

A News of the Assumption



EDITORIAL

Everyday Heroism

« God does not ask the impossible of us. Let's live with heart and goodness the commitment that we made at the time of our final profession. »

Agenda

Plenary General Council

- **June 1-11, 2018**, in Arusha, Tanzania
- **December 3-12, 2018**, in Rome, preceded by a meeting of the Economic Council of the Congregation (November 26-December 4)

Ordinary General Councils

- no 5 : **April 9-13, 2018**
- no 6 : **May 14-18, 2018**
- no 7 : **June 11-12, 2018**
- no 8 : **September 5-19, 2018**
- no 9 : **November 5-8, 2018**
- no 10 : **December 17-18, 2018**

Benoît

- **April 15-17** : meeting of Assumption Superiors (Paris)
- **April 22-30**: Kinshasa
- **May 23-25**: Assembly of the Union of Superiors General (Rome)
- **May 29-June 13**: Tanzania

Marcelo

- **May 29-June 13** : Tanzania

Didier

- **April 15-May 13** : Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and North America
- **May 20-22**: Paris
- **May 24-June 13**: Tanzania
- **June 14-June 23**: College of Consultants and Economic Council of the Congregation (Rome)
- **June 27-July 2**: Belgium

Thierry

- **April 22-30** : Kinshasa
- **May 29-June 13** : Tanzania

Miguel

- **April 2-10** : Ouagadougou
- **May 29-June 13** : Tanzania
- **June 26-29** : Forum and Coordination of Asia (Vietnam)

Patriarch Bartholomew visited Kadikoy

It is a well-established tradition: for the feast of St. Andrew, the patron saint of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchy of Constantinople, a delegation from the Holy See comes to Phanar. This is the section of Istanbul where the Patriarch lives. He is said to be "ecumenical" because of his authority over the entire Orthodox world. Last November 30th,

Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, guided the Roman delegation. For this occasion, it was decided that on November 28, Christians from Turkey would memorialize the visit of Pope John Paul VI to Patriarch Athenagoras 50 years

previous (on July 25, 1967). In order to do this, a meeting of two voices was planned for the "Casa D'Italia", the Italian Cultural Center of Istanbul. It included Patriarch Bartholomew and Cardinal Koch. The Assumptionists from Turkey were well represented at this event, with Mgr. Louis Armel Pelatre, Fr. Jules and the Oblates of the Assumption. At the time of this meeting, the Patriarch and Mgr. Pelatre, who knew one another and held one another in high esteem, greeted one another and the Patriarch promised to visit Kadikoy.

On December 22, Mgr. Pelatre announced the visit of the Patriarch for the next day, December 23, at 4 o'clock. This news was also given to the Sisters who live in the house at Kadikoy. Being very punctual, His Holiness Bartholomew I, arrived at the house at the appointed time. He was accompanied by his Grand Archimandrite and four police officers for security purposes. *"Once in the dining hall, recounts Fr. Michel Derache, the Patriarch offered us some Greek sweets and two brochures on the history of Phanar. We had coffee together and exchanged some conversation. The Patriarch made reference to the conference of November 28. I have retained this memory in my Assumptionist heart: 'We were enemies for 50 years. Today we are brothers.'"*

It is without a doubt that Fr. d'Alzon would have appreciated these words. He had come to this very place in the spring of 1863 to affirm the mission of the Orient that he had entrusted to Fr. Galabert. After visiting the library and the church, the Patriarch took his leave by extending to the religious and to the Oblates his wishes for a good and holy Christmas. The thoughts from the community were: "We will remember this visit for a long time. It encourages us to pursue with ardent prayer the unity of all Christian".

Reflection from Fr. Michel Derache (community of Kadikoy, Turkey)---ATLPE no16



On the cover

The Church of Saint Joseph, in the village of Muhila, in the parish of Kitatumba (North Kivu, DR of Congo), was built by a local Christian, Prosper Katasohire, and his family, who donated it to the Assumption of the Province of Africa. This same generous benefactor built a convent on 7.5 acres, giving it as a gift for a future Assumptionist implantation.

Everyday Heroism

Now that we are plunged in the radiant light of the empty tomb of Jesus-Christ, I want to reflect with you on what characterizes the religious of today in this world. We all know of the existence of heroes. They are spread through the founding stories of our peoples and our nations. We each have in our hearts a hero that we cherish. When I was a child learning the history of France I focused on figures of quasi-mythic, providential men. I rarely thought of women, with the exception of Joan of Arc. The lives of famous men contributed to the idea that there were exceptional beings who made history. Among these figures, that of the hero emerged. The hero is one who gives all he has to remain faithful to his ideals.



Fr. Benoît Grière
General Superior
of the
Augustinians of
the Assumption

The term, hero, is not directly linked to the Christian tradition. The Church prefers the term of martyr. Nonetheless, we are talking about the heroism of virtues. What does that mean? It is the official understanding that the baptized lived strongly the cardinal virtues of faith, hope and charity. We know that Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon was declared Venerable after the recognition of the heroism of his virtues.

What signifies heroism for a religious today living in the Congo, Chile, or elsewhere? The fallacy would be to believe that heroism is reserved for exceptional people, for those bestowed with superior qualities. One must return to basic concepts and live heroism daily. God does not ask the impossible of us. He accompanies us day after day and he allows us to be faithful primarily in the little things. I remember a conversation that I had with Dom Denis Huerre while I was a postulant. He was the Abbott of the monastery of La Pierre-qui-Vire, a French Benedictine Abbey.

He assumed the post for many years as abbot-president of his monastic congregation. This man impressed me with his religious demeanor and especially with

the wisdom that emanated from his person. I asked him a question about hermits, those religious who seek to live alone and who remove themselves from community life for a total quest. Even though the story is old--almost 30 years old--I can still remember his response: "The true hermit is the one who lives the Rule in its simplicity in the monastery without talking about himself." Dom Huerre was pointing at the essential: it is in the faithfulness of our engagement that we are able to become holy. The true hero is ultimately the one who fulfills day after day the humble tasks of his mission. The Christian life is a heroic pathway insofar as we live with heart and goodness the commitment that we made at the time of our final profession.

Since I travel the world to meet my Assumptionist brothers, I am more and more convinced that we need to live heroically every day. This means, above all else, that we live the Rule of Life in its entirety. I am always saddened to realize that faithfulness to daily prayer, the recitation of the Office in community, and the practice of an annual retreat are sometimes questioned by some. Forgetting the promise made in connection with our vows is a path to ruin. There is, therefore, the life of prayer, but there is also the building of fraternity. "Only one soul and one heart turned toward God", said Saint Augustine.

The heroism of love is to accept our brother as he is and to make the journey with him in spite of his weaknesses. Don't idealize the figure of the hero, because that would lead us to exclude the possibility of our becoming such a person. The strength of the Resurrection of Christ leads us to another path: that on which all becomes possible thanks to the presence of Jesus within us. The heroism of the religious is to first live intensely in faith, hope and charity. It is not a matter of making us into supermen but, better yet, children of God. ■

Calls, appointments, approvals...

Father Benoît Grière, Superior General, with his Council, has called

■ TO PERPETUAL PROFESSION

1. **NGUYỄN VĂN Tuan François-Xavier**
(Europe) (09/04/2018)
2. **PETCHIA Pierre-Paul**
(Europe) (10/04/2018)
3. **BONOU-YEHOUEYOU Blaise**
(Europe) (11/04/2018)
4. **TRẦN QUỐC Cường Joseph**
(Europe) (13/04/2018)

■ call to DIACONATE

5. **RADIMILAHY Jean Pierre**
(Madagascar) (09/04/2018)
6. **RAZAFIMAHATRATRA Jean Paul**
(Madagascar) (10/04/2018)
7. **NGUYỄN ĐÌNH Hành François**
(Europe) (11/04/2018)

■ call to PRIESTHOOD

8. **QUIÑAL Christopher**
(Europe) (09/04/2018)
9. **SELLA Jean**
(Brasil) (10/04/2018)
10. **RAKOTOZAFINDRAMOHA Germain**
(Madagascar) (11/04/2018)



THE OFFICIAL PICTURE OF THE NEW GENERAL CURIA

Taken in the chapel and the gardens of the General House, two official pictures have been sent to the communities in order to be displayed in the proper place of the house. May they help reinforce the communion in the whole body of the Assumption and rekindle the prayer of all for this team of religious which has accepted the call to serve at the international level.



From left to right: Fr. Michel Kubler (Secretary and General Procurator), Fr. José Miguel Díaz Ayllón (General Assistant), Fr. Benoît Grière (Superior General), Fr. Thierry Kambale Kahongya (General Assistant), Fr. Marcelo Marciel (Assistant General and Vicar General), Br. Didier Remiot (Assistant General and Bursar General).

Expulsion of temporary vow religious:

At the request of the Provincial of Africa and with the consent of his Council, the General Superior confirms the expulsion from the Congregation of the following brothers belonging to the Province of Africa:

- Br. Moïse Kasereka Kazimoto
- Br. Bienvenu Kolongo Musaidi
- Br. Jean-Louis Mbusa Kahehero
- Br. Moïse Muhindo Kavusa
- Br. Gerlas Muhindo Muhighinya
- Br. Emmanuel Mutsuva Sivalendera
- Br. Sédar Paluku Mutsotsya

Withdrawal of the mandate of formator (Capitular Rules no. 16 b) and appointment of an interim formator.

After concertation with the Provincial of Africa and the consent of the OGC, the mandate as formator of the Maison Saint-Augustin of Bulengera (DRC), Fr. Jean-Christophe Kanyororo Kisali.

Fr. phrem Kasereka Kapitula has been appointed an interim formator.

“Your kingdom come!”



The motto of the Assumption should be constantly invoked when discerning our missions. The reflection, offered here, is by Fr. Francis Bousquet, philosopher and theologian, Rector of St. Louis des Français in Rome and Professor Emeritus of the Catholic Institute of Paris.

“Your Kingdom come!”

This appeal lies at the heart of all Christian prayer, which is why it is good for us to reflect on what it means, in God’s plan for each of us, the coming of his Kingdom. In the space we have here, it can only be a simple sketch, an open meditation within an exegetical and theological framework.

The preaching of the Kingdom by Jesus to the Church

We must begin by going back to our sources, because the complex history of the liturgical feast of Christ the King invites us to make a deeper discernment. Established by Pius XI in 1925, the feast of Christ the King, marked by the political context of the time, wanted to celebrate “the social reign of Christ”, focusing on the relationship between the Church and society, which was still rather nostalgically about the loss of power. After Vatican II, this ambiguity was corrected and the feast was renamed “Christ the King of the Universe”, marking the end of the liturgical year. This time the aim was to point out the link between the Paschal mystery of the kingship of Christ and the eschatological character of the Kingdom of God established for all creation.

I would just like to highlight a few elements in the preaching of the Kingdom of God as written in the Scriptures. Jesus preaches the Kingdom that he lived in himself

but the disciples preached Jesus, who becomes the Kingdom, and used effective and concrete signs along with this preaching.

Jesus preaches the Kingdom. His words are striking, the Kingdom of God is near; the Kingdom is upon us; the Kingdom is among you... We need, however, to be cautious, the spiritual experience that we draw from this needs to be Trinitarian. Something that is not easy. We automatically think of the Kingdom as something external to Jesus, as if he was just a simple Prophet. But, although Jesus does not preach himself, he lives what he preaches, in his person. The point where we say “on Earth as it is in Heaven”, refers to him... This reservation, that Jesus does not preach himself but the Kingdom, translates itself into the wonderful discovery of a Trinitarian faith. We see through Jesus that there is, in God, a divine Son: the ability to receive and accommodate this fundamental generosity, is that of the Father, and therefore the ability to offer it back, is made possible in the Spirit, which he shares with us. In preaching the Kingdom, Jesus refers constantly to the Father, but at the same time he preaches the Kingdom that he lives himself, and invites everyone to a conversion to God, the Father.

So, the desire of Jesus, as Christ and Son of God in person, is that this Kingdom be shared by all, and that the will of God, who is love, is to reign on earth

as in heaven. He teaches his disciples to pray “May your Kingdom come”. His actions support what he says in his words and in his being: he enters the Messianic and Royal Jerusalem, at the start of Holy week, not like a warrior, but as a gentle and peaceful King mounted on a donkey.

Secondly: the kingship of Christ, like the Kingdom of God, is not to be thought of as an imperial power, but rather the expression of a power that is different from that of other potentates, the power of God, which is radically different. Jesus, as Messiah, both fulfils and undermines the functions to be found in the structures of the people of God of the Old Testament: Priest, Prophet and King. Priest: this function ensures that mediation takes place between God and man and between man and God. Jesus is the unique priest, because he is fully God and fully human; and the Epistle to the Hebrews explains the new economy of the cult that flows from this. Prophet: but Jesus is more than someone who is a bearer of the word of God: He is the Word in person, because there is no difference between what he says, what he does and what he is. King: this is not just a function of guiding the people in justice but for all people for whom the King is the one who will bring creation to its completion. Jesus is recognised as a Servant King, a *titulus* confirmed by the plaque placed ▶

Christ Pantocrator, a mosaic in Saint Sophia, Istanbul (13th C.)



on his cross at the crucifixion. For Christians, to behave like Christ, the Servant King, means helping to bring about the completion of creation through humble service. Unlike the predator, they offer a fruitful and peaceful service, at all levels of nature and society, each of us using his gifts, until the last transfiguration.

Thirdly: If Jesus preaches the Kingdom, the disciples preach Jesus. This is amazing! How did this happen? Let us disregard the words of Loisy, that “Jesus announced the Kingdom and the Church was formed,” a phrase that is ambiguous because it leads us to think that the Church is considered to be the Kingdom here on Earth. To preach Jesus rather than preach the Kingdom directly is to recognize that the Kingdom is realised at the heart of humanity in and through Jesus and brought

about by the Resurrection. The Church exists because of the Resurrection, and the Church expresses a dual loyalty to her Lord and to the whole of humanity. We will return to this later.

Finally on the coming of the Reign of God: the miracles are a sign of the Kingdom, i.e. salvation. We are not interested in miracles here as acts of wonder (as expressed in the Apocrypha). Our interest is to see them as the *magnalia Dei*, the wonders of God. They are signs, signs that are effective in making present what they signify, indicating the coming of the Kingdom like the windows in a tunnel that open on to a world to come: wonders which seek to heal, nourish and reconcile; all tasks given to the Church, as described in the Acts of the Apostles. When Salvation is “OK”, humanity brings to re-

alisation in itself that which the heart of God desired from the beginning until the end of time.

The Church : “Sacrament of the Reign of God”

In a second series of reflections, I would like to dwell on the depth of the change this brings to the character of the Church, which is indeed the “sacrament of salvation”, when it is considered as the “sacrament of the Reign of God”. I accompanied Georges Chevallier PhD, from the Catholic Institute of Paris, who completed his thesis on this subject: “The Church as sacrament of the Reign of God in a context of religious pluralism”, and I would like to pay tribute to his work, before developing what it inspired in me.

Two clarifications, before continuing: If we use the term “Reign” rather than “Kingdom”, although in the end they are almost equivalent, it is because in our language “Reign” means rather the advent or the future of the Kingdom, while “Kingdom” carries a more static meaning, implying more what has definitely been established.

Second clarification: we see immediately that while pointing to the same reality, the expression “sacrament of salvation” draws our attention towards the desire, sometimes the anxiety of salvation, which is the salvation of each one of us (since the Gospel is the Good News of salvation for all in Jesus Christ). The “sacrament of the Reign of God”, however, looks towards the future, and the whole of humanity. Perhaps it is only in an interreligious dialogue that we will truly perceive the significant benefit of this formula. Rather than continue with the indefinite controversy over who is in possession of the “means of

salvation”, the more beneficial interfaith dialogue would be to look towards the future, and ask, what spiritual resources do we have in our traditions to face the challenges of the developing world, and together offer hope to all?

The first impact of the expression “The Church: Sacrament of the Reign of God” is to highlight what Pope Francis constantly reiterates - that the Church must “move outwards”. A ceaseless self-reference leads her to look like a multinational institution touting and selling her products. The question, however, is not that simple, because globalisation also affects all Christians who have an impact on this identity. We cannot simply withdraw into ourselves; we have to go out... We also need to remember that the essential gesture of mission, and the dialogue that goes along with this gesture, is what gives the Church its identity. The identity of the Church is given to it only by following the Lord Jesus Christ who received his mission from Father and gives his life for all humanity. For us, his being is inseparable from his mission.

The identity and mission of the Church, through Christ and in the Spirit, are by nature paschal. Continually open to the one and only God, to the Father, as he hung on the cross he turned towards the whole of humanity, with his arms wide open. The love of God and neighbour are inseparably united in the form of the cross. For at the heart of this cross is the transforming presence of the Spirit, the Breath of God, the shared life of the Father and the Son, and through which charity issues forth to all hearts. This reflection on the purpose of the Church as the sacrament of the

Reign of God, speaks of a Reign that simultaneously overflows from and fulfils itself, thus revealing her originality. Because it is only from the risen Lord that we can understand and bring humanity to fulfilment; in other words, the future and the new creation can only be fully understood in the dialogue of salvation.

In doing this we uncover the differences and the common ground with the great Tradition that lay at the heart of Vatican II. The Council invited us to stop thinking in dualities in the constitution on the Church in the World (the duality that described the Church and the “world” as mutually exclusive, portraying the World as the darkness that refused the light), but rather to think in trinomial terms - the World – the Church – the Kingdom in mutual relationship. The Church, fully in “world”, (this is the world that God loved so much that he sent his Son, which is the second understanding given to the “world” in the Johannine writings); and at the same time she is fully of the Kingdom (of which she is its origin) and has for mission to facilitate the exodus, the transition, the Passover of the world to the Kingdom. The Church, then, is the sign and the sacrament of the Passover of the world to the Kingdom.

The second impact of the characterization of the Church as “sacrament of the Reign of God” is to remind us of the kenotic logic of this sign: the sign is active (it is effective, it does what it says) but only as a sign. It thus makes real and maintains the relationship between two realities, in this case, a dual otherness between the Church and the world, and between the Church and Reign of God or the Kingdom, in which the

Church belongs to both. This dual otherness, however, is not symmetrical, because Christ and the world are not of the same order. But the Church does not present itself as Christ, who is its head, and but as his mystical body.

This dual otherness can better express the Christian affirmation simultaneously and paradoxically, which is that of the Universal Will of salvation and the uniqueness of a Mediator. The Church, from the coming of Christ until his return, as the origin of the Kingdom of God, can only be understood in a fidelity both to her unique Lord and to humanity that it seeks to gather together.

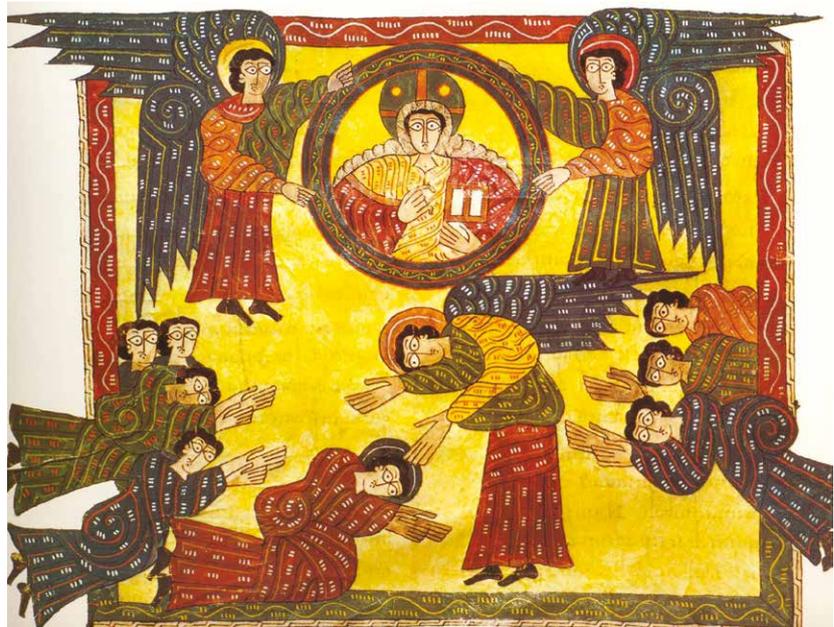
The third impact, in considering the Church as the sacrament of the Reign of God: we should normally say, rather than “all men are ordained for the Church”, the inverse of this formula, which is much less equivocal, “the Church is ordained for all men.” We think of a similar inversion that had operated in the time of Yves Congar, instead of saying: “outside the Church no salvation”, which restricts the work of God within our limits, using another formula that avoids this ambiguity, “in the Church, there is salvation”. It is certain that in the Church we find that the Spirit guarantees the ways and means, and it is open to the grace, which enables it to operate in a way that is not just individual.

Analogously, saying that “all men are ordained for the Church” would require, in order to avoid any ambiguity, to be clarified when it comes to the Church at the end of time, in its full eschatological dimension finally realised, when Christ will present to the Father, in the Spirit, all humankind reconciled for its ultimate

>> Reflection

transfiguration. The point here is to make sure not to confuse the Church in its present state with the Reign of God in its fulfilment. Sometimes we hear another expression: “all men are ordained to Catholic unity of the people of God”. Here again, to say that unequivocally, requires that we remember that the universality of this unity of the people of God embraces the whole of humanity. But this almost makes the phrase tautological; in the end, the important thing to remember is how the catholicity of the Church is a sign of..., and an appeal to..., the unity of all humanity in salvation, a promise that begins to happen, thanks to God, in the Kingdom of God.

The Fourth impact: wanting the Church to fulfil its mission to be the “sacrament of the Reign of God” has the advantage of reminding us that the logic of the Church is entirely a sacramental logic. The logic of sign, “to be a sign”, is the logic of a sacramental sign, of an effective sign, which does what it says, specifically, by the grace of God. The sacrament is both sign and instrument actually fulfilling itself, therefore, but as a sign. This underscores that it is both dynamic and effective as a sacramental reality, which ‘informs’, in its own way, that which gives shape to the Church. We see the benefits of such a perspective, both for the mission and for dialogue. In talking about the Church as the “sacrament of the Reign of God”, we should not lose sight of the Church as a “body of hope”, a very beautiful expression of Georges Kowalskif, to whom I am indebted. Its task is to give always more bodily shape and visibility to the Reign of God as it moves towards fulfilment. *Redemptoris missio*, is a vital



The Escorial Beatus (10th C.)

text of Pope John Paul II. In paragraph §20 he wrote: “the inchoate reality of the kingdom can also be found beyond the confines of the Church”. This does not detract from the traditional affirmation of the necessity of the Church for salvation, but it avoids becoming stuck in the intractable questions of membership, issues not to do with lawyers, but only with the One who truly searches minds and hearts. This is good because the Reign of God happens to be a still more effective sign. And the disciples of Christ, thanks be to God, will be a blessing to the world.

The last impact I would like to highlight in this short reflection. The Church “sacrament of the Reign of God” gives priority of place to hospitality. Kierkegaard said that there is a “how to” (how to exist, how to live) which, when asked properly, leads to the “what” of faith. God can only be known, can only be witnessed in existing as he exists. For the Church, witnessing to the Reign of God established by the Servant King, implies adopting a role of diaconal service, particularly by developing its hospitality and

leading the dialogue towards an ever deeper mutual discovery. A child once summed up for me in an extraordinarily appropriate way the dialogue of salvation, which moves from the Incarnation and the Paschal feast, by saying, “Yes, he came to us so that we could go home!” (He did not know that he was using terms taken from St. Leo’s Christmas homily.) The Church - Sacrament of the Reign of God - will be a Church of Christians who are all things to all men by being adopted as sons in the Son through the effective sign of a fraternity that grows ever broader and more humble, in both act and effect.

This corresponds to the dynamics of the dialogue we have with the secular world as well as with interreligious dialogue. This is not in order to claim an overarching excellence, but to enable us to face the challenges of this present world and to build peace. The world on fire needs prophets and sages; it needs a secure and effective hope based on concrete testimonies of the Reign of God, which is being realised in the crucified and risen Jesus.

Fr. François Bousquet

Holy Week with Cardinal Tagle

The monthly issue of **Living with Christ**, printed by Bayard, has published the meditations of the Archbishop of Manila for each of the days of Holy Week



With the aim of making the Eucharist and God’s Word the focus of the faithful during the Lenten season, Bayard Assumption Media Foundation released the March 2018/Holy Week edition of *Living with Christ*, featuring reflections by Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle.

“*Living with Christ*’ helps us to savor the Word of God day to day, to deepen it by commentaries and questions, by the examples of the saints and by the call of Pope Francis. Cardinal Tagle helps us specially during the Holy Week by his reflections and questions,” shared Fr. Bernard Holzer, Superior of the Philippine delegation of the Augustinians of the Assumption, in an interview with

CBCPNews.

According to him, the daily missal published monthly aims to form “better disciples” by giving the faithful access to the texts of the liturgy and to the daily readings.

“The liturgy and the Word of God are our guide and educator,” explained the French priest.

‘The center of our lives’

“*Living with Christ* is our daily companion for praying and living the Eucharist, to make the Eucharistic the center of our lives,” added Holzer.

Choosing Tagle to write for the Holy Week edition seemed like an obvious choice, the head of the Archdiocese of Manila being one of the most recognizable

personalities in the Church in the Philippines. “*It’s a grace to work with the Cardinal.*

He is a lover of the Bible. He is a marvelous story-teller, bringing us closer to God. ... He listens and takes care of his flock.

He is attentive to his sheep. I admire his way of acknowledging people, addressing them using nice words, asking them for news, encouraging them... always with a smile,” shared Holzer, who is also the general manager of Bayard Assumption Media Foundation.

Spiritual preparations

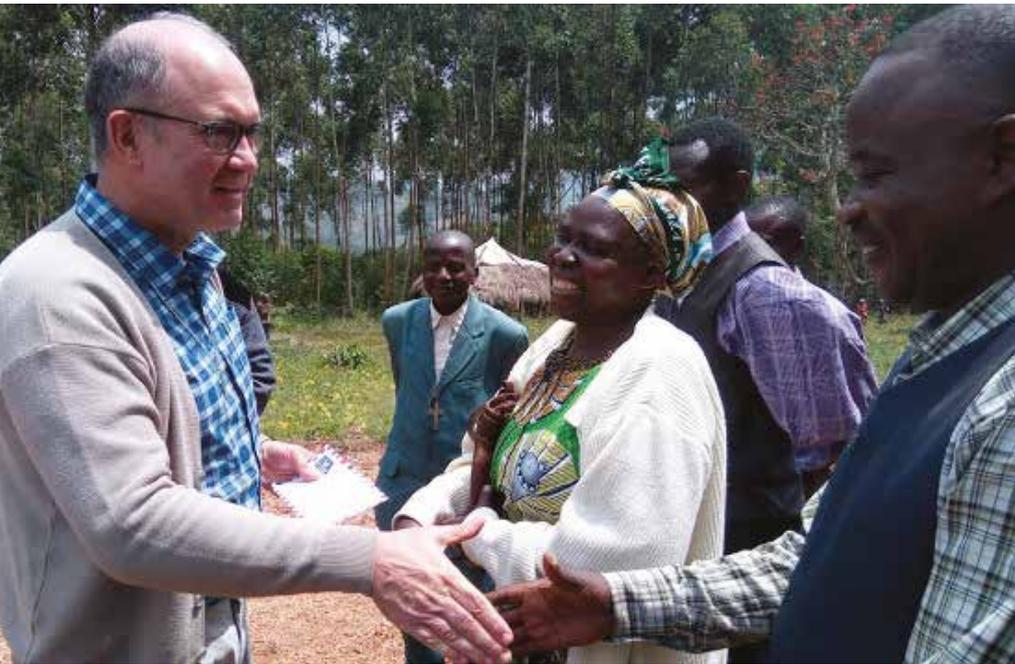
Expressing hopes that more Filipinos can spiritually prepare better this Lenten season, he noted how Lent “*is a time to accompany Jesus on His way to Jerusalem, to know Him and to love Him more.*”

Interested parties may subscribe or order “*Living with Christ*” by bulk for discounts by contacting Bayard Philippines at (02) 927-1052 or visiting their office at Bayard Assumption Media Foundation, Inc., No. 17 C. Salvador Street, Varsity Hills, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

(cf. CBCPNews)

The Superior general has met the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo

From 7th to January 31st, Father Benoît Grière and his assistant Father Thierry Kahongya have gone to the meeting of the region extremely threatened, but also showing great fecundity



Father Benoît Grière, Superior general, accompanied by Father Thierry Kahongya, the Assistant general, has accomplished a visit to the brothers of the Province of Africa, precisely in the region of Kivu. The visit has lasted three weeks of the month of last January. This was not a canonical visit process. It was rather a fraternal visit with regard to the implementation of the last general Chapter, sharing ideas about the next sessions that will deal with the life of the Province, namely, the appointment of the new Provincial, who will have to take over from Father Protais Kabila Kalondo, and the implementation of the Vice-Province of East Africa and the Vicariate of Kinshasa.

As we all well know, for almost three decades, the region

of Kivu has become the playing ground of multitude of local militia groups causing enduring insecurity. The militia groups aim at protecting their territory from the invasion of the neighboring countries (namely Rwanda and Uganda) animated by the expansionist spirit and the greed for Congolese lands and mineral riches. Many maimai militia groups, Rwandese rebels (FDLR) and Ugandan (ADF) are very active in the region. Unfortunately, the involvement of some highly ranked people in the government, the security forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the neighboring countries support this.

The population of this region whose beauty of nature strikes visitors lives every day in intense fear. We often witness serious

violations of elementary human rights with the complicity of the government and the international community, which have been deployed there since two decades ago. The Kivu population is victim of daily violent acts including theft, kidnappings, suppression of protests, road attacks by armed groups and so on. As a result, socio-economic life is seriously threatened. That is the context our brothers live and exercise their mission. Some live a few kilometers away from the rebels' camps; they run permanently high risks of being victims of multiple executions.

Despite the situation, the superior general and his assistant have found determined religious to serve God and his people in this difficult context. Globally, the quality of the religious life is good and the brothers live healthy fraternal relations in our diverse communities. All are well involved in the apostolic project of the Province including parishes, schools, media, chaplaincies, and so on.

The brothers of the communities of Goma and Bukavu, newly created in the Region, have well integrated in the region located along Lake Kivu. At Bukavu, the community has started well. The brothers stay in the spiritual centre of the archdiocese, which was previously animated by a Xaverian father. They commit themselves wholeheartedly to the apostolate of the sick and people

in difficulty, through the counselling and deliverance ministries under the guidance of Father René Mihigo, the exorcist of the diocese. There is a feeling that the people of Bukavu need their service. The brothers give equally a hand to the parish of the cathedral as parish vicars.

At Goma, our missionary implantation has deepened its roots after six years of its assumptionist presence in the diocese. The Emmanuel parish that is going to celebrate its fifth anniversary next November occupies the brothers sufficiently. They also celebrate morning Eucharistic celebrations in the neighboring religious communities of sisters. During the day, they are busy with the parish apostolic service. Father Thomas Ndovya is committed in the secondary school next to the community. He is also present at the parish, Saint-Martin-de-Tours, the military chaplaincy of Goma. A presbytery of about ten rooms is under construction at the parish through the efforts of the local faithful.

The religious of Goma, those of Bukavu as well, have a positive view of the life and the mission within the two Christian communities. They equally receive positive appreciations from their faithful. The two bishops, His Grace Francis Xavier Maroy (Archbishop of Bukavu) and His Lordship Theophile Kaboy (bishop of Goma), are satisfied with our presence and the services we render generously in their respective churches. They claim to be ready to entrust more parishes to the Assumption.

Diocese of Butembo-Beni, cradle of the African Assumption, has taken much time for this visit. It remains a socio-ecclesial reality difficult to present because of insecurity, which has profoundly

spread in the region. The fact is that the superior general could not meet his religious brothers in their environments of life and apostolate. Advised by His Lordship Melchisedech Sikuli and some politico-administrative authorities, it would have been imprudent to move from Butembo town. On the contrary, religious living in communities away from the city had to come to meet the superior general at the Provincial House.

Generally, religious were satisfied with the visit of the superior general, whose courage and daring spirit was admired as he decided to visit the region under serious troubles in the heart of Africa. The encounters with one or another among the religious have put both visitors in the presence of brothers happy with their religious vocation and full of delight in their various missions, despite the exposure to daily dangers.

Furthermore, Lay people were not left out. The Alliance is healthy in Goma and Butembo as well. We felt that all were expecting the general superior. At Goma, Father Benoît has consecrated a day for the lay of the Alliance. The day has started by the visit of Mugunga where a multipurpose hall is under construction; and it ended by the meeting of all the lay assumptionists of the city. Butembo has served as the meeting point of lay assumptionists from all the corners of the diocese. Delegates from Kasando, Kyondo, Oicha, Mangina, Mbau, and Beni came to spend precious morning hours with the superior general. Meanwhile, at Butembo as well as Goma, Father Thierry took the responsibility to gather the members of extended lay committees to present them fundamental orientations of the 33rd general chapter.

The superior general has as well consecrated his time to visit and to meet the personnel of some projects. Thus, our Kambali college has been happy to celebrate the Eucharist with the superior general, a celebration that was followed by an encounter with students, then with professors. The students of the High School of Emmanuel d'Alzon of Butembo (ISEAB) have also benefited from the moment of encounter and sharing with Father Benoît, successively through the website of Kambali and of the Mirador, where the new infrastructures are under construction. The Radio Moto Butembo-Beni has organized at the same time a moment of encounter between the superior general and the personnel of the radio. The essential was about the addresses that have turned around the spirit and the charism of the Assumption, which must be alive within our apostolic works.

In the end, the superior general has been happy to visit the land that has been given to the Assumption by a generous businessperson, Prosper Katasohire. This land of 7.5 hectares, is located in the rural outstation of the parish of Kitatumba, at a distance of twenty kilometers away from Butembo. This man constructed a beautiful Church, and a convent containing four rooms, a chapel and community spaces. The donor promises to supply both water and electricity to the religious who will be there and to appoint two of them in the soap industry located besides the Land. He hopes that Assumptionists will do the chaplaincy of his workers and that of the neighboring primary and secondary schools. He has merited a vote of thanksgiving from the superior general for that act of great generosity.

Fr. Thierry Kambale Kahongya

Mexico: moving on to another shore!

The parish of Tlilapan, a new foundation in North America is rich in promises and in challenges!

It all started with the charge from the chaplain at Saint-Joseph in Mexico, on February 23, 1947, to Fr. Cassien Dubost (1891-1954), a French Assumptionist transferred to the Province of North America. The chapel, dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, “Queen of Mexico and Empress of America,” is situated in the section of San José Insurgentes. Thus commences the story of the Assumption in Mexico.¹

Subsequently, the need that was felt was to open a community of formation so as to prepare the future of the Assumption in Mexico. It resulted in Casa Manuel, opened toward the end of the 1980’s in an area on the outskirts of Mexico, Ejidos de San Pedro Martir. This location promoted its

opening toward dimensions that are both social and missionary that would mark its apostolate.

This community has for its calling to be a house of formation, while at the same time being a center of missions and an awakening for vocations. The mission consists of leaving the city of Mexico to evangelize in the outskirts. This becomes a reality during Holy Week, also at the end of November for meetings on d’Alzon, and in the summer (June-July) in the area of Veracruz.

To extend the reign of Christ beyond the frontiers of the capital and to encounter the youth « where they are », the North Amer-

ican Province and the Philippines, in accord with the PGC decided, in August 2017, to transfer Casa Manuel to the parish of Santiago Apostol of Tlilapan. This is a municipality on the outskirts of the town of Orizaba.

The first steps toward this transition were organized by Fr. Miguel Diaz Ayllón, then Provincial of North America and the Philippines, in collaboration with Fr. Flavio Bustos Castillo, regional of Mexico. Mgr. Francisco Eduardo Cervantes Merino, Bishop of Orizaba, gave his sanction for an Assumptionist foundation in his diocese. Everything became real with the ceremony of canonical acquisition of the parish by the Augustinians of the Assumption and with the installation of the new pastor, Fr. Oswaldo Garcia Sanchez, on August 2, 2017.

The parish was founded 251 years ago situated by horseback in areas that are urban and indigenous. Our parish has the advantage of integrating three pastoral realities synonymous with the diocese: the urban pastoral, the rural and the indigenous.

Upon our arrival, we were brought in tune to the Christian community. The pastor met regularly with different groups that function in the parish in a manner that was quite personal. This was an opportunity for us to take the pulse of the parish, familiarize ourselves with its assets and challenges so that we could bet-



The joy of young missionaries



Lay and religious united for the coming of the Kingdom

ter promote and direct our apostolate.

For their part, the parishioners expressed an interest in receiving an adequate Christian formation. We responded with willingness, as this was part of our basic objectives for this new mission. Therefore, we offer different courses for the members of our parish committees and we animate biblical centers. All is realized clearly thanks to the collaboration with the lay and with other Assumption families present in Mexico, most particularly the Oblates of the Assumption, who, above all, manage the parish secretariat and the sacristy in one of our chapels.

Our integration in the local Church is going well. We participate in diocesan activities in

all aspects possible. We benefit equally from the brotherly support---moral and spiritual---from the religious and Lay Assumptionists---on regional and provincial levels.

It is true that there is much to be done in a parish that is still under construction, but we are confident in the Lord! Many works are in progress, notably the completion of the Baptistry, the layout of the communal chapel, the reinforcement of the roof of the church, and not over-looking the maintenance of the house.

Furthermore, this foundation carries with it many needs and challenges: learning the Náhuatl

language which covers a large part of the parish's territory; creating a positive division between the parish community and that of formation; solidifying vocations for the Church and for the Assumption; financial challenges in an area where poverty exists; challenges of living an Assumptionist religious life sustained by prayer; fraternal life and studies; beyond that, parish appeals that are sometimes untimely.

Finally, the new parish is well on its way. We are reminded that we must imprint, as much as possible, a true Assumptionist mark, through our lives, our activities and our presence.

P. Sébastien Bangandu

1) Cf. PERIER-MUZET Jean-Paul, « Tour du monde assomptionniste en 41 pays », in *Cahiers du Bicentenaire d'Alzon* n° 1 (2010), pp. 191-192.



Photos : Dominique Pétro

All new and all beautiful, The new scholasticate of Ouaga!

After having left the center of the capital Burkinabe near the border, the community of Ouagadougou has inaugurated its new location in April.

The community of Ouagadougou moved to its new buildings at the end of 2017. It took several years for the project to be completed, but the end is now realized! It was hoped that everyone would be in their new buildings by last September, but it was necessary to wait until the very end of the year to access the new construction.

Those few months of waiting provided the occasion for the newly-arrived brothers to become acquainted with the old house next to the cathedral, of tasting the joy of the goings and comings

by motorcycle, of the breakdowns and of the dust---and of staying two in a room during the trimester due to lack of space. The new location in the neighborhood of Kossoghin puts the Lavigerie Institute (where the philosophy courses are taught) only 10 minutes away by foot, and it has thirty rooms.

The foundation of an Assumptionist Scholasticate at Ouagadougou goes back to September of 2011. However, it was in 2013 that the construction project of the house actually took shape. Between 2013 and 2017, it became

a long process marked by diverse adjustments, discussions and actions that resulted in the birth of this beautiful showpiece.

It is this that shaped the brothers in their communal project in 2013: « We want to establish a project that will be in conjunction with who we are, what we live and what we do. For that, the house we wish to build should reflect a spirit of “family”, of “community”---be a house that is neither hotel nor monastery. It should be a house that allows 30 people to live a strong human and spiritual existence, open to the

Benediction of the International Scholasticate at Ouagadougou

Dear Brothers,

All of the Assumption rejoices in the inauguration and benediction of the Scholasticate at Ouagadougou. During this Easter Week when the Church is bathed in the light of the Resurrected Christ, the installation of a new Assumptionist community is a symbol of a steadfast hope. It is Jesus Christ who is at the heart of community life and of the Christian life. It is he who permits man to undertake and to dare take an adventure of witness in today's world.

The new community is dedicated to the formation of young religious in a way that is human, spiritual and apostolic. It is founded to give apostles to the Church, particularly in West Africa. The Assumption contributes to the coming of the Kingdom of God and because of that, we wish to form men with a solid faith, with a deep interior life and with an affirmed apostolic courage. I thank all of those who permitted this house to be constructed. In the first place, to His Eminence Cardinal Philippe Ouédraogo, who had the benevolence to welcome us into his archdiocese. His attention to the religious life and his care in establishing new religious charisms opened wide the doors of the capital at Burkina-Faso. I also thank the Assumptionist religious who invested themselves with courage in following the construction because it is a delicate, and often, thankless task.

I equally thank those responsible from the Assumptionist Province of Europe who did not conserve their efforts by coming regularly to oversee the construction site. Lastly, I can't forget the resolute involvement of the successive Provincials---Fr. Benoît Gschwind and Fr. Benoît Bigard—who enabled a dream to become a reality. A special thank you to the architect, to l'Appui, the clerk of the works, to the construction company and to all the workers at the construction site who now provide us with a beautiful house.

A house of formation has a stake in the future. The young who have been welcomed should find a wonderful framework for their growth and personal development. Studies are of the utmost importance. However, without developing a strong common sense and a solid apostolic engagement, the young religious wouldn't have the capacity to adapt to the world, which changes rapidly.

The house of formation is also an educational team. The formators are called to live in communion for the betterment of all. It is necessary to periodically assess the objectives of the formation and to make necessary adaptations. The students themselves are responsible for their own formation. It is crucial to personally engage in the process that should finally provide new apostles for the Church.

This house is an International Community of Assumption Formation. Along with those of Kinshasa, of Nairobi and of Buenos-Aires, they will contribute to the renewal of Assumption formation through their internationality. The Assumptionist belongs to a large fraternity that hopes, aside from differences in language, in nationality and in culture, to build the family of God. Next, it hopes to promote a larger availability of religious to respond to the missionary urgencies of our Church.

I conclude by wishing everyone peace and joy. May the Lord bless and keep you!

Fraternally,

Father Benoît GRIÈRE a.a.
Superior General

world, with the concern for being in communion with others and of being attentive to the smallest needs. It should be a lovely home, simple and sparing.” Today, those things have been accomplished. It is another life that will unfold in this “new” environment.

In terms of important dates to remember--- after the purchase of the land, the benediction for the beginning of the project took place in July 2015. This benediction set the tone for the activities to follow with the first step being to build the wall of the enclosure and one sentry box. The second step was to do some grading before the first foundations were dug in September 2016.

In the house, one must imagine a building that is central to community life, where one can find a reception area, a chapel, a library, a kitchen, a dining hall and a community room. These border an open area that contains four buildings in an arc-like fashion each having 7 to 8 bedrooms. It is like a little village. It is very comfortable to live in, even without the vegetation that is yet to blossom. Already, during the week of prayer for Christian unity, January 18-25, the community could invite the lay to pray with their Protestant friends in the large room that was available.

Not everything is totally finished at Kossoghin. We are still in the process of installing the solar panels, and it will take a few more months for the library to be at its full potential. However, there is already a pace that exists and the house is preparing for its official opening: it has been set for Thursday, April 5th. It will be a day of solemn benediction within the scholasticate!

**Brother Jean-Valère Kouwama
and Father Nicolas Tarralle**

At Bayard, times change!

Member of the directory of the enterprise since 12 years, Fr. Andre Antoni presents here his convictions so that such a work mobilizes the Assumption, at the same time the congregation mobilizes the work for its mission



Last December 5th, the whole group of the administration of Bayard was invited at the Plenary General Council at Rome for an actualized description of the enterprise as a “mobilizing work.” Alain Auge and I were cut off from the exercise; Pascal Ruffenach, new president of the directory and Florence Guemy, for that which had been first directory, have shown me how important it was to set up our faces on the “Assumption” through its authorities and how seriously they were struck by the challenge of the internationality of our congregation.

Longtime, Bayard has been

considered as the motherhouse of Paris with branches, kinds of satellites more or less independent abroad. However, periods change and there is the necessity of “Bayard networking” in Rome which was seen possible in the presence of the provincials. One of the points of actuality is to show how Bayard is part of the global treasure, without being neither a decline of the French entity nor a collection of small independent “Bayards”. This would be a strategic mistake in the era of networking in the world.

Today the international notoriety brought by Bayard to the Assumption contributes to the new foundations in Asia and Af-

rica. We also dream that it may be the same for India after the launching of the Newsletter, *Pri-ions en Eglise* (Living in Faith) in January 2018 at Bombay; in return, it has been similar for other countries (Canada, Philippines, Vietnam) where Bayard would not have existed as catholic editor without the presence of the Assumptionists. Bayard is one of the areas where the great capitulatory orientations can incarnate themselves in the dimension that overcomes what the “modest congregation” could foresee as it were stipulated by Father General. I think first of the “collaboration of lay-religious”, where about ten brothers and sisters



The Executive Board of Bayard (from left to right): Pascal Ruffenach (Chair), Fr. André Antoni a.a., Florence Guémy and Alain Augé (photo D.R.)

of the Assumption are like the leaven in the bread amidst 1800 employed people of the group. More than the figure, it is above all the qualification of each and other that should be underlined. I have moreover learned about the ends of Bayard from the view of the lay; but they are the religious who have contributed to bring theological and ecclesiological coherence to different projects that have been undertaken.

Moreover, I think about the main capitulatory priorities that the Assumption has chosen: the ecological concern of “our common house” is carried by 120 press titles across the world; education in schools, institutions and outside. Related to this reality, we know that the young press of Bayard touches more than half of French children, with a strong attracting capacity at the international level. I also think about “the foundation on the digital continent”, though I regret capitulates had not thought that at Bayard, there are strong resources invested for the purpose of the transmission

of faith, as content to education programs and to quality digital information. The Newsletter, *La croix*, ventures in English and Spanish digital versions. I, who occupies an important position at the general direction; the orientations of chapters are, furthermore, a compass to confirm the editorial positioning often disputed: I think of the interreligious dialogue, mainly through the Islamic report linked to the question of migrants. Saying that we work for unity in the divided world takes here all its scope.

Among the other “mobilizing” realities, I will list next the formation. In last September, about thirty Assumptionist young men from Asia, Africa, and Europe have participated in a formation workshop during one week using Bayard premises. Lay authorities facilitated this formation. They have come to discover that mass media was not a kind of evangelization understood as an institutional propaganda, but rather a companionship with a large fraternity: practicing Catholics,

declared Catholics who are not practicing, seniors from religious or philosophical sensibilities, all families, parents with a specific concern for educating their children. They have come to understand that it is only the public, which evaluates the benefits of a regular reading and fidelity to a certain title.

Therefore, it is not sufficient to be the reference point on the Christian outlook about the actuality. It is not sufficient to enhance the pertinence of the link related to education between the family and the school or to render service to Christian families: it is important to be attentive to our contemporaries and to join them in whatever their expectations are. We should invite people to have interest for their life by giving them opportunities to come together during great moments of their existence. It is a great mobilizing ambition, which requires not less than great modesty from the “communicant.” Here, the pastor becomes a ferryman.

André Antoni

The missing miracle...

‘What is urgent, it’s done, the impossible is on the way, for miracles, expect a delay...’

This quotation from an unknown author can summarize our article today. Why is it that the founder of the Augustinians of the Assumption and of the Oblates of the Assumption is not yet proclaimed a blessed? This question, indeed, applies to three Assumptionists whose journey towards the recognition of sainthood by the Church is well started. Rome has published the decree on their heroic virtues giving them the title of Venerable:

- for **Fr. Etienne Pernet** (1824-1899) on 14 May 1983, (1)

- for **Fr. Emmanuel d’Alzon** (1810-1880) on 21 December 1991,

- for **Fr. Marie-Clément Staub** (1876-1936) on 3 April 2014

In order to be blessed, each one must put forward a miracle recognized by the Church.(2) For the recognition of such a miracle, the procedure is somewhat similar to the recognition of the heroic virtues. (3) Upon the presentation of the Congregation, a group of faithful etc. the relevant bishop examines the possibility of the truthfulness of the miracle in order to know if there is a chance of recognition before constituting a tribunal that will scrutinize it following a strict procedure. The scientific elements are gathered together, meaning to say that the presumed healing, for example, has no explanation whatsoever. Then, all the elements of the medical documents are put together and the state of the person in order to verify if the healing has a permanent character. (4)

The launching of a procedure

cannot start without the consent of the person and his/her family. The opinion of two experts of the illness is also required. Such a procedure needs a sustained follow-up. With the doctor, the expertise must remain in the scientific sphere, while the work of the theologians will consist in proving that there is a direct and unquestionable link between the healing and the prayer of intercession.

In order the trial for blessedness of a servant of God might go through, it is not only necessary to assess through an inquiry the heroic character of his/her virtues, but also the genuine proof of the miracle due to the prayer of intercession. In order for a healing to be declared miraculous, it must be in tune with very precise criteria. (5)

The theological elements are also necessary, this is to say the documentary proofs of the witnesses’ declarations that the healing is due to the prayer of intercession. Saints do not perform miracles: it is God who, through their intercession, comes and confirms in a divine way the judgment of

the Church about the heroic virtues, the martyrdom or the offering of the life of a person. The miracles are meant to confirm the presence of the Kingdom of God on earth (Lumen Gentium, no. 5). ‘Today, in hope and prayer, we wait for the Church to recognize the holiness of Fr. D’Alzon.’

Fr. Bernard Le Léannec,
General Postulator



(1) A biography of Fr. Pernet was published in March 2018 in Italy with the title ‘The Gospel of the cheek’ by Paola Bergamini with a preface by none other than pope Francis himself.

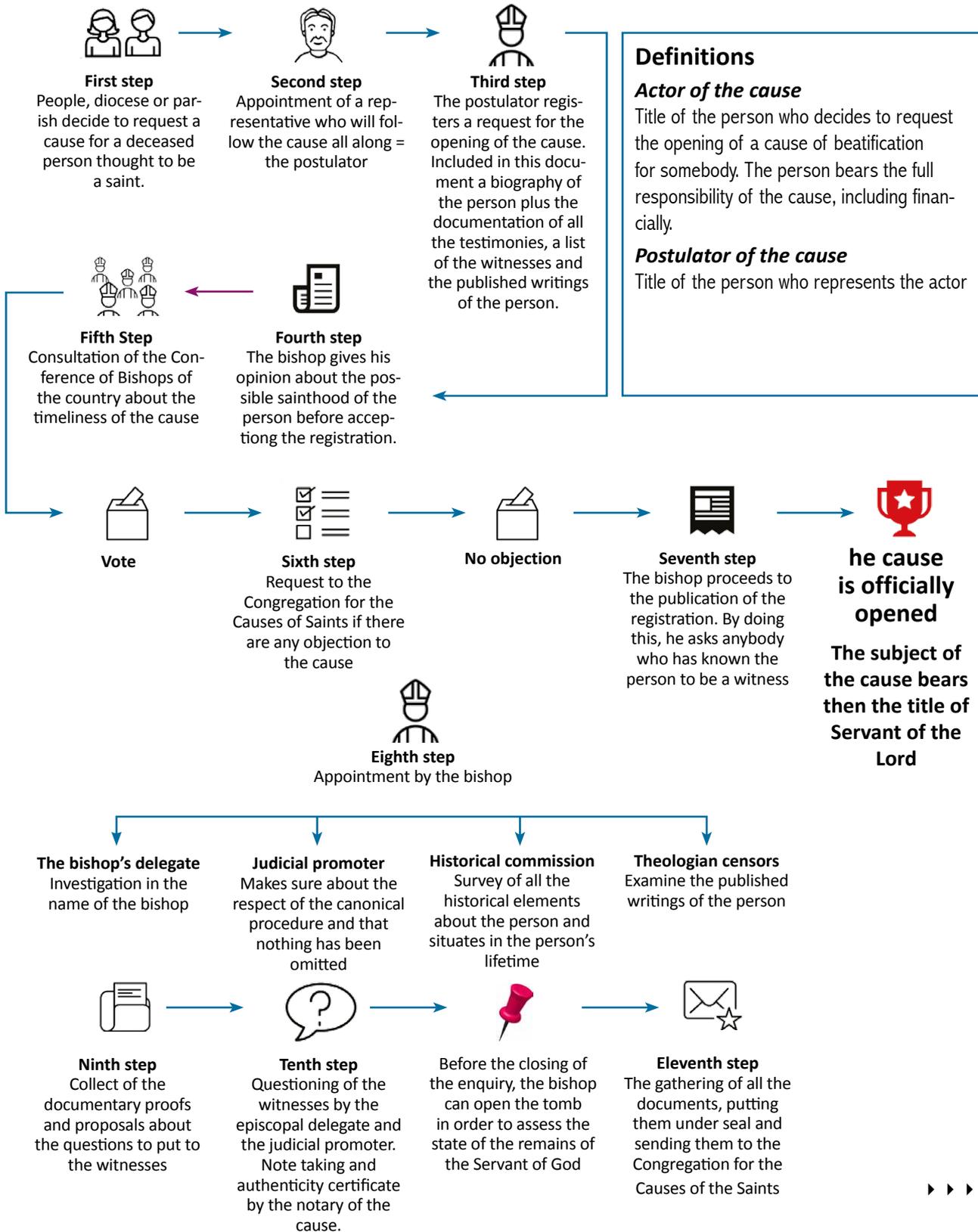
(2) The martyrs are an exception and are declared blessed as soon as their martyrdom is recognized. In the Assumption, this is the case for Frs. Kamen, Pavel and Josaphat, three Bulgarians recognized as martyrs on 23 April 2002 and beatified on 26 May 2002 by pope John Paul II, as well as the 19 Algerian martyrs recognized by pope Francis on 27 January 2018, Sr. Paul-Hélène Saint-Raymond, Little Sister of the Assumption, killed at Algiers on 8 May 1994.

(3) See below the computer graphics of the procedure for a cause.

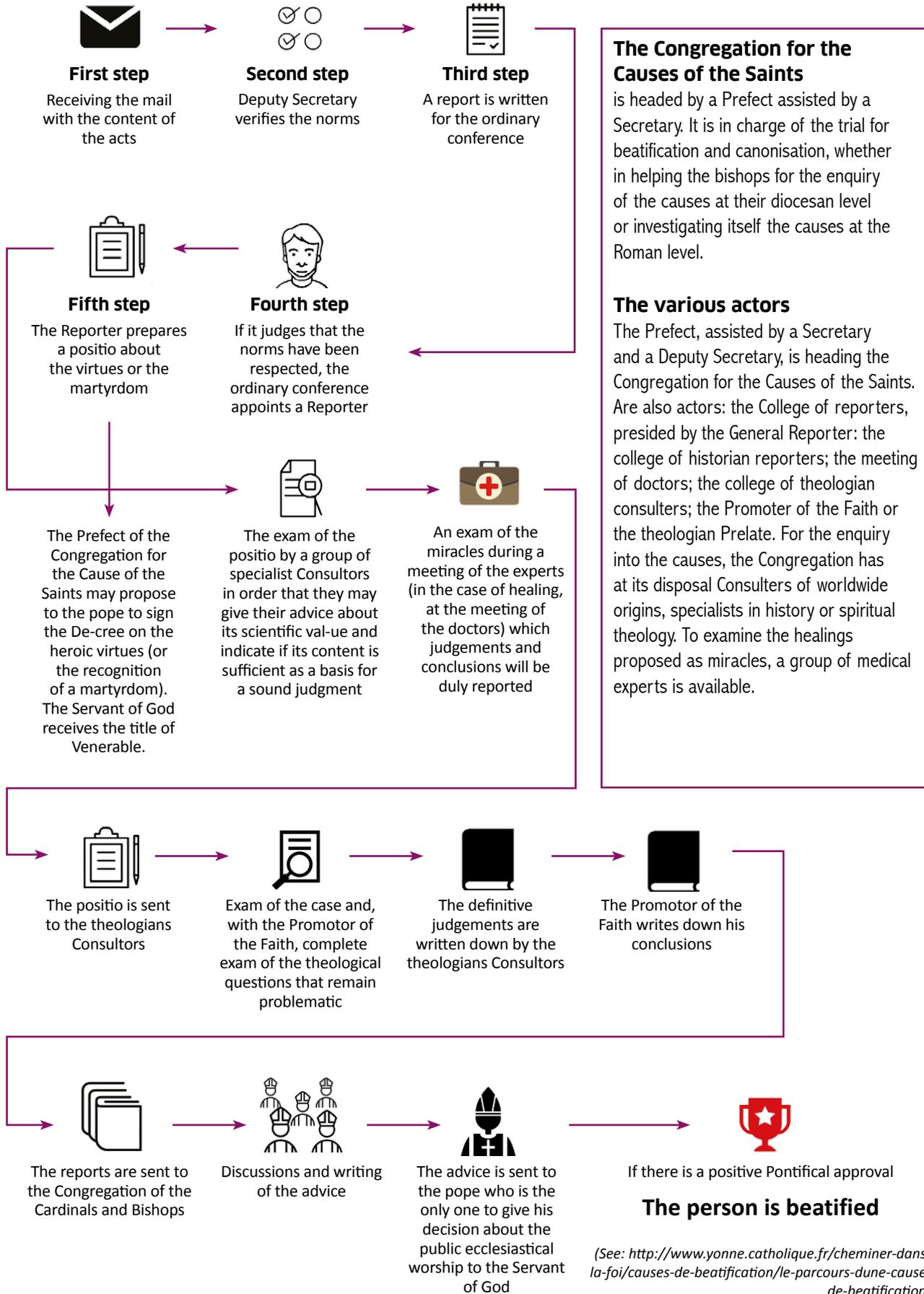
(4) The criteria are those of the late cardinal Prosper Lambertini, the future Benedict XIV, in 1734 in his treaty *De servorum beatificatione et beatorum canonisatione*.

The cause of beatification

Diocesan level



The Vatican level



A New International Commission for the Alliance

The Superior General announced the composition of the new international team in charge of Lay-Religious relations



- To put into place the Plan of Formation that was previously adopted by the Superior General in his Plenary General Council ;
 - To prepare an international gathering of Lay Alliance members that will take place in Nîmes in 2020 ;
- To promote Alliance meetings that are provincial, continental and intercontinental

Addressing the new members, Father General also wrote: *"I thank you with all my heart for your acceptance of this mission. The International Commission will be a real exercise in Assumptionist fraternity to work toward expanding the Assumptionist charism. I hope that you will be happy in this Commission and that you will bring your skills and your ideas to it. I am counting on you."*

M. K.

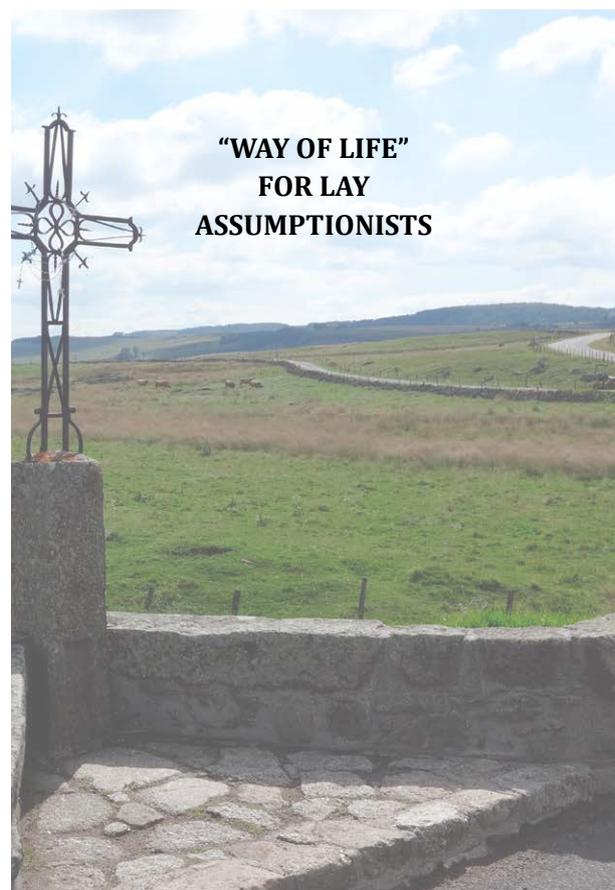
The letter of mission was dated February 27, 2018, and signed by Fr. Benoît Grière, Superior General. It was addressed to five lay people (all of them women) who will form the International Commission of the Lay-Religious Alliance, for a period of two years beginning on May 1st.

This commission, which will be animated by:

- **Fr. Thierry Kambale Kahongya**, General Assistant, is composed of the following:
- **Patricia Morin Haggerty** (North American Province),
- **Stella Kahambu Vumilia** (African Province),
- **Gil Victoria Prada** (Andean Province),
- **Cristina Moreno Sánchez** (European Province),
- **Bénédicte Fauvel** (European Province).

Placed in the context of the 33rd General Chapter held almost a year ago (cf. Acts n.121) and referencing the *Way of Life*, the Commission is given the following tasks:

- To work on the elaboration of a common formula for engagement for the lay ;
- To create a distinctive, common sign for the lay who make an engagement based on *The Way of Life* ;



The novitiates of the Augustinians of the Assumption (Part three: 1923 – 1939)

We continue our complete panoramic view of the novitiates of the Congregation, written by Fr. Patrick Zago, archivist of the Province of Europe. This third article presents the beginnings of the structure of Provinces following the General Chapter of 1923.

Territorial organization of the Assumption

Setting up of Provinces in 1923 (1): Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux, Belgium – Netherlands.

Afterwards, in order to accompany the development of the Congregation, other Provinces are created: Netherlands, North America and England, in 1946.

The Province of South America, in 1953.

The Provinces of North-Belgium and South-Belgium, in 1963.

The Provinces of Spain and Zaire, in 1969.

Let us first note that the new version of our Constitutions, approved by the Holy See after the 1923 General Chapter, changes, with no reference to the past and for a permanent period, the length of the novitiate from two to one year, not everybody agreeing. Fr. Gervais Quénard addresses the question in his Report to the General Chapter of 1929: 'The shorter novitiate period. – There was the objection that the novices had too little formation after one year of probation. This does not appear to be a sufficient reason to bypass a rule established by Rome in our Constitutions. The choir brothers will have a more comprehensive formation during their studies with a program adjusted to this goal. The short-comings of formation would be much more serious for the lay brothers, lacking more formation and exposed to painful isolation in most of our communities. Everyone is afraid of this possible danger, to which remedies were proposed, but it is necessary to duly apply them. At

least, a special mentor should be provided to them.'

There is a second reproach that is put forward to the new version of the novitiate. Fr. Rémy Kokel, the Provincial of Belgium-Netherlands, expresses it this way: 'Some reproach the novitiates of today to lead to the intellectual laziness of the novices by suppressing regular homework and essays.' But the Provincial adds on: the novitiate of Taintignies is very fervent and seems to get away with this reproach!

From that moment on, each Province must erect its own novitiate as soon as possible.

Saint-Gérard. (1919-1923)

Prior to the opening of the common novitiate for the French brothers of the Provinces of Paris, Lyon and Bordeaux, which took place only in 1928, the common novitiate for all the brothers continues at Saint-Gérard for a few years and then at Taintignies. When Fr. Rémy Kokel becomes the first Provincial of Belgium-Netherlands, it is Fr. Savinien De-

waele who takes over until 1928 before leaving for Scy-Chazelles.

Taintignies (2) Belgium.

Since 1890, Taintignies was first the home of an aluminate (1891-1914), then a plain residence during the war (1914-1919), then again a scolasticate of philosophy (1919-1924) and finally a novitiate. With the increasing number of novices, Fr. Romanus Declercq had a new wing of the novitiate built; this former beer-factory was transformed into a clergy-factory, according to the local people. The Novice Masters were: Fr. Savinien Dewaele (1924-1928), Fr. Romanus Declercq (1928-1935) and Fr. Domitien Meuwissen (1935-1939) followed by an interruption (1940-1941). Then came: Fr. Jean-Emmanuel Lieftring (1941-1942), Fr. Stéphane Lower (1942-1952), Fr. Jean-Bergmans Berghoms (1952-1954), Fr. Charles Bier (1954-1956), Fr. Bruno Bastiens (1956-1965). Afterwards the novices of the Province of South-Belgium will go to Pont-L'Abbé and those of North-Belgium to Leuven.

Leuven, Havelstraat 14.

This house of the Assumption is built on the plot of the former scolasticate, bombed and destroyed during the 1939-1945 war. It is modern and spacious; it is the house of studies for the brothers of the Province and it is also the community of the novitiate, from



Saint-Gérard



Les Essarts

1966 to 1968, under the leadership of Fr. Harry Lemmens. When the novitiate of Steenberg closes down, the Dutch novices join the novitiate of Leuven in May 1966.

Scy-Chazelles. Saint-John House.

This common novitiate for the three Provinces of France will not last long, only from 1928 to 1931. To have this common novitiate was dearly wished by Fr. Gervais Quénard and his Council, the General Curia paying for its construction with funds coming from the Vocations Foundation and the Province of Lyon providing the land, part of the property of the Saint-Joan-of-Arc aluminate, founded in 1919. But Fr. Gervais was insisting that it was the novitiate of the Province of Lyon, under the direct responsibility of its Provincial. The religious who were delegates to the General Chapter of 1921-1922 (3) in Rome were conscious that the Holy See had objected to houses of formation, novitiates and scolasticates being directly under the responsibility of the General Superior. The Novice Master was Fr. Domitien Dewaele.

Les Essarts.

The house of Les Essarts had been founded at the time of the undivided Assumption, in 1920. It was a large property of more

than 100 hectares of farming land and forests which was given to us by a 'distinguished benefactor, on her way back from a pilgrimage of repentance to Jerusalem.' But this holy woman with a stiff character was still acting as the real owner and only commander, which just made more difficult for the job of the Superior. Exasperated, Fr. Aymard Faugères, the Provincial of Paris, called on Fr. André Jaujou who happened to have among his faithful penitents other 'distinguished benefactors'. One of them bought back the property under her name, gave it to us and got rid of the irk lady. It was now quiet again! It is only in 1928 that the castle became a novitiate of the Province of Paris. In October 1936, the construction of the new building is launched with its huge chapel blessed on June 27, 1938. The Novice Masters were Fr. Léonide Guyo (1928-1934), Fr. Albert Devyncq (1935-1939). The novitiate was interrupted during the war until 1944. Afterward, Fr. Albert Devyncq resumes his duties at Les Essarts (1944-1946), after the interim of Vêrargues. He will be followed by Fr. Pierre Coulet (1946-1950) and Edmond Barthez (1950-1953) who is the last one since, from 1953 and on, the novices of the Province of Paris will have their novitiate in Pont-L'Abbé.

1) At the time of Fr. D'Alzon, the General Chapter of 1876 had already divided the 'little' Assumption in three Provinces: Paris with Fr. François Picard as Provincial, Nîmes with Fr. Emmanuel Bailly and Andrinopolis with Fr. Victorin Galabert. In order to be faithful to this orientation, Fr. D'Alzon had put in place the novitiate in Nîmes in 1879 in addition to the one in Paris. This division did not last and was abolished after the death of Fr. D'Alzon

2) Taintignies or Taintegnies. In the documents that were consulted, the two versions of this word are found.

3) This General Chapter was transformed into a 'consultation assembly' by a decision of the Holy See; it was tasked to write the Constitutions, according to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, and it was mandatory to create Provinces.

4) **Lettre à la Dispersion**, 1931, no. 406, p. 323.

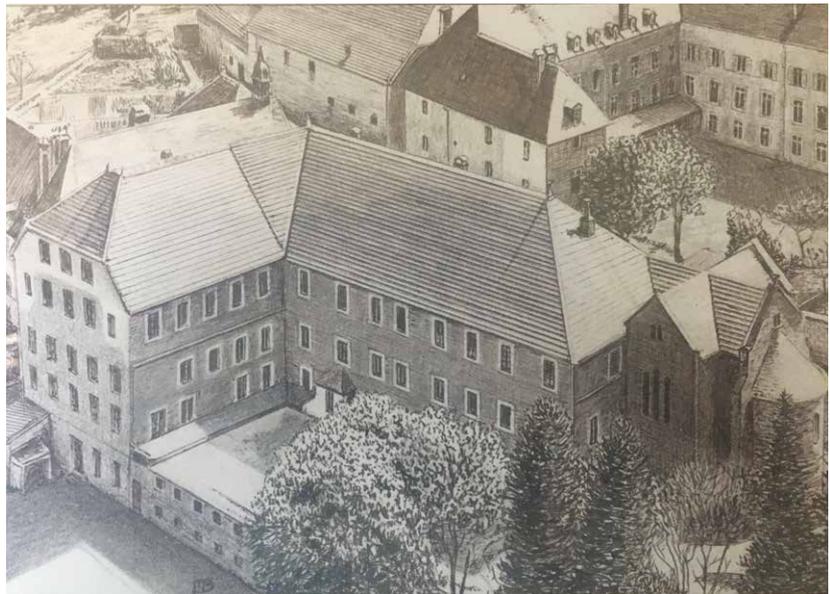
5) No. 409, p. 263 and no. 412, p. 281-285.

6) It is the language used at the time to say that it was free day all day (*vacat tota die*) and that a long hike (*deambulatio major*) was organized, carrying a meal.

7) **Lettre à la Dispersion**, 1934, no. 525, p. 120-126.

Nozeroy

On September 3, 1931, The General Curia sends out this note (4): 'The novitiate of the Province of the East, established up to now at Scy, is moving to Nozeroy (Jura), in the building of a former minor seminary of the diocese of Saint-Claude. The Province of the West, which is also preparing its own novitiate, will still send this year its novices at Nozeroy.' The *Lettre à la dispersion* (5) gives a long and juicy explanation about the foundation of the novitiate of Nozeroy. It is signed by Fr. Xavier Sorrel, treasurer at Scy, temporarily detached to Nozeroy. A short notice about the origins of the house: it is a minor seminary founded in 1811, a nest for many vocations but also the venerated cradle for two holy martyrs: François-Isidore Gagelin, a martyr in Cochinchin, and Pierre-François Néron, who later became a famous intellectual with his works on linguistic and his classical editions in Tonkin, where he died as a martyr in 1860... Wouldn't that be a sign of the Providence to show us the way to Vietnam! Some people think so. Another happy surprise: bishop Cart, later to become the bishop of Nîmes and of Fr. D'Alzon, has been a student in that minor seminary. This ancient city of the Jura had also other titles of glory: a big town of 800 people, it had the privilege of being called a city because it had once been the illustrious capital of the princes of Chalon-Orange. At Nozeroy also has lived blessed Loyse de Savoie, a niece to Louis XI, king of France, a holy woman dedicated to the Church and to the poor, who had an hospital built next to the novitiate. What a wonderful shower of graces for the novices who did not know anything about it! It is a beautiful countryside



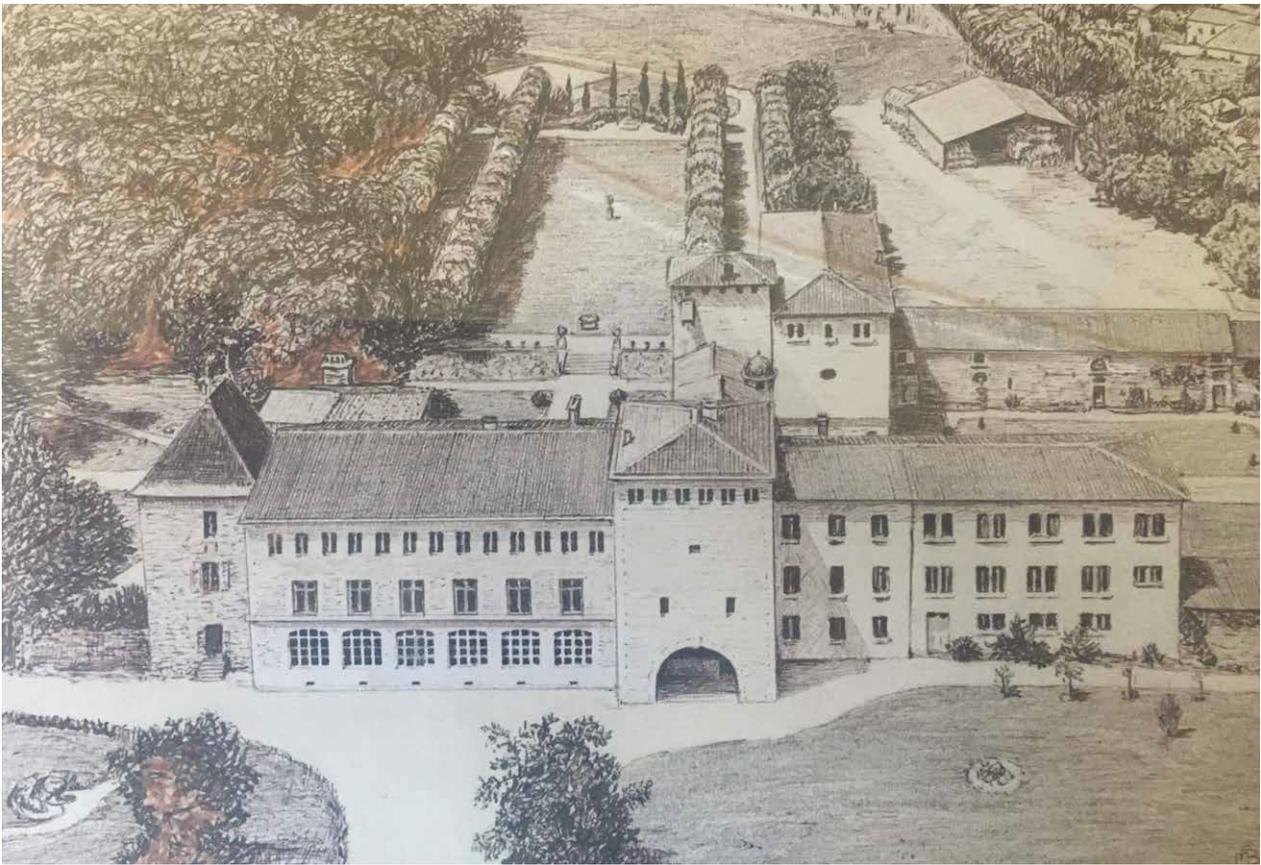
Nozeroy

with meadows and forests, where the bells of the cows joyfully ring around. But also a countryside with a lot of snow in the winter time and where the weather could be Siberian cold... The novices of the 1955-1956 promotion still remember a certain 'grand-jeudi' (6), when the thermometer fell to -30 degrees Celsius. It is a place with pure air, since sick novices from other novitiates were sent there in order to get back to good health. The Novice Masters were: Fr. Gauspert Broha (1931-1938), Alix Gruffat (1939-1940). Then the novitiate was interrupted because Nozeroy becomes a grammar aluminate (1940-1947) before it is moved to Vellexon, the birth place of Fr. Etienne Pernet. Later, the novitiate comes back to Nozeroy with, as Novice Masters: Fr. Chirstophore Figuet ((1947-1952), Romain Durand (1952-1958) and Amarin Metz (1959-1960). After that, the novices of the Province of Lyon will go to Pont-L'Abbé d'Arnoult.

Pont-L'Abbé d'Arnoult (Charente-Maritime)

On April 22, 1934, the group of novices of the Province of Bor-

deaux leaves the novitiate of Nozeroy for the new novitiate of their Province: 'The departure devotions finished, we take our luggage and go to the train station under icy snow. Hands and hats wave at the doors of the train for a long time until the novices of Nozeroy, still freezing on the platform, disappear from our sight behind a small hill...' (7) During this first year already well started, the novices are 17 of them, under the direction of Fr. Pol de Léon Cariou. The castle of La Chaume, where the novitiate is located, has a long history: at first a residence for the Templar, then a feudal castle and then again a prison during the Revolution. It is Fr. Eutrope Chardavoine, a native from the area, who started the first negotiations with Mr. Bonnet, an engineer of the Western Railway Co., a well educated person, passionate with archeology.(8) The couple was childless and wanted to bequeath their patrimony in good hands. The negotiations did not last long and it is with gratitude that the Assumption received this unexpected gift. On top of the castle, there was a 53 hectares property: a farming domain with



Pont l'Abbé d'Arnoult

four in-living workers and an entertainment garden French style... But, indeed, that does not make for a novitiate! In the refectory, was painted like in all the other novitiates the famous quote from Saint Augustine,(9) telling about fraternal love and communion among the brothers: 'Whoever by his own words love to bite the life of the absent, let him know that this table is forbidden to him.' Right from the start, it was necessary to build (10) in order to have more space for a chapel, a dormitory and a classroom. And when there is a catastrophe, it must be repaired as soon as possible, like the reconstruction after the fire (11)... The house of Pont-L'Abbé will remain a novitiate - first for the Province of Bordeaux and after for France and other Provinces - until 1968. A novitiate that operated during 34 years without interruption is not that old but, at Assumption, it had the golden medal of the length of the novitiates. It lost its title to the novitiate of Lwanga in Butembo (RD-

8) As a witness of that is the altar that is in the chapel of the new community of Valpré. This altar is a sarcophagus recuperated at the closure of the community of Pont-L'Abbé. Fr. Protais Jain said that it is an authentic Christian sarcophagus and that it was found by an amateur in the courtyard of a farm of Martres Tolosanes, where it was used as a drinking trough for animals. (Histoire de Pont-L'Abbé, 1955, draft text)

9) At the time, the novices were supposed to know a few words in Latin, this is why the inscription read: '*Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam, hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi.*' Saint Augustine had forbidden slandering and all that could hurt charity. He had scorned some bishops among his friends who had forgotten his lesson on that subject. His disciple Possidius reports the fact in chapter XXXI of his *Life of Augustine*.

10) Like for any house, there are always some fitting out along the years. Each Superior was finding it necessary to fit out, embellish or

even sometime build. But during the time that Fr. Armand Louis was the Superior, it seems that the intention was to build for centuries to come! I remember a confidence of Fr. Henri Guillemin, Provincial of Bordeaux at that time, who told me bluntly: 'Fr. Armand had truly the sickness of building in stones! I was obliged to go there and stop the work...' Indeed, as it is said in business: there was no return on investments since the house built in beautiful square stones was used by the novices for only four or five years.

11) **Ephémérides** p. 336, the fire took place on December 1st, 1959.

12) **Notre présence assumptionniste en Roumanie** since the beginning written by a direct witness, typed text, 1981. The author is Fr. Bernard Stef. Religious life progresses slowly in the Oriental rite Church, says Fr. Stef: there are many candidates but few of them persevere.



Beius

Congo) which will celebrate 37 years of existence in 2018. The Novice Masters are: Fr Pol de Léon Cariou (1934-1939), Protais Jaïn (1939), Gausbert Broha (1940), Régis Escoubas (1941-), Protais Jaïn (1944-1946), Christophore Figuet (1946-1947), Calixte Boulesteix (1947-1950), André Tournellec (1950-1952), Alphonse Picot (1952-1958), Armand Louis (1958-1964) et Raphaël Le Gleuher (1964-1968).

ROMANIA (12)

A novitiate of the Oriental rite was created in Romania (Vicariate of the Orient Mission, Province of Lyon). All the Romanian novices of that period were Melkites, so of byzantine rite. Locations have changed because of the lack of organization in the Vicariate, but also because of the war and the advent of the communist regime. In the year 1948, the Greek-Catholic Church was suppressed (integrated by force under Stalin into the Romanian Orthodox Church), and our Romanian brothers were either scattered or put in prison.

Beius was a boarding school under our responsibility. A house was bought in the neighbourhood for the Sainte-Marie novitiate (1927-1942). The Novice Mas-

ters were: Fr. Tiburce Donche until 1932), Hildebert Blois (1933-1935), Austin Treamer (1935-1940), Maxence Peyron (1941-1942).

Bucarest. The foundation of Bucarest, on Christian Tell Street, had been decided upon in order to house the Centre for Byzantine Studies which was moving from Kadiköy. There were two different communities in that house, one of the Latin rite and the other of the Byzantine rite (called Union rite). This is where Fr. Léandre Gayraud was the Novice Master (1943-1944). Then the novitiate moved to Blaj.

Blaj, Casa Domnului, was a large residence where the Oriental church was adorned with an iconostasis painted by Fr. Judicaël Nicolas. It is still Fr. Léandre who is the Novice Master until early 1947. When he was appointed parish priest of Harseni (13) in Faragas, he took the novices along with him until the closing in 1949.

BULGARIA

A novitiate is created due to the political situation at that time which prevented the young Bul-

garians, ready to start their novitiate, to leave the country. The novitiate is housed in Plovdiv (14), but the number of novices is not known neither the name of the Novice Master; all that we know is the date of the opening of the novitiate, 27 January 1948.

GERMANY (15)

A novitiate is established in Scheidegg (Bavaria); this house grew like a mushroom: all of a sudden, without any preparation from the part of the Assumption, in particular from the Province of Lyon... It is a lay brother, a former Augustinian from Würzburg who launched this adventure in 1928. Well, thanks to the influence of Fr. Césaire Kayser, that he had met and that he knew. He himself was a former member of the Orient Mission who had built a network of benefactors in Alsace and Germany to support that mission, from his residence in Dinsheim (Low-Rhine). He was publishing *Missionen* (16), the German version of the magazine *Missions des Augustins de l'Assomption*, and he was looking for new members for the Archiconfrérie ND de l'Assomption. The first work of this community was to print and distribute this magazine, most of the time going door to door. It must be said also that most of the time the brothers were also beggars for our missions, which brought the opposition of the diocesan authorities of Augsburg. In 1931, the first Superior of that community is appointed, Fr. Burgard Burgard. Next came Fr. Florian Griesemer, who took the responsibility until the closure. But it is only in 1933 that the community of Scheidegg was canonically established as a novitiate for lay brothers with Fr. Lierbermann Weisshaar as Novice Master. The novitiate lasted until 1938. The

situation was very difficult, almost impossible for French religious who were responsible of a German house when the Nazi regime was at its peak. (17) The house is closed in 1939. Some religious have judged very severely this adventure of the Assumption; I leave them with their opinion but, as for me, I will always have an admiration for the lay brothers who had their formation at Scheidegg and who were faithful *usque ad mortem* to the Assumption, away from home: Br. Emmerich Köhle, Br. Gabriel Guisl, Br. Magnus Bucher, Br. Gregor Holzner.

(to be followed)

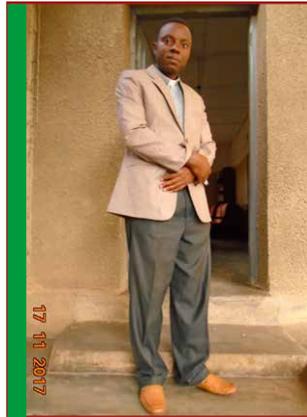
13) Fr. Léandre wrote: 'Since 1940, our novitiate has moved three times. We are leaving Blaj which will be transformed into a boarding school. We will establish the novitiate in the vicinity of Fagaras where the bishop has entrusted to us a parish of 400 people. This will get busy a second priest and will help us since here the parish priests have a salary and, above all, there is a property of 10 or 15 hectares of farming land...' *Lettre à la Famille*, no. 32, New series, September 1947, p. 152.

14) *Ephémérides*, p. 27. *Bulletin officiel de l'Assomption*, no. 4, May 1948.

15) Report on Scheidegg in the Archives of Paris (code LBN, BO, LBP). Also a writing by Alain Fleury, *La maison de Scheidegg* (L'Harmattan, 2005, 156 p.).

16) *Missionen*, 25,000 copies

17) Report of Fr. Liebermann to the Provincial Chapter of Lyon, no date, most likely that of 1934/1935: 'It would only need a spiteful denunciation to capture the attention of the authorities on us and we would be expelled.'



An Action of Grace : My Life Escaped Danger

It was Thursday, April 27, 2017, at around 5 p.m., on the route to Beni-Oicha. That evening, I escaped sudden death from a traffic accident on my motorbike. A vehicle was just about to hit me. In trying to avoid it, I veered toward the sidewalk with a slight injury to my head. In reality, there was a brain injury. A passer-by, a young taxi driver, a Jehovah's Witness, brought me to the medical center of Mavivi. After awhile, I lost consciousness.

The next day I was transferred to the general hospital of Oicha. Under the advice of my doctors, those in charge decided to transfer me immediately to Kampala.

At the same time, the General Chapter was taking place in Lyon at Valpré. My brother capitulants and others throughout the world were quickly informed of my accident. I found out afterwards, once I became conscious, that much of the world was praying for my recovery. Two days after the accident, the brothers took me to the Congo-Ugandan border where Father Landu Safari was waiting for me. He was going to accompany me to Kampala and to assist me with my needs. Arriving at the hospital, the doctor proceeded quickly to perform surgery, which went well. By the following day, I was beginning to feel sensation, to everyone's satisfaction. I had to stay in Uganda for three months to recuperate. At my last medical check-up, in the beginning of November 2017, the doctor found that the responses of my brain were becoming more and more normal. He suggested that I commence my normal activity without pushing myself to the extreme.

Also, once I regained full mental capacity, I remembered that it was an activity at the Cultural Center Yira Mirembe that brought me to Beni for a preparatory meeting of a concert that was supposed to take place the following weekend. I have been a member of this group since its creation, during the time of our philosophy studies in Bulengera. In fact, I was president of the group. In establishing this cultural group, we were driven by the conviction that songs and music were the tools of our first missionaries (Fathers Théodard Steegen and Stephan Smulders, for example) to transmit the gospels to our people. We had strong convictions that Christian songs, cultural songs, stories, conferences, masses, cultural dances during concerts, allow one to acquire and transmit human values. Glory should be given to God that these activities were able to continue, despite the accident that physically separated me from the group. It is thanks to a close collaboration of religious men and women and all of the group's members.

It is now time for me to thank God and to sing with the psalmist: « For great is thy steadfast love for me; thou hast delivered my soul from the depths of the nether world » (Ps 85, 13). Those who saw me say that I was almost near death. Therefore, regaining my health was a joy for all. It is through the goodness and prayers of a multitude of sisters and brothers that I was saved. Many priests, brothers and sisters from the Assumption family told me of their prayers to Venerable Father d'Alzon for my recovery. The strength of their prayers was manifested. What else is there to say? I promise to implore, without ceasing, blessings of the Lord upon those who gave of their intentions so that my life might be saved. I owe a special thanks to the Oblate Sisters at Kampala who took good care of me during this time of difficulty for me and all those connected with me.

P. Jean-Baptiste Kakule Mbakula (Province d'Afrique)

Editor

Michel KUBLER, General Secretary



Assunzione@mclink.it

Translator

Patricia Haggerty and
Gilles Blouin, English;
José Antonio Echaniz,
Spanish

Model and laid out

Loredana Giannetti

Composed in March
30, 2018

This no 04 of AA- info
is printed in 220
copies:

160 in French

30 in English

30 in Spanish

And 350 electronic
shipments.

Agostiniani dell'Assunzione - Via San Pio V, 55 - I - 00165 Roma
Tel. : 06 66013727 - Fax : 06 6639824 - E-mail : Assunzione@mclink.it

3 EDITORIAL

- ◆ Everyday Heroism

2 OFFICIAL

- ◆ Agenda

4 ◆ Calls, appointments, approvals

5 REFLECTION

- ◆ « Your Kingdom come! »

9 PHILIPPINES

- ◆ Une Semaine sainte avec le cardinal Tagle

10 OVER THE CONGREGATION

- ◆ The Superior general has met the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo

12 FONDATION

- ◆ Mexico: moving on to another shore !

14 OVER THE CONGREGATION

- ◆ All new and all beautiful, the new scholasticate of Ouaga !

16 OUR MOBILIZING WORKS

- ◆ At Bayard, times chang!

18 POSTULATION

- ◆ The missing miracle...
- ◆ The cause of beatification

21 REGARDING THE LAY MEMBERS

- ◆ A New International Commission for the Alliance

22 ARCHIVES LINES

- ◆ The novitiates of the Augustinians of the Assumption (Part three)

27 POSTING

28 OUR DEPARTED BROTHERS

Our departed brothers

† **Fr. Jaques RAFFIN**, of the community of Layrac (Province of Europe), died on 9 January 2018 at Layrac (France). His funeral was celebrated on 12 January in the parish church before the burial in the cemetery of Layrac. He was 89 years old.

† **Fr. Jean-Marie COMTE**, of the community of Layrac (Province of Europe), died on 27 January 2018 in Layrac (France). His funeral was celebrated on 30 January at the Priory before his burial in the cemetery of Layrac. He was 89 years old.

† **Fr. Marie-Georges BLANC**, of the community of Albertville (Province of Europe), died on 28 January in Albertville (France). His funeral was celebrated on 30 January in the community chapel before his burial in the cemetery of Albertville. He was 95 years old.

† **Br. Armand LEMAIRE**, of the community of Worcester-English Road (North American Province), died on 28 February 2018 in Worcester (USA). His funeral was celebrated on 5 March 2018 in the chapel of Assumption College before his burial in the cemetery of Saint-Anne in Fiskdale. He was 93

years old.

† **Fr. Joseph ROLLAND**, of the community of Layrac (Province of Europe), died on 13 March 2018 in Agen (France). His funeral was celebrated on 16 March at the Priory before his burial in the cemetery of Layrac. He was 81 years old.



Brother Adélard KALYONCU SAHUKIRA, A Brother of the Assumption (the Congregation founded by Bishop Piérard in Butembo), died on April 3rd, 2018, in our General House where he had lived since 2016 while pursuing his studies in Rome. His funeral was celebrated on 5th April in the parish church of St. Pio V. He was 42 years old.