hours at a time, its stations and walk through the unending labyrinth of richly decorated corridors. We get lost of course and yet it is not for the lack of meeting good Samaritans who in perfect Russian show you the way to go. In Moscow the

best way to get to know the city is to get lost in it. After some "must" visits: the Kremlin, the Tretyakov Gallery, I got down of course to the principal reason for my visit: our Assumptionist community.

The discussions with Archbishop Paolo Pezzi of the Mother of God of Moscow were very fruitful even if my Italian is not perfect, but we understood each other well especially when I told him that our brother Pavel had made his first "explosion" instead of saying "profession"...!

The faces of the archbishop, of his Vicar General and of our Father Celeste showed surprise. The Italian language continues to play tricks on me.

The brotherly life that sustains our mission is a challenge that, as our Rule of Life states, is to be built each day. We must be carriers of the Good News that does not belong to us, we never cease to see to it that this Word be heard and understood: for our brother learning Russian is the necessary step at the end of which new perspectives appear. May God be thanked!

Pray for our Assumptionist mission in Russia so that at the side of the Oblates, true pillars of this mission, we may continue to be at the service of the extension of the Kingdom and work for unity in the Church. ■

On the occasion of the Forum of the Province of Europe in Valpré at the beginning of September, I don't remember who asked me: **“What does a General Treasurer do?”**.

Without wanting to answer that question in detail here, I would like to describe what my month of October was like.

## What does a General Treasurer do? The mission of Brother Didier Rémiot

By Didier REMIOT, General Treasurer

Accompanying Father General, I left Rome at dawn on Thursday September 26 to take a flight that, with a transfer in Amsterdam and a stopover at Kigali (Ruanda) brought us in the evening to Entebbe (the airport of Kampala, Uganda). We were to stay in Uganda only two nights: just enough time to meet our two brothers Pierre and Gilbert, visit, in the company of the Archbishop of Kampala, the construction of the community's house which is almost finished and that of the parish church of Kyabakade, also almost completed. We also met with the Ordinary of the place, the Bishop of Lugasi. For me, all these visits and meetings allowed me to clarify (well almost...) the questions of financing all that construction.

Already on Saturday, the little plane of the CAS Airline (built in Czechoslovakia in the sixties...) finally brought us to Butembo, in the North Kivu (DRC).

### Butembo, the center of the Assumption in Africa

If my two preceding visits had allowed me to go to all the communities of this center of the Assumptionist presence in Africa, this stay was practically entirely devoted to the construction of the 2013-2015 budgets (the budget year of the Province of Africa begins on September

1) of the nine formation communities of the province in order to justify the amount of money requested by the Province of Africa from the solidarity fund for that year, an amount that after being studied by the Council of Consultors in November 2013, needs to be approved by the PGC of December 2013. For that, with the Provincial Treasurer, it was a question of seizing the realities of the accounting for the year 2012-2013 (which had just ended), analyze the figures, study the budgets proposed for the year which had just begun (2013-2014), to correct them in accordance with the amount voted by the PGC in December 2012 from the International Solidarity fund, and then build the pre-budgets for the year 2014-2015. All that work, as much as possible, was done in the presence of the local treasurer of each community, which constitutes each time a small formation session. In order to accomplish this task well, it took me ten days of work for 10-12 hours a day! In fine, a big dossier with, for each formation community, the real figures for 10-11, 11-12, 12-13 and the budgets for 11-12 and 12-13. Also there was a voluminous dossier of the analysis of the accounting, the great difference among the communities, the average costs of each religious in the various posts, the evolution of the revenues and costs for 5 years, the relative importance of the local revenues, the progress (or not) of the implantation of a food self-sufficiency policy, etc.



### **That was the first aim of my visit.**

**B**ut just the same, in the 14 days of my presence in the Kivu, I was able to: visit the community of the philosophy scolasticate in Bulengera (the largest Assumptionist community with its 55 members!) I had only made one quick overnight visit two years ago. This time I was able to visit it more thoroughly, work on the accounting with Fr. Christian, the local treasurer, and visit with him the fields and the buildings where the community should launch anew its husbandry efforts.

Before the community I made a vast survey, a kind of conference in which I sought to acquaint the religious with the financial situation of the Congregation. We also discussed the dream of electrification with photovoltaic panels, for which, on my return to Butembo, I visited the successful realization of a neighboring Benedictine convent with the financial help of the Italian Episcopal Conference.

### **Giving here and there some formations**

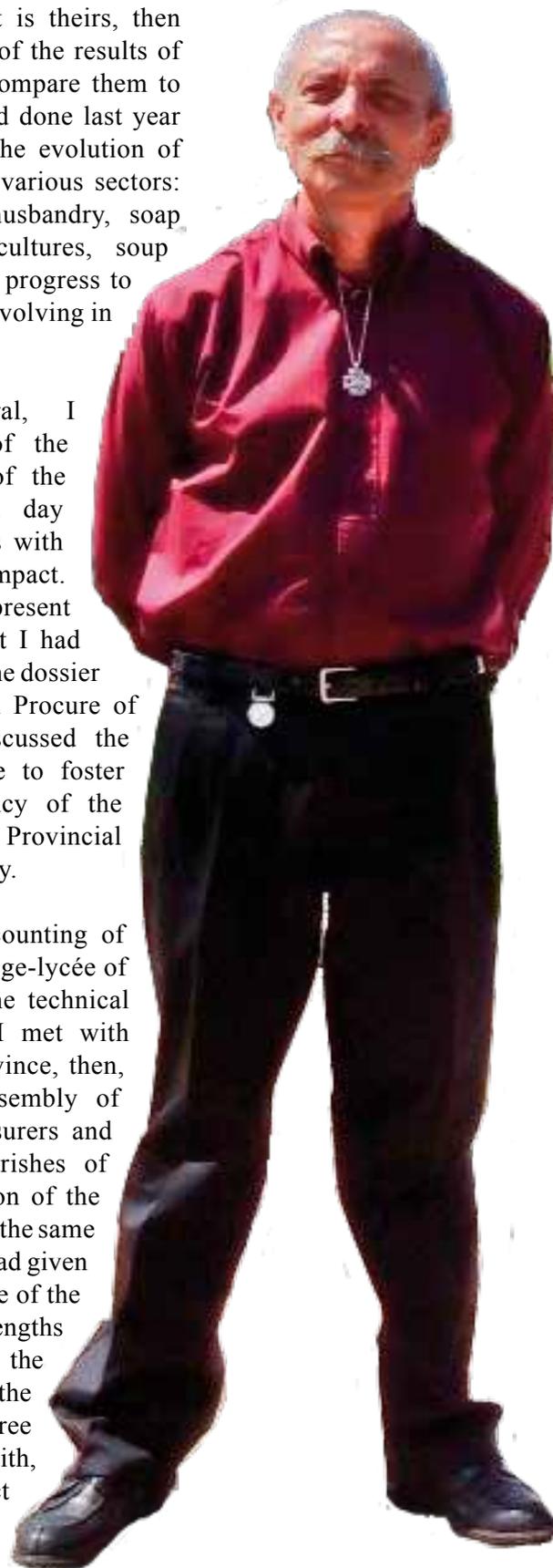
My trip was also for the advancement of research for funding projects by the Office of Development and Solidarity (BDS): this trip, as all my trips in reality, was the occasion to assemble documents and photos for the dossier of the BDS, as also to create new dossiers in search for financial aid. I was thus able, after visiting the future site, to verify the presence of the needed bricks, quarry stones, and gravel for the building site, and verify the financing of the first building to eight audiences of the ISEAB. We need to find \$175,000 more!

It also included giving some very quick formations on the use of Excel, visiting the communities of Lyambo (parish), of “Saint Charles Lwanga” (novitiate) and that of Butsili in Beni where I discovered, with much satisfaction, the nine hectares of land now planted with rice, banana trees, beans, soya, manioc,

and various other cultures. There are projects to launch small chicken farms. I also visited the brothers of the community of Palmba in Mbau, first of all to express our fraternity in the difficult insecurity that is theirs, then to build an accounting of the results of the farming of 2012, compare them to those of 2011 that I had done last year and analyze in detail the evolution of the profitability of the various sectors: plantation, oil mill, husbandry, soap factory, brickworks, cultures, soup kitchen... There is still progress to be made but Palmba is evolving in the right way!

With Father General, I participated in one of the days of the session of the Provincial Council, a day that concerned subjects with a heavy financial impact. Notably I was able to present in detail the report that I had written in two years of the dossier of the African Mission Procure of Brussels. We also discussed the means to put in place to foster the food self-sufficiency of the communities and the Provincial financial self-sufficiency.

I then received an accounting of the finances of the college-lycée of Kambali and that of the technical school of Mahamba. I met with the Council of the Province, then, two days later an assembly of the superiors, the treasurers and the pastors of the parishes of the Assumptionist region of the North Kivu to give them the same conference as the one I had given at Bulengera: 1) the state of the human and financial strengths of the Congregation; 2) the sources of revenue of the Congregation; 3) the three crises (demographic, faith, and financial) that affect our resources.



For the Council of the Province and its Provincial Treasurer, we added the presentation of the accounting for 2012-2013 and their analysis; for this second presentation, I added a complementary formation session on the technical aspects of accounting and on the processes of sustained verification and the preparation of a budget.

Finally, always with the Provincial Treasurer, I was able to build the sketch of a budget for the Provincial administration seeking to highlight the revenues that allow it to cover their expenses. The session was completed by building a real 2012-2013 budget for the whole of the Province (all the communities of formation, all the 'working communities' and the Provincial administration).

### **The road between Butembo and the Ugandan border**

On Saturday, October 12, we left for Nairobi: the CAS plane was not available as we had foreseen so we had to use the road between Butembo and the Ugandan border at Kasindi. We almost did not make it: an impromptu blockage had occasioned a massive traffic jam. Even by abandoning a car on one side, crossing the knot of tangled vehicles on foot to go find another 'taxi' on the other side, we had difficulty to continue our trip. Another car again was waiting for us and brought us to Entebbe – more than 12 hours of travel – where we took a plane to Nairobi in the evening.

In Kenya we spent two nights in our beautiful parish of Njiru. I worked with the local treasurer of the new community of the postulancy which is supposed to move into its new house on November 1: the elaboration of a budget for a new community that is starting up is always a bit delicate.

We also visited the present construction sites on the territory of the parish, that is the enlarging of the parish elementary school, the construction of an area church, the house for the postulants (these three building sites are financed by the parish, with, sometimes, European help and also the construction of a coed lycée with a boarding school area that is financed by the Province on the land of Katua that belongs to it. The lycée would receive its first students on January 1, 2014.

And lastly, I helped Father General in his canonical visitation by taking time for a long talk with three of the youngest Assumptionists of the community. On Tuesday morning we left for the international scholasticate of Emmanuel House, always in Nairobi. With the local treasurer, Father Bernard, we met with the agency director of his bank to clarify our understanding of a new government tax on bank accounts.

### **In Tanzania by road**

On Wednesday, accompanied by the Regional Superior, Father Simon, I took a bus that brought me, after six hours, to Arusha in Tanzania. After a



late lunch with the community of our parish of Kijenge, I had just the time to visit our new big rectory that the parish is just finishing before going to work at the novitiate of Kizito House, with Fathers Yves and Arnold, Superior and Treasurer respectively, to present to them the analysis of their budgets of the past year and correct the budgets for the next two years. The next day I did the same work with Father Eric, the new



Treasurer of Austin House the new philosophy residence. He showed me the garden and the stock-farms that should add to the resources proper to the community. In the meantime, the evening before, before all the religious of Arusha (three communities), I gave my conference on the financial life of the Congregation and I answered their questions before returning to Nairobi in the evening.

### **In my rare free moments**

In my rare free moments of those three weeks, I tried to deal from the distance, the maximum of the e-mails I received, and work on a certain number of dossiers left in abeyance and I succeeded in working on and sending to the Council of Consultors all the up to date dossiers at the end of September on the portfolios managed by the General Treasury. On Friday, the 18th,

I also worked with Father Claude to review the plans for the postulancy that will be built in Kinshasa: it's a question of building as simply as possible in order to reduce the costs.

### **Boston after 30 hours of travel**

It was after 30 hours of travel that I at last arrived in our community of Brighton (USA) on Monday at about 6:00 P.M. I spent three days in this ▶

community which with the help of the young residents, Boston College students, and five young professed Assumptionists, has 22 members: alone but also with Tomasz Jaster, the layman who takes care of the finances of the Province, then with Fr. Marcel Poirier, the Provincial Treasurer I studied the very complex budget of this Province with its four distinct territories, as well as the request to the International Solidarity from the Province for 2014. I also had a meeting with the Director of the MBA program of Assumption College to study how to reinforce the twinning between Assumption College and ISEAB in Butembo and how to deepen the contacts established last August by Fathers John Franck and Salvator with a certain number of people in the government in Washington concerning the presence of the Assumption in the Kivu. Finally, a half day was dedicated to Fr. Salvator studying the open dossiers for the Office of Development and Solidarity.

On Friday October 25 in the morning I left for Assumption College in Worcester: that day I had meetings with three subcommittees for the Board of Trustees of which I am a member: Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement, and Student Affairs. In the evening there was also a meeting of the Assumptionist members of the Board of Trustees (in the by-laws at least 20% of the members must be Assumptionists). For various reasons the number of new students entering the college each autumn is falling; the budget of the college suffers from this. We discussed how the Assumption should accompany the administration of the college in this difficult time.

On Saturday took place the meeting of the whole Board of Trustees. During the 'pauses' of the meeting, I was able



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to meet with the Vice President of the college to discuss a certain number of issues concerning the leasing of a part of the space of the General House for more than six months of the year to house some college students participating in programs and courses in Rome. In the evening, in a beautiful 19th century theater, a rare Worcester relic of the past, I participated in the “President’s Dinner”, an annual formal evening when the college invites all the past and potential donors. All the Assumptions are called to be on deck for that night! It was on Sunday night the 27th that I at last took a flight that brought me back to Rome on Monday morning, October 28.

**I**n conclusion, I can confirm that this long article does not really explain “what a General Treasurer does”. But it attempts to express what I did during the month of October. It was a month rich in meetings and discussions with numerous brothers and communities, but heavy with many works for which I try to bring my support to the life of the Congregation so that it will be better able to accomplish its mission. ■

4



1) (preceding page) The church of the Lyambo parish. The Mass in the presence of Father Benoît Grière, Superior General and Father Protais Kabila, Provincial Superior of Africa.

2) On October 12 we were obliged to use the road between Butembo and the Ugandan border at Kasindi.

3) From left to right: Fathers Protais Kabila, Wilfrid Kibanda and Benoît Grière visiting the construction site of the ISEAB.

4) In Nairobi, Father General visits the construction of the future college at Katua in the parish of Njiru. From the back, Frs. Benoît and Willibrord.

## Nîmes celebrates one of its sons

**In the diocese of Nîmes a step in the recognition of the holiness of Father d'Alzon has been taken: the diocese is mobilized to bring to a successful conclusion the cause of its illustrious Vicar General.**

By Julio NAVARRO ROMÀN and Marcelo MARCIEL

**T**he diocesan Secretariat of Nîmes in charge of promoting the beatification cause of Father d'Alzon, since its formation by the bishop in January, 2013, has not slacked in its efforts. It has given itself precise objectives and seeks the best adapted methods to realize locally its aims. It is thus that it has foreseen a complete program to highlight the date of November 21, anniversary of the death of Fr. d'Alzon.

Its first objective is to motivate and sensitize the clergy of the entire diocese. It seeks a wide diffusion of information on the figure of Fr. d'Alzon by the means of all the media available and to interest the young students and the teachers of the area of education to know and to make known this personality of the diocese.

Last November 21, the bishop of Nîmes, Msgr. Robert Wattedled, presided the Eucharist, surrounded by most of the presbyterium of the diocese in the chapel of the Oblates on rue Séguier where the tomb of Fr. d'Alzon is located. His homily was centered on the call of the Lord to holiness and underlined how much Father d'Alzon “appears as a witness and undoubtedly also a model” of holiness. On this occasion, a prayer asking for the beatification of Fr. d'Alzon, composed by the bishop himself was distributed (see insert).



Before the Mass, Father Julio Navarro, Postulator, expressed before the clergy the motives that we have to believe in the holiness of Fr. d'Alzon, to make him known and venerated as a true saint of this local Church, and invited them to implore his intercession and imitate his virtues. Promoting the cause of a Servant of God can become a true “ministry to holiness” for the People of God.

The same day, the contemplative monasteries of the diocese (Carmelites of Uzès, Poor Clares of Nîmes, Cistercians of Anduze) were united in prayer with the diocese for the same intention.

In the educational area, a poll was launched “with the intention of bringing attention to the person of Fr. d'Alzon”. There are seven questions in this poll. It will be interesting to find out the results.

The preceding Saturday there took place a moment of fraternity and conviviality for all the friends of the Assumption family around the Oblates, the Little Sisters and the Augustinians of the Assumption.



From left to right: Bishop Robert Wattebled of Nîmes, Fr. Marcelo Marciel, Assistant General, Fr. Julio Navarro, Postulator.

The program began with the projection of a video entitled “Emmanuel d’Alzon from A to Z”, presented by Sister Zoé Vandermersch, OA. Fr. Julio Navarro then expounded on the universality of the figure of Father d’Alzon as a model of holiness for today and explained why we had “to promote the cause of his beatification and canonization.” Fr. Marcelo Marciel, Assistant General in charge of the animation of the Lay-Religious Alliance presided the Eucharist showing how d’Alzon led to holiness and was model of the virtues. The day ended with a good time of conviviality around a table.

Another significant moment of this celebration was the Eucharist shared in Montpellier, on the evening of November 20 with the two Assumptionist communities of Montpellier and Nîmes, Religious and Little Sisters of the Assumption of Montpellier with many lay friends of the Assumptionist family. The figure of holiness of Father d’Alzon was present in mind to make the eyes shine. ■



### Prayer for the beatification of Father Emmanuel d’Alzon

Lord Jesus Christ,  
To answer your call and take part in your mission, the Church needs, today as yesterday,  
Men and women impassioned by the Gospel, “hardy, generous and disinterested”, faithful to their baptism.

The message of Father Emmanuel d’Alzon, that we are learning to know, incites us to love you, to love what you love, to desire what you desire. If it is your will, inspire our Church to recognize, in his life and in his works, a reflection of your holiness.

Renew and strengthen in us the desire to see reign, among men and the peoples, truth, justice and peace.

May the love of your Father and the breath of your Holy Spirit incite us to be men of faith, of communion and of solidarity with the poor.

Following the example of Father d’Alzon, we place ourselves in the care of Mary: may we be truly in the expectation of your Kingdom and in the service of its coming.

May your Spirit renew the face of the earth and bring us into the communion that unites us in your Father for ever and ever. Amen

*Bishop Robert Wattebled of Nîmes,  
November 21, 2013.*



## The Alliance and the Way in the Congregation

**The meeting of the International Commission of the Laity that took place in Madrid from September 23 to 27 was lived as a revealing moment.**

by Marcelo MARCIEL

At this beginning of 2014, the discussion on the “Way of Life” continues. It should come to a “decisive crossroads” at the next Plenary General Council next June when the project will be submitted for approval. The work already done is considerable notably in the International Commission which, in conformity with the desires of the General Chapter of 2011 (172) was charged with the presentation of such

a project. This progressive elaboration of the text met with the enthusiasm of many all over the world, in Latin America, in Africa, in Spain, and in France where the groups are very dynamic and overflow with multiple activities. The work of the International Commission whose last meeting took place in Madrid on the 23-27 of September, 2013, consisted in putting into form a project that started from two corrected versions that were themselves inspired by five different texts. The work is ongoing to establish this project of the “Way of Life”,

that once adopted by the PGC will be an “ad experimentum” text. The eight page document is divided into five short chapters”

- **Disciple of Christ:** our spirituality centered on Christ,
- **Agents of communion and fraternity:** our commitment to the life of the community,
- **Apostles of the coming of the Kingdom:** our motto and the mission.
- **Witnesses to life in the Spirit:** our presence in the world,
- **Men and women of prayer:** our spiritual roots.

The text is studded with numerous quotations from the Rule of Life of the Assumption and abounds in well-known Alzonian expressions. The adoption of this text is an indispensable step so that the



Assumptionist charism and spirituality, which should see the day and will be the occasion to assemble the numerous available documents for the formation of lay Assumptionists. This program will respect the great diversity of the groups in the Alliance of the Congregation and will be available in various languages. It will be inspired by the various programs that the groups use for their formation. It will be necessary to produce a practical protocol for formation that will be useful for all groups. This proposition aims at helping the Provinces to put into place a roadmap for the lay person in the Assumption so as to give him the indispensable elements to deepen the “Way of Life”. ■

Superior General can submit the “Lay-Religious Alliance” for its canonical recognition and for the approbation of the Congregation of Religious. If this canonical recognition belongs to the Superior General and the Roman authorities, it must be recalled that the various associations of laity can have, according to the different countries a civil recognition such as those of France and the Congo that were recently presented to the PGC.

Soon the International Commission will have a renewal of its membership and its members will be designated by the Superior General for a specific mandate. That renewal will be on the agenda of the next PGC after a discussion with the Provincials.

The Commission also worked on a plan of formation, a solid program rooted in the

**1) Fathers Marcelo Marciel, Claude Grenache in a meeting with Paco Romero and Jimena Garcia.**

**2) Under the walls of Avila, Fathers Marcelo and Claude with Brother Jean-Claude Kakule Kamabu.**

**3) Celebration of the Lay-Religious Alliance in the Leganès-Madrid community**



## The Spanish translation of the Spiritual Guide of Fr. Sage

By Father Hector Garcia Ochoa, A.A.,  
Santiago de Chile, 2013, 167 pages.



The *Commentaire du Guide Spirituel de vie intérieure* well known by all Assumptionist was written by Father Athanase Sage in 1959 and was published in an annex to the twenty-one volume

collection of the Cahiers d'Alzon. The Andean Province, in its continued effort to help the Spanish speaking religious and laity to appropriate the charism of the Assumption, has published this translation by Fr. Hector Garcia Ochoa, A.A. This work now allows Spanish speakers to access this precious text. Father Hector has dedicated his life to teaching Saint Augustine to the novices in Latin America. This translation is one further step to root oneself in the spirit of Father Emmanuel d'Alzon and to devote oneself to the great causes of God and man that mobilized our Founder. Many thanks to Father Hector!

Marcelo Marciel

## Testemunhas da Ressurreição e do Amor

By Father Luiz Carlos de Oliveira, A.A., Rio de Janeiro, 2013, 110 pages.



Father Luiz Carlos, born in 1967 in the small village of Marginha, Minas Gerais, presently Provincial of the Assumptionists in Brazil, has just written these pages that we read with delight and surprise.

The publisher of the book defines the author as “an eternal lover of stories, tales, parables and poetry and has made of these literary forms his principle hobby”. Father Luiz makes the elements of nature speak: the cloth that served as the shroud of Christ, the stone that closed the tomb where Joseph of Arimathaea had placed the body of the Resurrected, the ass that accompanied Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. Particularly interesting is the story of our three Bulgarian Martyrs told by the mop that served to clean the corridors of the prison in Sophia. These “stories” formed by the imagination of Luiz Carlos are a great catechesis for children and also for the faithful at the Sunday Mass.

Julio Navarro.

## A new printing of the Rule of Life in French.



It is not a secret for anyone: each religious should have handy, besides his Bible, the text of the Rule of Life and also the Capitular Rules. It is during the celebration of the beginning of the novitiate that the candidate receives the book that will become for him “a way of Gospel” (Ratio {94) and contains the secret of his vocation to community life and to mission in the Church. It happened that the French edition of 1984 was out of print and many French speaking religious, especially in Africa couldn't get a copy, it was decided to have a new limited printing while waiting for the General Chapter of 2017. The definitive form of the Rule was published in 1984 in the four languages of the Congregation.

We recall that a new English edition was published in 2007. This 2013 French edition includes the modifications requested by the General Chapter of 2011 and approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life concerning four new articles. The revised text is also available in French, English, and Spanish on the Internet.

# Learning to live together

The region of the Great Lakes is marked by conflicts: border conflicts, as well as ethnic, civil wars and rebellions. The Congo-RDC is without a doubt among the countries most affected by these armed confrontations (1). Father Wilfrid Kasereka Kibanda, Director of the Institut Supérieur Emmanuel d'Alzon of Butembo (ISEAB), one of the Mobilizing Works of the Assumption has been preoccupied for a long time by the construction of a lasting peace in that region. It was the subject of a thesis in practical philosophy that he



**“ The work of Father Kibanda seeks to be a building stone in the construction of peace in Africa.**

brilliantly defended at the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL). In the work he has just published (2) the author begins with the idea of universal peace in the light of the evolutionist theories of the biologist Charles Darwin (1809-1882). In fact, the thinker of the theory “of the descent modified by the means of selection” in the “Descent of Man” (1871) opens a vast horizon for the recognition of otherness and the universal peace that is the basis of the philosophical approach of the author. But the variety of the finches of the Galapagos and the variety of the ethnic differences have only very distant links, those of the hazards of nature and the imperative of civilization that constitute the building of a lasting peace.

The first part of the work places in evidence the misunderstanding between transformation and the Kantian vision of the history of civilization and the future of humanity. How can the vision of Kant be reconciled with that of Darwin, father of the theory of evolution, in what concerns the construction of universal peace? In the second part, the author compares what embodies the determinants of peace in the two philosophical approaches. This book makes us enter into an open debate that is not foreign to the Realpolitik where nature and civilization are not simply paradoxical. We retain that the reflection begun goes way beyond a simple debate and, as the author underlines: “the virtue of understanding peace as a task of humanity consists in making humanity responsible to engage in it, to make plans or scenarios to approach it.” Let us hope that this reflection will help the protagonists of this difficult dialogue in the region of the Great Lakes be inspired by it so that at last the people of the region learn to live together in a durable harmony and understanding.

**Bernard Le Léannec**

1) Cf. the study of Matthieu P. and Williams, J.C., *Conflits et guerres au Kivu et dans la région des Grands Lacs, entre tensions locales et régionales*, Ed. Harmattan, Paris, 1999

2) *L'idée de paix universelle au risque de la sélection naturelle. Discussion des déterminants de la paix*, Louvain/ L'Harmattan, 2013, 249 pages. (You can obtain this work directly from the Procure Assomptionniste, on Avenue d'Itterbeek, 230, 1070, Bruxelles, Belgium. In part, this work can be consulted on the Internet.

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**Mock-up and page  
design:**

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**Composed on  
12/30/13.**

**This no. 11 of AA-News  
Has 220 copies:**

130 in French  
30 in English  
30 in Spanish  
30 in Dutch

**And 350 electronic  
copies**

Agostiniani dell'Assunzione - Via San Pio V, 55 - I - 00165 Roma  
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# Our Deceased Brothers



✠ Father LEMMENS, Lucas (North Europe Province) died on October 20, 2013 in the hospital of Kortenberg. His funeral was held in the church of Saint Gertrude of Louvain on Saturday, October 26, 2013 and he was buried in the cemetery of the Abbaye du Park at Heverlee (Belgium). He was 87.

✠ Father OOSTERLAAK, Benno Wilhelmus Petrus (North Europe Province) died at Boxtel on October 31, 2013. His funeral was held in the chapel of Molenweide on Monday, November 4 and he was buried in the cemetery of Kasteel Stapelen of Boxtel. He was 86.

✠ Father BARAKOV, Stanislas (Province of France) died on November 6 in Sofia (Bulgaria). His funeral was held on Thursday November 7, 2013 in the chapel of the Catholic cemetery of Plovdiv where he rests forever. He was 90.

✠ Brother KERBOUL, Robert (Province of France) died on November 26, 2013 at Agen. His funeral was held on Friday, November 29 at the Priory of Layrac. He was 82.