

# AA

## News

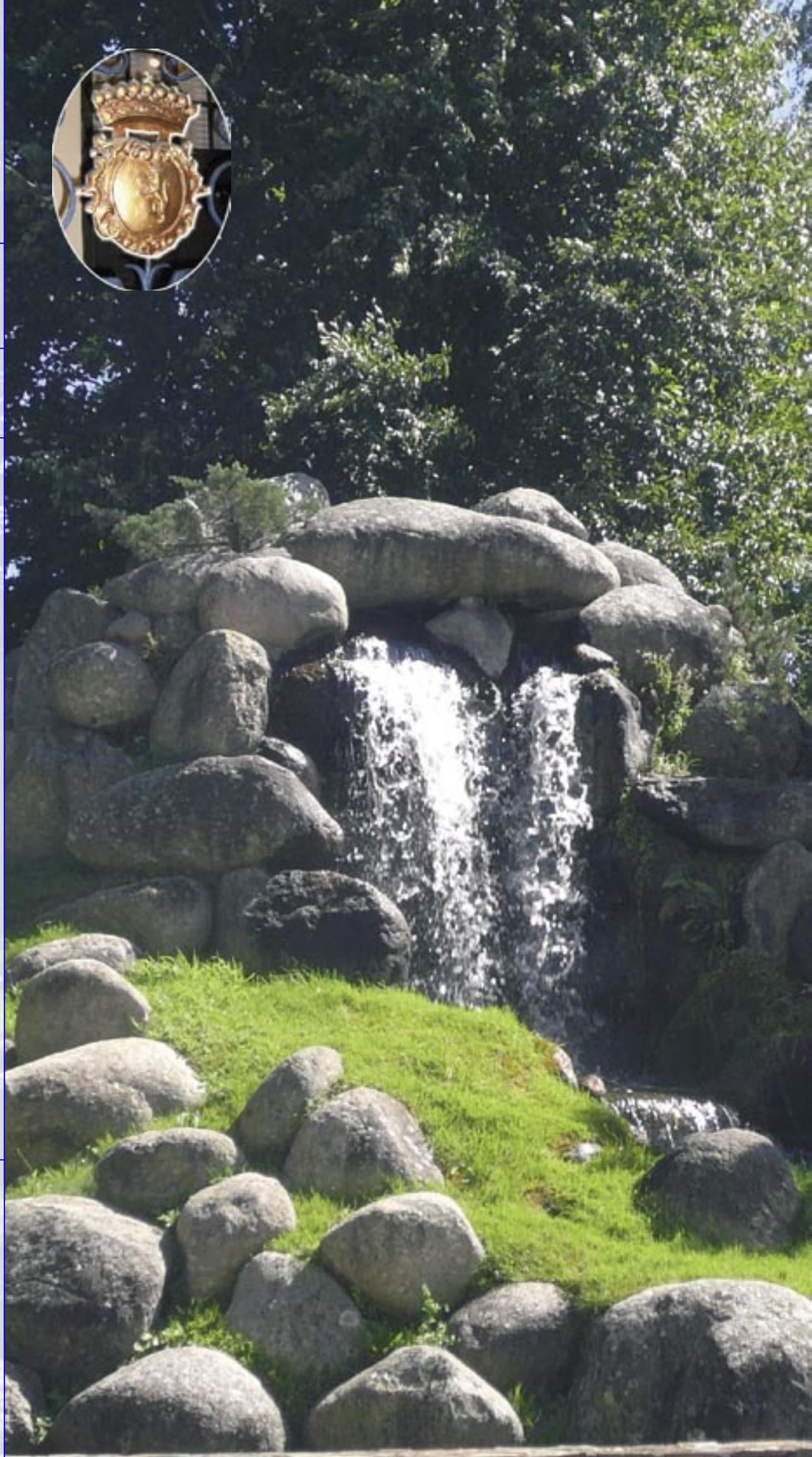
Informations - Noticias - Informatie

No. 21  
October 2010

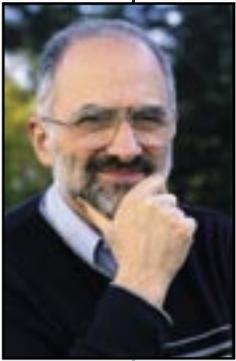


Agostiniani dell'Assunzione - Via San Pio V, 55 - I - 00165 Roma - Tel.: 06 6623998 - Fax: 06 6635924 - E-mail: Assunzione@mcmlink.it

# Assumption



# For the Sake of Love



In its June 11<sup>th</sup> issue, *Newsweek* magazine published an article entitled “‘I Don’t’—The case against marriage”. The bottom-line: it makes little sense and is neither practical nor possible to commit oneself to a spouse in marriage. I was reading the article in a train on my way from Paris to London, where I was to preside at the final profession of one of our young brothers, Nguyen Kuong Dhuy. Of course, the article made me rethink what I would tell Dhuy during my homily as he was about to say “I do!” As it turns out, what I did say strikes me as so important that I’ve chosen to repeat it in this editorial. I do so in light of the real difficulty of making such commitments in today’s culture. For almost twelve years now, I have grappled with this question and once again want to say what I believe to be most important in our vocation as Christians and as religious.

For me, the bottom line is clear: **if we do not commit ourselves as Christians or as religious for the sake of love, then we shouldn’t do it!** Religious certainly shouldn’t do it for the sake of *power*. “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely!” But we didn’t need Lord Acton (who spoke the words in 1887 to a Bishop!) to remind us of that. The Gospel already says it clearly: “The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them... It shall not be so among you.” (Matthew 20:25-26) We know the dangers of power, of arbitrariness, and of secrecy, both in our societies as well as in our Church. No, our Christian commitment cannot be in view of acquiring power.

Nor can it be in view of acquiring *prestige*. Religious life does not upgrade us to first class status; all baptized Christians are called to holiness. The spirit of the three so-called Evangelical counsels (poverty, chastity and

obedience) is for all Christians. A priest or a religious does not have a higher status because of his or her commitment.

And, though this might not be readily apparent, I do not believe that we should say “I do” for the sake of *philanthropy* or generous service to humanity. Clearly, service is important in the life of every disciple of Jesus: “The son of man came not to be served, but to serve.” (Matthew 20:28) But does one need to be a religious (or for that matter, a Christian) to be dedicated to the service of humankind?

I seem to agree with the author of the *Newsweek* article; there are many reasons not to say “I do!” But I come back to my pain point: we can say “I do!” if it is for the sake of love. And here I would like to write a few words especially for religious. Strictly speaking, as I suggested earlier, it is not the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience that distinguishes them from other Christians, but one of their commitments does: the commitment to a celibate life in community.

Perhaps it is ironic, but religious choose to remain celibate for the sake of love! They choose to pursue just one “love affair” if I can call it that, their relationship with Jesus Christ. In many different ways, during their life, they have been touched by Jesus Christ, in the love they’ve experienced in their families, through their friends, from their teachers; during a special moment of prayer or from a word in the Scriptures; through a service-project that challenged them. And then they chose to surrender everything (home, possessions, family, independence) in order to give their life over entirely to Jesus Christ, as the “one thing necessary” (Jesus’ words to Martha in Luke 10:41-42). This love, they’ve decided, can fill their hearts and make their lives fruitful.

But this choice does not narrow their horizons since religious choose to live celibacy in community. Love of Jesus Christ is no private affair. It has a way of including the whole world, first in very concrete daily ways with the brothers with whom they have chosen to spend the rest of their life, and then with all of God's people, with whom they share the love of God that they have experienced.

“For the sake of love!” Some foolish things can also be done “for the sake of love”! I’m not talking here about a passing sentiment, about “commitments” that do not last. Being a religious nowadays or for that matter being a Christian who takes the life of discipleship seriously is not easy. If our focus, however, remains fixed on the one for whom we have made this decision, the one who rose from the dead and is present in our hearts and in our world as a source of life, we can be confident that He will strengthen our resolve and give us peace and joy in this Christian journey on which we have embarked.

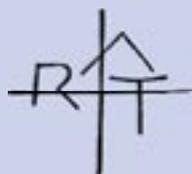
*Richard*

21 September 2010 – Saint Matthew

**Just published:  
Report of the Superior General:  
The 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 reports submitted  
in view of  
the General Chapter of 2011**



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**Cover photo © Lucas  
The waterfall at Le Vigan, at the entrance to  
E. d'Alzon Avenue**



## PRAYER FOR THE GENERAL CHAPTER

As we prepare the General Chapter, let us invoke the Spirit that Jesus promised, so that our communities may seek above all the Father's will and accept to convert themselves.

**Response:** *May your Kingdom Come in the hearts of our brothers*

1 - *With Emmanuel d'Alzon, our desire is to be disciples of Jesus Christ.*

Lord, renew our fidelity to live evangelical poverty, chastity and obedience.

We ask you to open our hearts to be attentive to your call, we pray to the Lord.

2 - *With Emmanuel d'Alzon, our desire is to be apostles of Jesus Christ.*

Lord, we ask you to accompany us on our apostolic journey and to make us sensitive to the needs and sufferings of the people of our day. Help us to draw close to them so that we can bear witness to your love and bring your light to the world, we pray to the Lord.

3 - *Like Emmanuel d'Alzon, our desire is to be brothers in Jesus Christ.*

Lord, help us to love one another and to promote a spirit of solidarity in the world, especially among those with whom we share bread at the same table, we pray to the Lord.

4 - *Emmanuel d'Alzon shared his passion for the coming of the Reign of God with brothers and sisters in the same Assumption family. Today, this passion is awakening new religious vocations as well as committed lay people throughout the world.*

Lord, we pray for those who will commit themselves this year. Grant them happiness and perseverance, we pray to the Lord.

**Concluding prayer:**

Lord, you who called Emmanuel d'Alzon to serve your Kingdom and to launch a mission that today extends to the entire world, help those who have been inspired by his example to continue courageously the work of spreading your gospel among the people of our time. You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Father Richard Lamoureux, Superior General, with his Council, called

### To the priesthood:

1. MBUSA KATOMEKO Anicet (Africa)

### To the diaconate:

2. CASTRO Alex (Philippines)
3. HAJANIRINA Aristide (Madagascar)
4. MONTAÑEZ Ricky (Philippines)

### To perpetual profession:

5. YARRA Ludovic Sirman (Madagascar)



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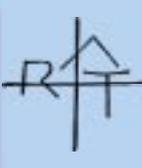
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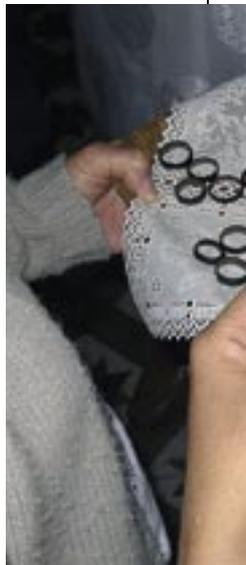


## RIAD 2010

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Meeting of the Assumption for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Dialogue took place in Brazil from July 14 to 25. Present, with God's blessing, were the five Congregations of the Assumption Family that share the same charism for ecumenism. The theme was "Dialogue with the Evangelical Churches." A team was set up to create a

"blog" that shows what we experienced together. It is our pleasure to share with you the highlights of this event, especially in Rio de Janeiro. Our fraternity was enriched by various cultures and languages. Blog: <http://riad2010.wordpress.com>  
Abraço a todos  
Bro. Célio Firmo, A.A.

For photos of the RIAD, see the blog: <http://riad2010.wordpress.com>



## Calendar of the General Council

### Next Meetings of the General Council:

- December 3-22, 2010.
- March 7-26, 2011.

### Next Meeting of the Council of the Congregation:

- Paris, February 17-19, 2011.

### General Chapter:

- Rome, May 2 (evening) to May 23 (evening), 2011.

### Father Richard Lamoureux:

- Argentina, Centennial celebration of the Assumptionist presence in Argentina, September 25 to October 2, 2010.
- Paris, meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption Family, October 5-7.
- Nîmes, October 8-11, Bicentennial celebrations.
- Lorgues and Albertville, canonical visitations, October 26 – November 2.
- Togo, canonical visitations, November 4-12.
- USA, Provincial Chapter and vacation, December 27, 2010 to January 15, 2011.

### Father Julio Navarro:

- Argentina, Centennial celebration of the Assumptionist presence in Argentina, September 25 to October 2, 2010.
- Paris, meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption Family, October 5-7.
- Nîmes, October 8-11, Bicentennial celebrations.
- Chile, Provincial Chapter, October 17-28, 2010.
- Brazil, Provincial Chapter, November 28 to December 5.
- Spain, Provincial Chapter, December 27-31.

### Father Jean-Daniel Gullung:

- Paris, meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption Family, October 5-7.
- Nîmes, October 8-11, Bicentennial celebrations.
- Valpré, invited for November 20-21, 2010.
- France, December 26 to January 6, 2011.

### Father André Brombart:

- Paris, meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption Family, October 5-7.
- Nîmes, October 8-11, Bicentennial celebrations.
- Brussels, October 23 to November 12.
- France, Provincial Chapter, November 13-21.
- Netherlands, Provincial Chapter, November 29 to December 5.
- Brussels, December 27 to January 20, 2011.

### Father Emmanuel Kahindo:

- Brussels, September 29 to October 4
- Paris, meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption Family, October 5-7.
- Nîmes, October 8-10, Bicentennial celebrations.
- Madagascar, Provincial Chapter, December 12-21.
- Africa, Provincial Chapter, December 22 to January 14, 2011, in D.R.C.
- Africa, January 15-21: Kenya and Tanzania

### Father Lucas Chuffart:

- Paris, meeting of the General Councils of the Assumption Family, October 5-7.
- Nîmes, October 8-11, Bicentennial celebrations.
- France, annual retreat, November 10-19, 2010.
- France, December 26 to January 6, 2011.

## New Addresses



### E-mail of the General Archives

Father Jean-Daniel Gullung, acting Archivist, wishes to advise everyone of the new address of the Archives of the Congregation in Rome:

[ArchivesACR@gmail.com](mailto:ArchivesACR@gmail.com)

Kindly put it in your address book.

### E-mail of the Treasurer's Office in Madagascar

[economatvpaa@moov.mg](mailto:economatvpaa@moov.mg)

### Little Sisters of the Assumption

57, rue Violet

F-75015 PARIS

Tel. (0) 1 44 37 34 62

or Tel. (0) 1 44 37 34 61

Fax: (0) 1 44 37 94 64



### **HOSPITALITY = MISSION!**

The community of the General House, after its Local Chapter at the beginning of the year 2010, simply wants to remind you of the applicable criteria and principles:

- The persons being invited must be known to at least one member of the community. We are not a guesthouse in the broad sense of the word, but we are pleased to receive in our house and our community all the members of the Assumption Family, and the members of our families and friends.
- It is essential that you send your requests as early as possible to our guest master (Fr. Bernard Le Léannec: [bl719@gmail.com](mailto:bl719@gmail.com)) and to the hostess (Mrs. Carla: [assunzione.roma@libero.it](mailto:assunzione.roma@libero.it)).
- An Assumptionist religious can come with the members of his family, but he must come with them, stay with them, and take responsibility for them.
- A sharing in the costs is suggested because we do not have any fixed rates as do official hotels or guesthouses.
- The guests must be introduced to the members of the community. They are always welcome to attend our prayer.
- In July and August, because of our absences and the vacations of our personnel, we cannot receive any guests.
- At certain periods, all the rooms of the house are occupied by religious attending sessions or meetings of the Congregation.
- The duration of their stay shall not exceed five days, allowing for exceptions, and the number of persons in a group shall not be more than ten.
- Other communities also have accommodations (the Oblate Sisters, Via Andrea Doria, the Brothers of Christian Schools, Via Aurelia), which are close by and have very nice facilities. For more information, consult: [http://www.romeguide.it/relig\\_search/trovarelig.php](http://www.romeguide.it/relig_search/trovarelig.php)

*In this issue of AA News, instead of the usual list of guests received at the Assumptionist General House at Due Pini in Rome, we are offering you the comments of a few special guests, without implying that the others were not special!*



**Receiving guests, whether male or female religious, priests or laypersons, makes us aware of our Mission. The international aspect of hospitality, and the news transmitted from the communities and the apostolates around the world draw our attention to the persons and realities involved.**



### **8 Young Chileans in Rome**

“Dear Brothers at the General House, Through this message, I want to thank the entire Assumptionist Family. We, the group of eight young Chileans, were well received and accommodated in all the places and communities we visited and in all the activities in which we participated in Paris, Lourdes, Nîmes and Rome. We benefited from the great experience of the Assumptionist meeting, and we recovered our strength to continue animating the other young people in Chile. Thanks to all this, we will follow Jesus in the Assumptionist way that Father Emmanuel d’Alzon bequeathed to us.”

*Fr. Francisco Javier Sepulveda Contreras  
[fsepulve2000@hotmail.com](mailto:fsepulve2000@hotmail.com)  
and [www.assumptio.org](http://www.assumptio.org)*

*See also pages 20 and 21*

## INFORMATION ABOUT SOME OF OUR GUESTS



### Visit to Sant'Egidio



September 17, 2010, the General Council met Gianni La Bella, Mario Giro (in charge of international relations), Father Marco (priest from Santa Maria in Trastevere), Erica (in charge of San Bartolomeo in Isola), Ugo and Massimo, members of the community of Sant'Egidio.

This international community now has the greatest number of its members in Africa. It is especially known for its work for peace, especially for dialogue between belligerents. It also has projects in favor of development, education and health. Our guests, who are very convincing, are interested in what the Assumptionists represent in the field of the media throughout the world and in the Christian Near East.

We also spoke about their work with the homeless in Rome, their support of the Gypsies in Italy, and their battle against AIDS, with a program called "Dream" which is adapted to the poor countries, especially in Africa.

November 13, 2011, the Assumptionist and Oblate Communities of Due Pini will go to celebrate the feast of our Bulgarian martyrs at San Bartolomeo in Isola, a church dedicated to the Christian martyrs of the 20th century. They will deposit there a relic of our martyrs.

The reception received and given is part of our mission!

### First "ad limina" visit of Bishop José Geraldo da Cruz



After the visit of Archbishop Piero Marini in June (see AA News no. 20, page 23), it was the turn of Bishop José Geraldo da Cruz to be received by the community Saturday September 11, 2010. He met in our house with some Brazilian friends he had known in 1960 at the seminary of Eugéno-polis, but he came especially for his first "ad limina" visit after seven years as bishop of Juazeiro in North-Eastern Brazil. A former Assistant General, José Geraldo felt comfortable talking about the positive aspects of this visit to Rome. The Pope received him by taking away his cane (Bishop Geraldo had just had a hip operation) and saying to him in Italian in the presence of the photographer: "We won't let you fall!" The Holy Father mentioned the importance of ecumenism. Religious sects, the

new evangelization, catechesis, so important in an immense diocese populated by communities that are basically Christian, were the core subjects in the discussions and conversations he had in the various Roman dicasteries. The latter are always informed by a preliminary survey conducted one year before on the realities concretely lived by the bishops in any given Apostolic Region.

At the end of our exchange, Bishop Geraldo said with his usual smile: "Believe it or not, our production of wine has improved; our grapes and our wines compete with the Chilean wines, which are very well-known; and little by little our vines are replacing the cactuses in our semi-desert region!" Now that's a nice parable!

*josegeraldocruz@uol.com.br*

### LIFE AT THE MONTMARTRE: A MISSION!

Many of you already know it, others are learning about it here. Your servant is getting ready to continue his mission elsewhere... A bit of history, thanksgiving, and a new beginning.

**A bit of history!**

In 1999, Fr. Christian Blanc came to the Montmartre to give Fr. Gilles Blouin a chance to breathe a little and to head for new horizons. It was during this first year that, with the then-Provincial of North America, Fr. John Franck, with Fr. Marcel Poirier, Bro. Pierre-Jean Genest and in collaboration with the provincials of France and Africa, it was decided to found a new international community: the d'Alzon Community (here, community means the founding of a local house of our Congregation, the Augustinians of the Assumption). This new community would have a threefold mission: to be present in the student milieu and to encourage Assumptionist vocations; to animate the Montmartre; and to continue the Assumptionist presence in Quebec. Accordingly, the d'Alzon Community was set up in 2001 with five brothers of Romanian, Congolese, and French backgrounds, and strengthened during two years by a brother from Madagascar.

**Thanksgiving!**

In rereading these nine years, the reasons for being thankful are many. First of all, it gave the Montmartre the possibil-



*Father Benoît Bigard and Brother Joseph Ai*



**Thank you for these years in Quebec. Be both heirs and founders, and may you have fair winds from the Spirit!**

ity of having stable and constant personnel for almost a decade – which is rather rare in our congregation – a fact that gave it an impetus, color, and a sustained development. Also, if we look at the objectives we had at the beginning, and if we take into account the context of the Church in Quebec, we have nothing to be ashamed of. Indeed, thirty-six young people lived in the community or in the center during those years. One of them is presently an Assumptionist, another had been a postulant, several are diocesan seminarians, and all were able to profit by their stay to deepen their human and Christian vocation. From the point of view of the animation of the Montmartre, many things were put in place... Indeed, many people tell us that they found the Montmartre to be a center of renewal, of brotherhood, and of deep

spiritual nourishment. I cannot draw up here an inventory of all the work that was done, but I simply want to mention that the file, which was kept up to date on a daily basis of the persons who participated in the activities of the Montmartre, contains 1,400 names, without counting those who participated in liturgical celebrations, in retreats, or who are affiliated to the Guild... Finally, continuity of the Assumptionist presence was assured and will continue because 3 students (Congolese and Vietnamese) arrived recently to take up the torch, with 2 priests (Congolese and Russian) who will arrive shortly, and with the presence of a group of lay Assumptionists who are now well established in Quebec.

**A new beginning!**

The Montmartre has been in Quebec for 85 years! Over



## Ecology and the Bible, Summer University at the Montmartre



the years its mission took on different characteristics: it was beautiful, sometimes difficult, but also persevering and creative, because faithfulness to the Gospel requires of each and everyone among us, of each generation, to be both heirs and founders! The last ten years are part of this history, and it is now time for a new beginning. To be sure, letting go is always difficult, but it is also promising: new ideas will emerge, new networks will be created, and the lay-religious partnership already in place will be able to develop itself even more. During these years, new stones were added to the building of the Montmartre, the cement is solid, and the house of the community is beautiful: the mission can be confidently pursued in continuity with the past but also as a new beginning!

The 5<sup>th</sup> Festival of the Bible took place August 27-29, 2010 at the Montmartre in Quebec. The theme of this 5<sup>th</sup> festival, Ecology from biblical times to our day, suggested four avenues of reflection taken from the Bible and the teaching of the Church for a better understanding of the ecological crisis which calls for a spirituality of Creation.

Interspersed with breaks for lectures and workshops, this festival was the occasion for very pleasant encounters and discoveries, both scientific and pastoral, that take place here. Testimonies and well-prepared celebrations revived our deep but not always active faith in Creation. This intensive journey was ably directed by Benoît Bigard, an Assumptionist. Generously collaborating with us were the Department of Theology and Religious Sciences of Laval University, the organization Development and Peace, the

group Voluntary Simplicity, and the Montmartre bookshop, all of whom created a very welcoming milieu throughout the entire weekend. As the summer vacation period was coming to an end, the festival was the occasion for us to become more aware of the fact that, for Christians, there is no vacation when it comes to developing our vigilance regarding the ecological crisis. Our session ended with a festive celebration of the Eucharist, presided by Bishop Blanchet who invited us to take concrete steps in our respective milieus and to constantly listen to the Artisan of Creation who desires the happiness of all his creatures. Sincere thanks to all the artisans, collaborators and participants who made this festival a success.

*Monique B. Grégoire, Volunteer*  
<http://www.lemontmartre.net/montfesti.htm>

### Renovation of the interior of the Stapelen Castle – Boxtel

On January 6, 2015, the Dutch Assumptionists who are still living at the Stapelen Castle will commemorate the fact that 100 years ago the first Assumptionists installed themselves here. The Stapelen Castle goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, where until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, several noble families succeeded themselves. In 1857, the Castle, long neglected, became the property of Mr. Mahie who completely renovated it. Bought by the Assumptionists, the Castle served as a novitiate and a little later as a minor seminary.

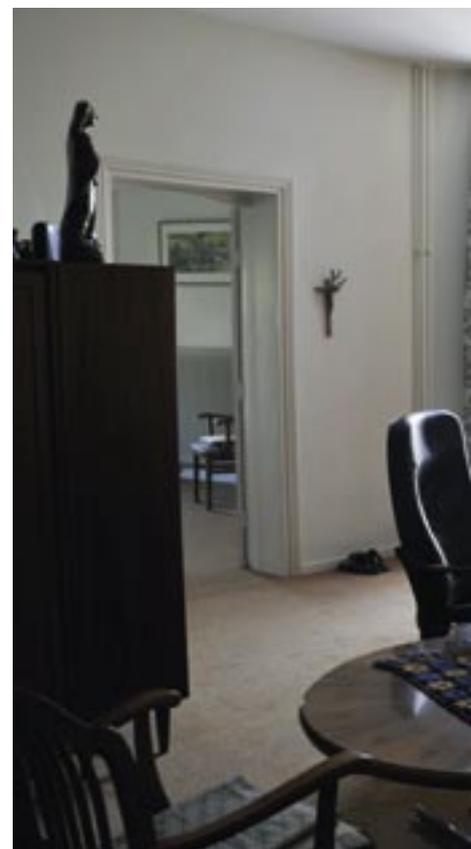
At the present time, 95 years later, there are ten religious at the Castle, with an average age of 82. Fortunately, their health is relatively good. But as the proverb says, “Old age comes with weaknesses.” This led to the government of the Region to foresee times when special care eventually becomes necessary. A centuries-old Castle with its small rooms, stairways, doorsteps, limited bathroom facilities, troubling electric cables, worn-out heating and sewer pipes, the risk of fire, and so many other things are no longer adequate. Regardless, all the religious prefer staying there until the end in our familiar motherhouse. The decision was therefore taken to update the Castle.

A building committee was established. It chose a competent architect, contractors and a clerk of the works in the name of Assumption. We established contacts with the National Service of Historical Monuments and the

City Commission of Monuments. We drew up plans and drawings that were then reviewed and changed several times. For the ten residents, we looked for temporary lodging in Boxtel. When all the preparatory work was finished, we hired movers who furnished us with many boxes for moving. The personnel and the priests themselves could now begin to pack the house equipment, the library books, and all the personal belongings of the religious. Anyone who has ever had to pack an entire castle knows what this means!

When the day came to move out, the residents left about 9 in the morning for a day with their family or friends. In the evening, they went to one of the two temporary lodgings, where their bed was already made and where they found the necessary furniture and all their personal belongings. At the Castle, part of the remaining closets, chairs, lamps, etc. were piled up by the movers, to a height of approximately 10 feet, in the recreation room and in the refectory, two rooms that were not being renovated. The other part was placed in storage with the movers.

Now, the Castle is taken over by a small army of workers. Cranes and scaffolding were set up. The interior is partially or entirely emptied right up to the outside walls. All the electric cables and the water and sewer pipes were removed. What a mess! Laypeople knowledgeable about architecture





*Entrance to the Castle, a community room and a beautiful oak stairway.*



say desperately: "It will never be fixed up." But they are wrong. During the following months, arose from the chaos twelve remarkable apartments which included a large living room, a bedroom, and a modern shower. The workers are now building an elevator, an ingenious connection of the floors of two separate buildings, a new kitchen, a beautiful oak stairway in the old provincialate, and three guestrooms.

It took a while for the residents to get used to the new situation. But now everyone is very happy with their new quarters. A one-day Open House for the population of Bostel provoked several times the exclamation: "Here you'll be able to live until you reach the age of one hundred." We look to the future with confidence. If ever you come to these parts, come and see it.

*Noud Smulders, A.A.  
Superior of the Stapelen Castle*

## ***SOMETHING NEW IN THE NEAR EAST?***

**The new Assumptionist community in Bucharest has been launched!** The four religious who make up that community – two Romanians and two Westerners, two already present in the country and two coming to live here – are already in place regiving life to a building with a prestigious past, as part of an ambitious project. These four people, whose apostolate was thought out by an international commission, want to take the time to base their initiatives on a deep understanding of the Romanian situation and of the ecumenical issues of today.

As a matter of fact, it is not a “new community” that is being founded in the Romanian capital: it is the community of Bucharest, founded in 1936, that is re-opening in a new way, after having been on hold for more than sixty years! It experienced the dark days of communism and of the Romanian regime of Ceausescu.

**The purpose of the community:** “To encourage mutual understanding, the coming together of two traditions,” particularly “by providing scientific tools that will facilitate this coming together” (cf. article by Lucian Dinca in AA News no. 19).

This vocation expresses itself in the “**corporate name**” of our institute in Bucharest, henceforth called the “**Assumptionist ‘Unitate’ Center of Byzantine Studies and of Ecumenical Encounters,**” or, for short, “Unitate Center.” This name recalls the spontaneous cry voiced by the Romanian people, Orthodox as well as Catholics, to John Paul II and to Patriarch Teoctist in Bucharest, in May 1999, during the first trip of a pope to an Orthodox country. The community is under the joint patronage of the Saint



# YES! THE "UNITATE" MISSION!



Apostles Peter and Andrew, i.e. to say, the “coryphaeus” (the one who presides) and the “protoclite” (the first called), respectively, the Fathers of the Roman Church and the Romanian Church: two brothers to bless and support the dialogue between the two sister-Churches. Through this Center, the Assumptionists and the Latin Church must get down to “listening to the Eastern Churches, the living interpreters of the traditional treasure of which they are the guardians” (John Paul II, *Oriente Lumen*, no. 5). This supposes a permanent predisposition of receptivity and of respect toward this Tradition, and a desire to know it better so that we can nourish ourselves from it. And this excludes any attitude on our part that might suggest a sense of superiority or a desire to proselytize.

**The context in which this reopening is taking place must be taken into account from several points of view:**

- **Social and religious:** in Eastern Europe hit by the economic crisis and a rapid secularization, the temptation is to hold on to “values of refuge,” including religious values.
- **National and international:** the life and the activity of the Center will be linked to its location in the Romanian capital. However, the present globalization and the international dimension of the religious issues involved do not allow us to keep our vision on a single country.
- **Assumptionist:** the reopening of our house in Bucharest constitutes an important event of the bicentennial of Fr. d’Alzon, who was passionate about the Christian East and the Unity of the Church.

Already half a dozen students (Orthodox, Catholics of the Eastern Rite or Latins) occupy rooms at the Center

under the direction of Fr. Ovidiu. The arrival of 15,000 books from our Byzantine library in Rome and Athens (via Juvisy) is imminent, so also that of a Romanian Oblate Sister to help Fr. Lucian with its direction. **And the inauguration of the Unitate Center is foreseen for the end of January**, with a lecture by Cardinal Walter Kasper, president emeritus of the Pontifical Council for the Unity of Christians.

Two recent events gave hope to this rebirth. The funeral of Father Bernard Stef in Blaj after a life given to the Greek-Catholic Church and the request by Bishop Vasile Bizau, the local auxiliary, that we begin a new relationship with the Church of Romania. And two days later, the Latin Archbishop of Bucharest invited himself unexpectedly to discover our house and share our meal. Apparently rather impressed by the setup, Bishop Ioan Robu expressed both his support for the project the Assumptionists want to resurrect in this house, as well as his confidence and his willingness to have us share in the mission of the Church of Bucharest – with, in addition, some very appealing pastoral and financial proposals.

**It is now up to us, with the help of God and the support of the entire Congregation, to turn the page of our history in Romania.**

When all is said and done, it is this page that will say if there’s something new, for the Assumptionists, in the Near East. “Unitate!”

*Michel Kubler, A.A.  
Michel.kubler@gmail.com  
(Director of the Assumptionist Center  
'Unitate' in Bucharest)*



## Good news: the rehabilitation by the Bulgarian Parliament of those condemned during the trial of 1952

**Wednesday, July 28, 2010, will remain a historic date in the Bulgarian Catholic Church and for our Assumptionist family.**

On this day, the Bulgarian Parliament passed a decree correcting and completing the law that rehabilitates politically and civilly those victimized by the repression. This was the initiative of Laceyar Toshev, Orthodox deputy of Northern Bulgaria, in the context of the parliamentary commission responsible for human rights, religious denominations, and the requests and complaints lodged by private citizens.

This decree officially rehabilitates “those condemned by the third correctional chamber of the Supreme Tribunal, in the 1952 trial, no. 452, against members of the Catholic Church in Bulgaria,” as well as those condemned in the two trials brought against the members of the Union of Evangelical Churches in 1949.

After his beatification in March 1998, Bishop Evgueni Bossilkov was rehabilitated by the Bulgarian court in May of 1999. In 2002, after the beatification of the three blessed martyrs, Kamen Vitchev, Pavel Djidjov and Josaphat Chichkov, a similar procedure was begun in view of their official rehabilitation, but this was never finalized. Eight years later, a new initiative, this time at the parliamentary level, has led to the rehabilitation not only of the blessed martyrs, but of all forty persons condemned (eleven of whom were Assumptionists) during the trials against members of the

Catholic Church in Bulgaria.

The reputation of those condemned (“accused of having founded, directed or abetted after the coup d’état of September 9, 1944 an organization whose goal was to overthrow, destabilize and weaken the popular democratic regime in the Popular Republic of Bulgaria by another coup d’état, a revolt, a riot, by means of terrorist acts and crimes constituting a danger for all of society and through foreign military intervention”) is now washed clean fifty-eight years after their condemnation. Of course, the rehabilitation comes after all of these Bulgarian priests and men and women religious who were brought to trial are no longer alive. For them, undoubtedly, such rehabilitation has a very relative importance given the fact that they now know true justice after having met face to face the just and merciful Judge. Nonetheless, we can only rejoice at seeing justice restored.

We do well to note that by a happy coincidence, which divine Providence alone understands, the joy of this rehabilitation is joined to that occasioned by two other commemorations: that of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the union with Rome on the part of the Bulgarians of the Byzantine rite, which is at the origin of the apostolic Exarchate of Sofia, as well as that of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Emmanuel d’Alzon, whose spiritual sons paid a heavy price during the iniquitous trial of 1952.

<http://www.assomption.org/MissionOrient/IndexMO.php>

## "AN ASIAN MISSIONARY IN ASIA!"

**Dear Paul, you were ordained a priest in June 2010, and at the end of September you, a Vietnamese, were sent to the Assumptionist community in Korea. Why?**

"I was asked this question many times, especially by the parishioners of Ecully and by my friends. This appointment to South Korea answers the needs of the Assumptionists and those of the Church. The Korean community in Kwangju is fragile because it currently has only two Priests: Fr. Frans Desmet, a Belgian, and Fr. Joseph Baik Ho, a Korean. I was able to visit this community in February 2010 and I saw everything that has been done and that needs support. I am happy to have been sent there for this mission. Besides, the archdiocese of Kwangju needs foreign missionaries to help the immigrants, among whom are a certain number of Vietnamese. I will therefore be working in the diocesan pastoral office in charge of those who come to work here from Kwangju (headquarters, among others, of the well-known "Kia" automobiles [unpaid publicity! Have a laugh!])."

**Do you think that the priority given by the Assumptionists to the Asian Mission is justified?**

"Of course," answers Paul without hesitating. "Father Provincial offered me several places. And I chose Kwangju for several reasons. First, because it was the Assumptionist mission in Asia. For a long time, the Assumptionists have heard the call to evangelize Asia, for example in Man-



churia until 1952. Now, for almost twenty years, in Korea, and more recently in Vietnam, and still more recently in the Philippines. Our recent foundations concretize our Asian Mission and calls continue to reverberate in China, India and Indonesia. As a Vietnamese Assumptionist appointed to South Korea, I hope that my presence will create visible and strong bonds for our Asian Mission."

**What do you fear the most: the change of culture, the difficulty of the language, or Korean food?**

"I've got no problem with Korean food. However, the Korean language will be a challenge! The Korean language is completely different from Vietnamese. I'll have to learn a different alphabet and a different language structure. With time, I hope I can manage. The Korean culture is deeply rooted in Confucianism and in a very particular way. It takes a long of time to understand it. I am counting on the help and prayers of everyone."

*tmh26610@gmail.com*

or

*ptminhhai@yahoo.com*

## And the First Vows



*Fr. Paul Dong and the newly professed*

On August 28, four young Vietnamese (Duong, Duc, Nam and Tai) made their first vows in the Assumptionist Congregation. All of the Assumptionist Family had chartered a bus of 50 places to transport, from Saigon to the novitiate at some 80 km from Saigon, the Assumptionist brothers and the Oblate Sisters, but also the postulants and the candidates. Appointed to the formation community in Binh Loi, the four newly professed left the novitiate right after the festive meal, in order to make room for four new novices.

<http://www.assumptionist.org.uk/dongaa/index.php>



**See also Father General's letter no. 13, "...in the East and in the West, Our Mission in Asia ... and 'at home.'" Pentecost 2010.**

### KENYA



## Dedication of the Parish Church of Saint Monica, Njiru, Nairobi



Also, see  
article in  
AA-News no. 9  
October 2007, pp. 6-7

August 29, 2010 was a long-awaited day. The church, whose construction was started in February 2005 on a plot donated by the Waweru family, was now finished.

Cardinal John Cardinal Njue, the pastor of the Archdiocese of Nairobi, began Mass at 10:23 a.m., inviting everyone to remember that this was the day the Lord had chosen to come to his dwelling place to meet us and to reveal himself to us. It was the day on which the Lord reminded us of the covenant we had entered with him at our baptism so that we might better live our human condition. He reminded the congregation that we had come to bless a church that is the fruit of hard work in order to raise it to the status of God's dwelling place.

The penitential rite took the form of the blessing of the water with which the people and the building were then sprinkled. The people could not contain their joy as they sang the Gloria accompanied by a lot of ululations. And the blowing of the vuvuzela recalled the context of the recent World Cup. It was very interesting to

see the Gospel procession preceded by someone carrying an African pot containing burning incense, by a guard carrying a spear and a shield, by women waiving banana leaves, and by a young girl carrying a Bible and hoisted on the shoulders of two women dressed in traditional African clothes.

The Cardinal took his time for the homily, using it as an opportunity to teach the congregation and to remind it that we had all gathered there because we needed God, and not simply because it was Sunday. He recognized the delegation that had specially come from Pistoia in Italy and that had significantly contributed to the construction of this church.

After the homily and the Litany of the Saints, the Cardinal proceeded with the anointing of the altar and of the pillars of the church with Sacred Chrism, and then incensed the Altar. Next was the blessing of the tabernacle which is a miniature replica of the church.

After the celebration of the Eucharist, various messages were read, among



Parish of Njiru, Cardinal Njue and Fr. Kabila

them, one from the Superior General of the Augustinians of the Assumption who referred to the Church as a beacon of hope for all those who, local or far away, are searching for rest.

The parish priest, Fr. Protais Kabila, was overcome with joy at seeing the congregation estimated to be more than 4,000 people, to the point of being unable to give his speech. He simply expressed his gratitude to all who contributed to this achievement and stated that each parishioner had an irreplaceable place in his heart. Mass ended at 3:45 p.m., giving way to other celebrations that went into the early part of the evening. No one seemed to be in hurry to leave since this was our day and it was our church. May God bless the good work begun and bring it to completion.

*Brother Waweru Gichuki, Wilson, A.A.*

P.S. The parish of Saint Monica also has three schools, is the place where our Assumptionist student brothers receive their apostolic training, and has a Center for Ecumenical Dialogue.

## A community often “attacked”!

For the second consecutive time, our confreres of the community in Njiru (Kenya) were attacked by armed men. Indeed, on July 20, 2010, heavily armed thieves burst into the community at 1 a.m. They stole more than 6,000 Euros that the treasurer had just withdrawn from the bank to pay for the final work on the new church of St. Monica (see accompanying article) and for the preparations of its inauguration. A sentry guard was tied up while his colleague hid himself.

Two weeks later, August 4, in the middle of the night, the community was visited once again. This time the aggression was savage and cruel. One of the guards was killed. The bandits seriously beat up Father Protais Kabila, pastor of the parish and Regional Superior of the Assumptionists of East Africa, as well as Father Ignace Katembo, the associate pastor. They threatened to kill them if they cried for help. They tied up the pastor and covered him with a loincloth found in the house. As for the associate pastor, they tied him up with a liturgical stole! The thieves wrecked the office of the Regional, tore up all the files, and walked off this time with everything they could put their hands on: money, telephones, DVD readers, computers... Everything!

### What a traumatic experience!

Everything seems to indicate that the bandits knew the confreres and the place very well. The authorities have begun an investigation. But we know that in such cases, nothing will be returned.

*Thank you.*

**We therefore ask all people of good will to come to their help. You can send contributions to the “Procure des Missions (pour Njiru), 230 Avenue d’Itterbeek, 1070 Brussels. Belgian bank account (CCP Belgique) 000-0317131-38 and/or a message of encouragement to Father Protais Kabila for his community: tumeprotais@yahoo.com; postal address: P.O. Box 85 Kayole, 00518 Nairobi, Kenya.**

### TOGO SPECIAL, A YOUNG MISSION

“Fr. René Mihigo, you were just renamed Master of Novices, this time in Togo, after having had that position in the DR Congo. How do you feel about this?”

“Thanks for giving me the opportunity to speak after a long silence. The Province asked me to become the Master of Novices in Sokodé. For me, it is a grace to be renamed in this way. The one responsible for the novitiate is attached to the novices. He himself profits from the spiritual experience he offers to the novices entrusted to his care. His role is simple: he guides, he forms

according to the charism and the spirituality of his religious family. And along the way, during a whole year, he discerns with the novices the action of the Spirit in their lives.

“This year I will be receiving seven novices, all of them Togolese! The proof that God is calling! These young men are coming from many places and have learned about us in different ways. Our vocation ministry is very simple. The young people learn about us from a pamphlet describing the Assumptionists, or from one or another religious of the community, or again and especially from our apostolic work. The youth ministry in Sokodé, the inter-novitiates in which we participate, the parishes in which we help out are all situations that get people thinking. Most of the youth are university students and contact us by mail, e-mail and telephone.

“To come back to my responsibility as Master of Novices, I accepted it wholeheartedly, even if I regret



Father René Mihigo and the seven novices

having to give up certain pastoral activities that I like. Sometimes I think that I am like ‘reheated soup.’ But it’s also through poverty that we must accept to be good reheated soup! We are available so that the Reign of God can come about. I was ten years in the DC Congo and I thank God for them. They made me what I am today. The time I spent in the ‘initiatory grove’ of the novitiate turned me into an ‘initiated person’ next to the great ‘Initiated One’ who is Jesus Christ, to speak in terms of our African cultures. The experience of the novitiate is one of an ‘initiation,’ or again a passage from ‘death to Resurrection’ with Christ in the Assumptionist spirituality.

“The experience of having been an assistant general in Rome for six years was also for me a time of purification and of formation to a truly Assumptionist identity, and a time to renew my attachment to the Assumption. Rich experiences, difficult trials: I grew in the knowl-

edge of myself. It was liberating! “Here in Togo, the context of the mission in a milieu that is mostly Muslim is necessarily significant, given the number of mosques and the calls to prayer by the muezzins! But relations are good, and dialogue in daily life is more eloquent than great declarations. As a priest, as a religious, and now as ‘Master of Novices,’ I am becoming somewhat like an imam or an Alhaji (a Muslim man who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca)! And we have many trusting and friendly relationships with Muslim students and adults.

“To conclude, **I would say that the Assumptionists have a future in West Africa by working seriously for the coming of the Reign of God in ourselves and around us.** May the Holy Spirit be the novices’ interior master and my own interior master, God willing!”

Thank you.

Father René Mihigo Marhegane.  
renemimar@yahoo.fr

**On Saturday, August 14th, over 200 members of the Assumptionist Family, religious and lay, gathered in the Hagan Campus Center at Assumption College in Worcester to celebrate the Bicentennial of the Birth of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon.**



## 200 Religious and laypeople in Worcester

During the festive luncheon, old friendships were renewed and new acquaintances were made through the sharing of memories and stories of the past and new hopes and dreams for the future.

After lunch, Fr. Dennis Gallagher, A.A., Regional Superior, welcomed everyone most warmly and acknowledged the broad sweep of Assumptionist Family members. He noted that those present represented the various ministries and personal ties which had been forged over many years, the religious branches of the family, and those in formation from around the world who constitute a hope for the future. This visual reality truly reflected Fr. d'Alzon's dream of extending God's kingdom, religious and laity working and witnessing together as a family.

On behalf of the College community, Dr. Francesco Cesareo, President, welcomed everyone and expressed a deep sense of gratitude for the Congregation's profound commitment to education, its witness in seeking truth and academic excellence and in bringing the Gospel to society through the presence and influence of the religious.

Mr. Tomasz Kierul, Director of Development for the U.S. Region, thanked everyone on behalf of Fr. Gallagher

for their support of the "Partners for God's Kingdom" fund and asked for their continued financial assistance in furthering the vision and dream of Fr. d'Alzon through the life and ministries of the Congregation.

The keynote speaker of the afternoon was Fr. Richard Lamoureux, A.A., Superior General of the Assumptionists, who focused on the theme of the day, "Partners for God's Kingdom." Inspired by Fr. d'Alzon's vision and implemented over the years through General Chapters, the Congregation has set a course with subsequent documents and directives to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel, especially to the poor, to promote communion in the world in union with the laity. As the Congregation grew, this dream took on an international face with global dimensions and significance in such countries as South Korea, Belgium, Kenya, Chile, Argentina, Mexico and Madagascar, just to name a few. Fr. Lamoureux highlighted how these alliances of religious and laity have led to the sharing of common projects, such as parish and school ministries, work with immigrants, prayer and retreat offerings and vocation recruitment.

Fr. Lamoureux challenged the reli-

gious and laity inspired by the dream of Fr. d'Alzon to be courageous in being faithful Catholics by taking the Gospel seriously and by always being open to new possibilities in transforming society. He further urged us to pay special attention to our young people, to continue to develop our efforts in the fields of education, publishing, parish work and specialized ministries.

The afternoon ended with the Vigil Mass of the Feast of the Assumption celebrated in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, presided by the bishop of Worcester, Most Rev. Robert McManus. In his homily, Fr. Lamoureux spoke of Mary's life as she journeyed to Judea, to Bethlehem, to Egypt, to Jerusalem, to Calvary and finally to heaven. As her children, we too are on a life-long journey experiencing struggles, doubts and fears, as well as hopes and joys. And like her, we too need the support of friends and the companionship of fellow travelers along the way, being attentive to the needs of others in serving those we meet, always accompanied by God on our journey of faith toward eternal glory.

*Sent by Tomasz Kierul  
tomkierul@gmail.com*

Once upon a time, there was a group of eight young Assumptionists from Chile (one of them, a religious) who had a dream: to take part in the national pilgrimage to Lourdes in France and to learn more about the Assumption. At the outset, the situation was very difficult for them, given the fact that a trip as big as this one was beyond their means. Nevertheless, God's help, their own work and the desire to reach their goal pushed them to move forward... Finally, after a great deal of effort, they were successful and set out on their pilgrimage.



### IT'S POSSIBLE...

*And now these same young people have returned to share a bit of their experience.*

#### **Our first stop was Paris.**

Though it was great to learn about this beautiful city, the best part of the visit was to meet the Assumptionist brothers and novices who welcomed us warmly in their home and took very good care of us.

Then **we headed to Lourdes**, our main goal, where without a doubt we had our finest experience. The reception we received from everyone during the pilgrimage, despite the language problem, illustrated the Assumptionist spirit.

But what struck us and pleased us most as Assumptionists was to see the diversity of pilgrims: Africans, Indians, Europeans, Koreans, etc. And despite the fact that



**Once again, thanks to everyone! May God bless you for your generosity and for having believed in us.**

in many of those countries Catholicism is not the official religion, the faith manifested by each one with regard to the Virgin and to God was worthy of our admiration. We saw with our own eyes that the Church is truly universal!

**Afterwards, we went to Nîmes** to visit the places where Father d'Alzon had lived and worked. Though we hadn't planned it that way, we encountered another group of lay Assumptionists from different places in the world, who together with the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption, intended to make the same kind of pilgrimage that we had planned. Mother General invited us to join them, and so we had the opportunity to know and to spend time with other Assumptionist brothers and sisters.

It was really incredible to visit all of the places that were important to d'Alzon, to see where he was born and

baptized, to see the school where the Congregation was founded, his childhood home, the Château of Lavagnac, a beautiful spot that inspired peace and tranquility.

On the last evening we spent in Nîmes, we offered to all those people with whom we had shared this d'Alzon pilgrimage a bit of our folklore. We really enjoyed this activity and in particular the participation of the laypeople and sisters, who even joined in the dancing... Then we went to Lyons, where we spent a few hours, and once again benefited from the exceptional hospitality of the Assumptionist family.

**And finally we arrived in Rome** and spent time at the General House with all the Assumptionists, who once again received us very warmly. We joined them at meals and even for a birthday party. In Rome, we "left out feet on the sidewalk," as we say in Chile. We walked all day



## God continues to call those he wants

**“Today, like two thousand years ago,  
God continues to call those he wants.”**

In these few lines, I would like to share with you, brothers in the Assumption, what consecrating my life to the Assumptionists means to me. On January 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year, I made my first religious profession with two other brothers: José Luis (from Ecuador) and Everaldo Portes (from Brazil). During these few months as an Assumptionist religious, I have been very pleased with all the gifts the Lord has given me: a new community, new pastoral responsibilities, and university life. This implies a faster pace, but without neglecting the center of my life, Jesus Christ. During these months of consecration, I have been able to feel God manifesting himself through the events I was living. I have been living the vowed life with great joy. I feel that it's a gift of love to Him who loved me first.

For me, my religious consecration confirmed what I felt the very first day I became a postulant: I mean, a new life, new ideals, new projects, and new hopes. I want to live my life in faithfulness and in love for Him who looked at me one day, called me by name, and appealed to my heart for ever. With the passing of time, he filled my heart with gratefulness to God because **being an Assumptionist** taught me to be a man of truth with all that I am and with all that I possess. With all that, I can say that



long, getting to know churches, monuments, museums, etc. Without a doubt, it was well worth it; the visit was marvelous. We are most grateful to the Assumptionist family for its hospitality, to Father Julio for his warmth and friendliness, and to God, who allowed us to know so well the Assumptionist spirit and to live it concretely.

**This dream-come-true** has renewed our energies, so that we can continue to commit ourselves even more to Jesus and to the Assumption, and to encourage other young people to get involved and to be part of the great Assumptionist family, as we are.

*Patricia Barrera  
Zuñiga, Assumptionist  
Youth from Chile  
Bro. Francisco  
Sepúlveda, A.A.*

I am a happy man, whose happiness no one or nothing can take from me because happiness is God himself. My faithfulness to Jesus, the Lord, is supported by the Blessed Virgin, a fundamental pillar of my daily prayer. The Blessed Virgin has always been present in the life of the Church, from its very beginning on Pentecost (Acts 1:14) until today, watching over it, encouraging it, and interceding for it. The Immaculate Virgin Mary is the patroness of all vocations and will always protect our own.

That is why the religious vocation is a mystery of love between a God who calls and a human being who responds to him freely and lovingly. A vocation is the mystery of a calling from God. “It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure” (Jn 15:16).

*Bro. Alejandro Godoy Vásquez, A.A.  
jano247@gmail.com*

On the occasion of the bicentennial of the birth of the founder of the Assumptionists and of the Oblates of the Assumption, the General Council had the opportunity to walk in the first footsteps of Emmanuel d'Alzon, so to speak, on August 30, 2010, the anniversary of his birth, and on September 2, 2010, the anniversary of his baptism at Le Vigan, at the foot of the Cévennes Mountains.

For the celebrations of these events, which were coordinated by the General Council of the Oblates, we joined on August 30 a small group of faithful pilgrims under the direction of Cardinal Paul Poupard and guided by Fr. Vincent Cabanac in the church of St. Peter at Le Vigan. On the day of his baptism, September 2, the anniversary that Father d'Alzon preferred, the two General Councils got together around the baptistery, then, as the founder often did, they went up to l'Espérou for a Eucharistic celebration in the chapel of 'Our Lady of Happiness' and a festive meal that brought together the daughters and sons of Father d'Alzon in a same communion.

The members of the General Council dedicated the other few days either to cultural visits, among others to the Desert Museum, the high place of Cévenol Protestants, to St Gilles-du-Gard and to Saintes-Maries de la Mer, and finally to the Palace of the Popes in Avignon, or to relaxed meetings of the Council. During this stay called the "vacation of the Council" and not the



*Bishop Wattebled, Sr. Claire Rabitz, Cardinal Poupard, and Fr. Richard Lamoureux*

## The General Council in the footsteps of Emmanuel d'Alzon

"vacancy of power," we artistically combined relaxation, d'Alzonian memories, and contemporary culture. We could not have done any better!

I now pass the word over to Fathers Julio Navarro and Emmanuel Kahindo to give you a few impressions:

### **My impressions of Father d'Alzon's country**

"I had gone several times to Nîmes and Le Vigan, says Father Julio Navarro, particularly in 1980 for the year of the Centennial and in December 1999, at the beginning of my mandate as Assistant General. But this time, I felt it was not just a question of visiting 'places' of Fr. d'Alzon, but of entering a little more into his soul, in his human and family roots, in his spiritual sensitivity. Indeed, it is often said that the countryside, the climate, and the soil where one is born shapes an entire person.

was able to contemplate very joyfully ever so many varied landscapes of these Cévennes Mountains and of this region of l'Hérault so dear to Father d'Alzon. The vineyards magnificently cared for, the fields of apple trees, the olive groves, and the chestnut trees ... the hills of Cévenol, the rivers that meander everywhere, these impressive geological amphitheatres ... all these wonders of nature deeply touched me. Also, in going through so many small villages, like the one that carries the name "ALZON," with their stone houses and their narrow streets, I was transported to the time of Fr. d'Alzon. The Protestant presence, with this high place of the Soubeyrand Farm and of the Desert Museum, made me understand perhaps a little better the dream of young d'Alzon to 'convert' these brothers to the Catholic faith. And what can I say about Avignon, the city I had secretly wanted to see again someday! I thought not only about the period of the popes



◀ After Mass,  
on the steps of the church of  
St. Pierre in Le Vigan  
08/30/2010



▲ Cardinal Paul Poupard receives from  
the Mayor of Le Vigan and from the Presi-  
dent of the Cities of the Region the medal  
of the city of Le Vigan "of which Father  
d'Alzon is one of the best known citizens  
throughout the world."

who lived in these beautiful castles, but also about Father d'Alzon participating actively in the Regional Council of Avignon and already fighting for the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by the Church of his time.

This was a beautiful vacation fraternally spent with the General Council and a beautiful spiritual experience that will mark yet another milestone in this Bicentennial year!"

*Julio Navarro*

*julionavarroroman@hotmail.com*

### **The land of my ancestors is like the womb of my mother**

For me, it's always touching to walk on the soil of my ancestors, because, according to our African tradition, this soil is sacred. It is not only like the womb of my mother who carried me and nourished me, but it is also the place where I feel in communion with my ancestors. When I walk in the pathways where they too have walked, when I pick the fruit of a tree they planted and

that nourished them, when I drink from the same stream that quenched their thirst (as was the case in Limalou-les-Bains), I felt that these ancestors are not dead: they are there, they are living. And this absence-presence stimulates me to take good care of the heritage they left us (as Nabot would say!). Then just imagine the feelings I had when I stopped, but for too short a time, on the property of la Condamine at Le Vigan, or when I was not able to visit the Château de Lavagnac, for want of the proper authorization. Yes, these were very powerful and melancholic souvenirs for me.

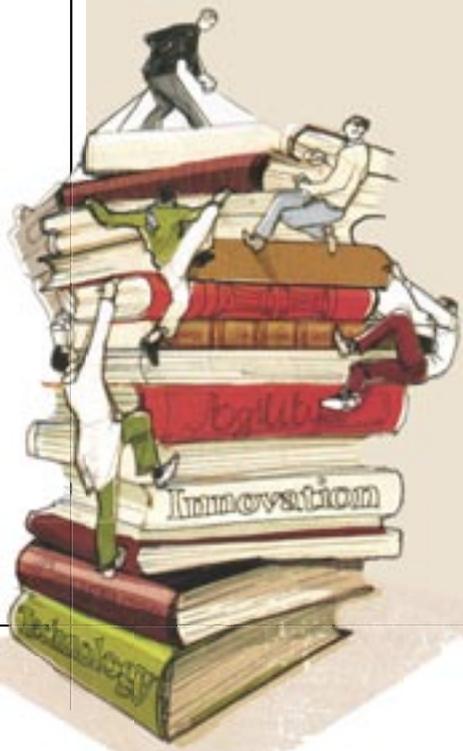
*Emmanuel Kahindo*  
*emekahi@hotmail.com*



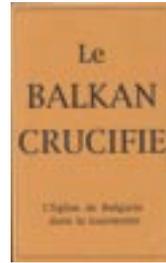


### Did you know?

The collection of about ten booklets edited on the occasion of the Centennial of the death of Father d'Alzon in 1980 included some 1,060 pages. They had their importance. Actually, the number of pages in the series Booklets of the Bicentennial (Cahiers du Bicentenaire) of the birth of our founder, Emmanuel d'Alzon, is already 3,319 pages up to number 13. And you probably haven't yet seen or read everything because there is already another issue in progress by Father Jean-Daniel Gullung, our interim archivist. It will include "portraits and photos of Father d'Alzon," along with an introduction and a commentary. There might also be other publications.



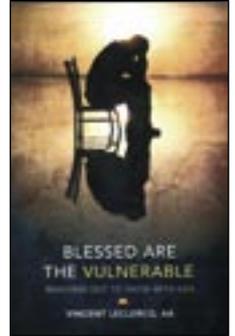
No. 230 of the bulletin of the Province of France, A Travers la Province (ATLP), tells us that the movie-maker and photographer Claude Sauvageot (1935-2010) died June 9. With his wife Marie-Ange Donze, he had produced in 1995 the documentary **The Balkan Crucified. The Church of Bulgaria under Persecution**, during which our three Assumptionist brothers, Kamen, Pavel and Josaphat, were executed by the communist regime in 1952 and rehabilitated recently (see article on the Near East Mission in this issue of AA News).



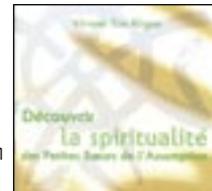
This same issue of ATLP announced the publication of **La foi au Dieu des chrétiens, gage d'un authentique humanisme** (Faith in the God of Christians, Guarantee of an Authentic Humanism), the doctoral dissertation of Fr. François-Xavier Nguyen Tien Dung, A.A., DDB, 520 pages, €38. It focuses on the work of Henri de Lubac, The Drama of Atheist Humanism, and points out that 'Christianity is humanistic because the One who reveals himself became human at the Incarnation...'  
[fxnguyentiendung@hotmail.com](mailto:fxnguyentiendung@hotmail.com)



Also, the publication of **Blessed are the Vulnerable**: Reaching out to Those with AIDS, the doctoral dissertation of Fr. Vincent Leclercq, London, Twenty-Third Publications, 2010, 257 pages, thesis defended in 2007 at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, MA. Its original title was "Vulnerability and the Kingdom of God. A Theological Ethics in a Time of AIDS."  
[leclercq\\_vincent@hotmail.com](mailto:leclercq_vincent@hotmail.com)

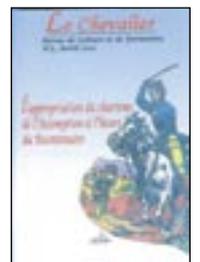


### Other publications:



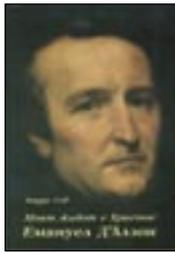
In the series **Vienne ton Règne, discover the spirituality of the Little Sisters of the Assumption**. On the back cover is this quotation from their Rule of Life, § 20: "Sharing the aspirations, the values, the joys and the sufferings of the poor, we learn with them to let ourselves be converted to the Gospel."  
[assomptionpetitessesoeurs@yahoo.fr](mailto:assomptionpetitessesoeurs@yahoo.fr)  
 and [www.assomption-psa.org](http://www.assomption-psa.org)

The issue **Le Chevalier** of the Review of Culture and Formation appeared in April 2010. It was published in Kinshasa. Because of the bicentennial, this issue carried the title "Adapting the charism of Assumption during the Bicentennial," 122 pages.  
[musanganiajeanpaul@yahoo.fr](mailto:musanganiajeanpaul@yahoo.fr)



# come out!

Among recent translations: the translation into Russian of **Christ is My Life. Emmanuel d'Alzon 1810-1880**. Appeared in 2010. [gorokoff@gmail.com](mailto:gorokoff@gmail.com)



In a few pages chock-full of information, Sister Fortunata Maha, O.A., summarizes the **Identity of the Oblates of the Assumption in 2010**, our religious missionary sisters also founded by Father Emmanuel d'Alzon. [mahafortunata@yahoo.fr](mailto:mahafortunata@yahoo.fr)



Le Monde de la Bible no. 194, September 2010, presents admirable photos of **the Holy Land taken by Assumptionists** and first published in

the book La Terre Sainte. Texts by Frs. Jacques Nieuviarts and Alain Marchadour, A.A., Bayard. "Terrific!"

A very nice first issue of a new bulletin, but we don't know yet if and when there will be a second issue! One has been promised, but no date has been given. **Assomptionnistes. Afrique de l'Ouest** (Assumptionists. West Africa), with an editorial by the editor-in-chief, Fr. Jean-Paul Sagadou, A.A. To be requested from: [communauteaa.sokode@yahoo.fr](mailto:communauteaa.sokode@yahoo.fr)



**AA News wants to encourage all the editors/writers of the (Vice) Provincial or Regional bulletins, whether computerized or on paper, in black and white or in color, and to thank them for the articles sent, shared, illustrated and enriched! Do not forget to send a hard copy to the Archives in Rome. Thank you.**



La Documentation Catholique no. 2449, under the direction of Fr. Jean-François Petit, A.A., reproduced Letter no. 7 of Father Richard Lamoureux, Superior General, **"In One Body."** Assumption's Ecumenical Mission is always up-to-date (see in this issue of AA News the articles by Frs. Daniel Gillier and Michel Kubler, A.A.).

Issue no. 2 of the review **Anh Sang** published by our Assumptionist Vietnamese brothers. The first two issues are available on the review's website: <http://www.tapchiansang.com>





EMMANUEL D'ALZON  
1810 - 1880



**Prayer**  
for ask a grace  
and for that the Church recognize  
the holiness of Father Emmanuel d'Alzon

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You called Emmanuel d'Alzon  
to the service of Your Kingdom.  
So that the Church might recognize  
the holiness of Father d'Alzon,  
grant us by his intercession  
the grace that we now ask...  
You who live and reign  
forever and ever. Amen.

(With the approval of the Ordinary; 2009)  
Those who receive a favor through  
the intercession of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon  
are kindly asked to write to the General Postulator:  
Via San Pio V, 55 - 00165 ROMA (Italy)  
postulationcassunzionist@gmail.com

## An authentic relic

At the request of the Postulator, Fr. Julio Navarro, Sr. Claire Rabitz explains how the recently printed images of Father d'Alzon with the prayer of intercession to obtain his beatification contain on the lower right side an **authentic relic** of our Venerable Founder. It's a question that people often ask us.

"The relic, says Sr. Claire, comes from the lining of a liturgical vestment belonging to Father d'Alzon. There existed other relics but their stock has run out. With the help of some of the sisters, I have made new ones in the form of little strips of cloth 2 cm by 1 cm from clothing having belonged to Father d'Alzon. I still have a few dozens.

As for the present images with an authentic relic, it was an associate laywoman who made them, Marie Clara Delacroix (*see photo*).

She spent many hours at it. She is very pleased to "work" for Father d'Alzon, so that he can become known and venerated.

It's meticulous work: she had to put the relic in place, then stick a transparent slip of paper over it to protect it. It's not difficult but it takes a lot



of patience and can become fastidious when it comes to 3000 images! Those who request and receive this image with the relic will appreciate it. We must also foresee in a special way a certain number of copies for the sick people who pray to Father d'Alzon for their healing and for the people who pray for the healing of others through the intercession of Father d'Alzon. Some people might laugh at this devotion: if they do, it's simply not for them! You should know that a lot of people ask for the image: it's the occasion to begin a dialogue and to explain who Father d'Alzon is and to put each thing in its place! A relic is not a sacrament, nor some magical object: it's a devotional means which requires first of all faith in Jesus Christ."

*Sr. Claire de la Croix Rabitz,  
Superior General of the Oblates of the Assumption,  
Religious Missionary Sisters  
Claire.rabitz@free.fr*

## YOU SAID IT!

**Centered on the Mission**

Because many articles in the recent issues of AA News were centered on the Mission to highlight what is said in our Rule of Life, **"The apostolate of our Congregation inserts our communities into the Church's mission of gathering all men and women into the People of God"** (no. 13), the letters and e-mails of our readers have gone in that same direction. Here are a few examples:

*"Assumptionists of yesterday (Pierre Santu, Paul Charpentier, Fernand Denis) and of today, you guide us by doing "apostolic spade-work" in these difficult times and by helping us to see beyond our suffering and our discouragement. Thank you. Here is a little help in the form of a check for the bulletin." A. Teillet (Southern France).*

*The Bicentennial of the birth of Father d'Alzon gives my wife and me the occasion to organize a missionary gathering in Lorques, particularly thanks to the help of Father Jean-Paul Périer-Muzet." Claudette et Michel Charrot (Lorques).*

*"The Assumption bulletin helps me to keep a missionary spirit in a small parish of the Var Region." S. Aponte (St-Mandrier-sur-mer, Var.)*

*"Returning from Vietnam where I was on vacation, I thank you for AA News which helps us to remain*

*open to the world. Pray for us." Antoine Thuc and Anne Dung (Region of Paris).*

*"I was in Brazzaville on vacation with my family. The ordination of the first Assumptionist from Brazzaville was a great missionary boost. My apostolate is in Turkey." Sr. Fruges, Oblate of the Assumption.*

*"I received the last issue of AA News. It's very rich in news about the missions. I immediately put the bulletin at the disposal of my confreres. Thank you and have a fruitful apostolate." Fr. François Nzanzu (Kinshasa).*

*"Thanks to the article on Madagascar (no. 20, pp. 20-21). I was able to understand what my friend Elisabeth has been doing there this past year. She is happy in that country: a clinic in the bush, meetings in villages, Christian base communities, etc." Elisabeth R-P (Region of Paris).*

*"Thank you for AA News. I will be in the US until the end of August. I hope you're in good health. You seem to be so in the photo." Anita M. (France).*

*"This new AA News testifies to the beautiful missionary vitality at the service of men and women under God's watchful eye." J.P. and J. Martin (France).*



At the Assumptionist International Pilgrimage to Lourdes in August 2010, many came to tell us how pleased they are to receive AA News by e-mail (submit requests to [assunzione@mcmlink.it](mailto:assunzione@mcmlink.it)) or to consult it in four languages at [www.assumptio.org](http://www.assumptio.org), because this openness to the world and to Assumption's daily missionary adventure seemed indispensable to them.

Does paragraph 18 of our Rule of Life not state: "From the very beginning, our apostolate has taken on various forms, in particular: teaching understood in the broadest sense of the word, studies, social communications, pilgrimages, ecumenism, parish ministry, apostolic movements of laypeople, social work, service to the younger Churches, etc. In keeping with Assumption's distinctive vocation, we must constantly make ourselves available and remain creative."

**May you all have a fruitful apostolate!**

**A.R.T.**

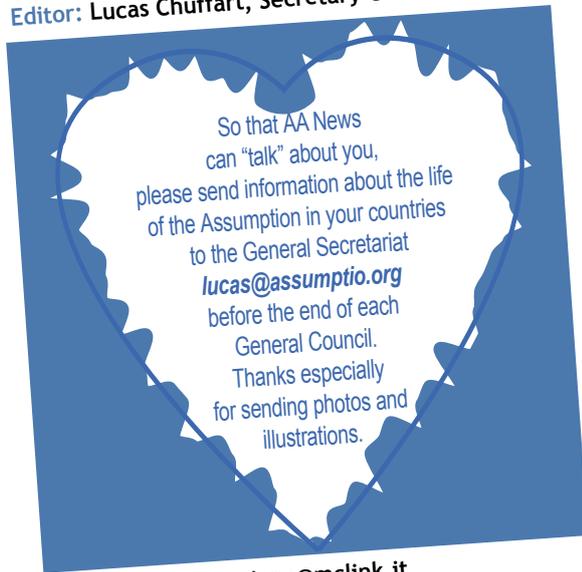
[lucas@assumptio.org](mailto:lucas@assumptio.org)

# NEXT ISSUE OF AA NEWS (JANUARY 2011)

- The celebration on November 13 of the Blessed Bulgarian Assumptionists
- The feast of the Venerable Father d'Alzon on November 21
- The Provincial Chapters throughout the Congregation



Editor: Lucas Chuffart, Secretary General



[Assunzione@mclink.it](mailto:Assunzione@mclink.it)

#### Translators:

Robert Fortin, English  
José Antonio Echaniz, Spanish  
Kees Krijnsen, Dutch

#### Proofreaders:

Julio Navarro, André Brombart  
and Cathy Rozé

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Loredana Giannetti

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AA News is also available at [www.assumptio.org](http://www.assumptio.org)

## The Assumption of Heaven



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|------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| 08/10/2010 | KERMARREC Ernest  | France | Layrac            | age 85 |
| 08/29/2010 | CHAUTAGNAT Robert | France | Ollioules Sur Mer | age 88 |
| 09/11/2010 | STEF Bernard      | France | Blaj              | age 93 |