



2010 Bicentennial Newsletter

Birth of Emmanuel d'Alzon August 30 and baptism September 2, 1810

www.assumption.org
www.alzon-2010.org

No. 7
September 2010

August 30 and September 2, 2010 celebrated at Le Vigan.



“Everything doesn’t have to come from Rome,” such was my answer to Fr. Vincent Cabanac when he complained that nothing had been foreseen at Le Vigan to mark the bicentennial of the birth of Father d’Alzon.

The General Curia had foreseen festivities in October, and I had trouble seeing how we could bring together a lot of people during the summer vacations. With the help of *Le Pèlerin*, Fr. Vincent therefore organized for his readers a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Father d’Alzon, presided by Cardinal Paul Poupard. For her part, Sister Claire of the Cross, Superior General of the Oblates of the Assumption, had foreseen at those same dates a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Father d’Alzon with her General Council. And she had had the good idea of inviting the General Council of the Assumptionists. The parish and the municipality of Le Vigan, honored by the visit of a cardinal, took to this idea very favorably. Even though it was a Monday and a weekday, there were at least one hundred-and-fifty persons in the church of Saint Peter for the Eucharistic celebration. Bishop Robert Wattebled of Nîmes came to concelebrate with Cardinal Poupard, as did Fr. Christian Salendres, pastor of Le Vigan, as well as the General Council of the Assumptionists. After the Mass and the souvenir photo in front of the

church, Eric Doulcier, the mayor of Le Vigan, welcomed Cardinal Poupard, 196 years after the stay of another cardinal, Giulio Gabrielli, who had been forced to reside in Le Vigan by Napoleon and who was offered hospitality by Viscount Henri d’Alzon. He also wished Cardinal Poupard a happy birthday, for he too was born on August 30 and was celebrating his 80 years. The Community of Townships in the Le Vigan area, who bought the house where Fr. d’Alzon was born, was represented by its Vice President, Régis Bayle, who presented the program of the festivities that were foreseen for October 10 and who invited everyone to participate. That day, after Mass, a plaque under the bust of Fr. d’Alzon at La Condamine was unveiled and a lunch was offered to all the participants, followed by a concert in the church of St. Peter by the Cévennes Chamber Orchestra with a program adapted to the celebration (there was even a piece composed by the conductor François Gilles for the event). Also, in the context of the European Heritage Days, Saturday September 18, Professor Gérard Cholvy gave a lecture at La Condamine on Father d’Alzon’s faithfulness to his Cévenol roots.

Fr. Jean Daniel Gullung, A.A.



The two General Councils met intimately on September 2 with the pastor of Le Vigan for a celebration around the baptistery. Born on a Thursday, Emmanuel d'Alzon was baptized the following Sunday by his uncle, Father Daniel Liron d'Airolles, to whom he succeeded twenty-nine years later as Vicar General of the diocese of Nîmes. It should be noted that his parents insisted on giving him the names of Emmanuel, Marie, Joseph and Maurice (the names of his godmother and grandaunt Louise Marie Joseph Daudé d'Alzon, who had adopted and raised at La Condamine her niece, Jeanne Clémence de Faventine, mother of Emmanuel, and of his godfather Jean Maurice de Faventine, his maternal uncle). At the beginning of the Mass on October 10, Bishop Wattebled unveiled a plaque in the baptistery which carries a reproduction of the baptismal record translated into French. The celebration of the Word, begun in the baptistery, was followed by the Eucharistic celebration in the chapel at l'Espérou, built by Fr. d'Alzon in honor of Our Lady of Happiness. We were truly happy to have been able to live these two days of August 30 and September 2 on the spot.

Fr. Jean Daniel Gullung, A.A.

Echoes of celebrations, meetings, animations on the occasion of the 2010 Bicentennial

Argentina

Sunday August 29, the day before the commemoration of the birth of the Venerable Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon, we celebrated a solemn Mass in the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes (in Buenos Aires). Just before, the students from the Assumptionist schools of "Nuestra Señora de Lourdes" and "San Román" had placed around the altar the works they had produced over a period of time on the founder of the Congregation, and which were then blessed along with the posters of Fr. d'Alzon which were subsequently placed in the two colleges and in various areas of the parish.

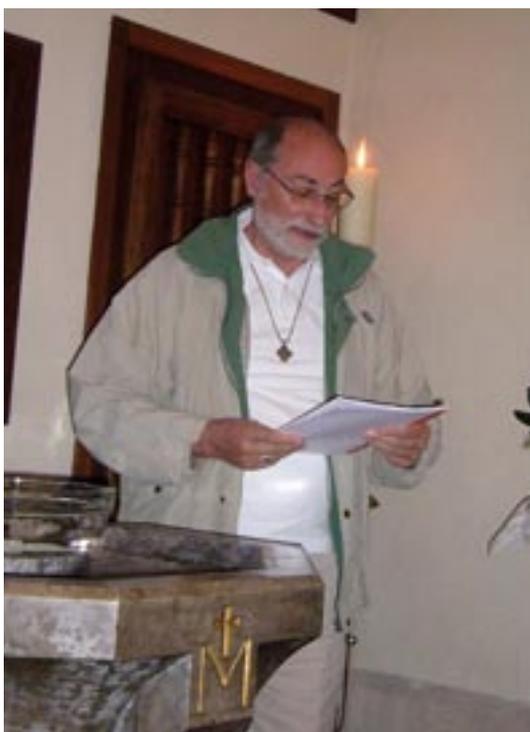
Videos on Fr. d'Alzon at the "San Román Institute"

On the feast of the Assumption, in the context of the Bicentennial of Fr. d'Alzon, the San Román Institute made a video which, during the week of August 15, was used by the students, their parents and the personnel of the Primary and Secondary levels during the formation period in the morning. That was "the material we contributed to make known the 200 years since our Founder was born," said Fr. Juan Carlos Marzolla, A.A. in a message that accompanies these pictures. In five videos of almost five minutes each, the interpretations of the students, combined with the drawings, recalled the life of Fr. d'Alzon and connected it with today's reality.

The videos may be seen on the following websites:

http://www.sanroman.esc.edu.ar/novedades_60.html

http://www.nsi.edu.ar/v_p_d.html



Assumptionist Centennial Celebrations in Argentina

During the week of September 26 to October 2, celebrations took place commemorating the arrival of the Assumptionists in Argentina. In the context of these festivities, there were meetings of the Superiors of the Province as well as of the religious and laypeople (who stayed with families), to conclude with an evening of farewell for all the delegations. The last commemorative events of our Bicentennial Year will take place on November 21, the feast of Christ the King and the anniversary of the death of the Venerable Fr. d'Alzon.

Spain

The bulletin *Venga tu Reino* described at length the events that took place in the Province: the provincial meeting in Elorrio June 30 to July 2, animated by Frs. Julio Navarro and Jean Daniel Gullung, the theme of which was the most significant moments on Fr. d'Alzon's road to holiness; the celebrations of August 15; the meetings of religious and laypeople; the community celebrations on September 2, the two-hundredth anniversary of Fr. d'Alzon's baptism; and finally, a 10-page report (on a total of 28 pages in the bulletin), together with numerous photos, recounting the pilgrimage in the footsteps of Fr. d'Alzon to Nîmes, Le Vigan and Lavagnac.

Northern Europe

On August 29 all of the Assumption Family and their friends, invited by a terrific handout prepared in common, gathered for a Eucharistic celebration in the church of Saint Gertrude in Louvain. The big church was full and the celebration was followed by a lunch served at the community of Demi-rue (Halvestraat / Half-Street).

Togo

In the editorial of the first Bulletin, *Assumptionists of West Africa*, Fr. Jean-Paul Sagadou wrote: "The desire to honor the founder of the Augustinians of the Assumption on the occasion of the bicentennial of his birth: that was the origin of this bulletin. Installed since September 2006 in Sokodé, Togo, the Assumptionist community wanted to mark, in its own way, this jubilee year." The bulletin then went on to present the biography of the Founder and the Assumptionist apostolates.

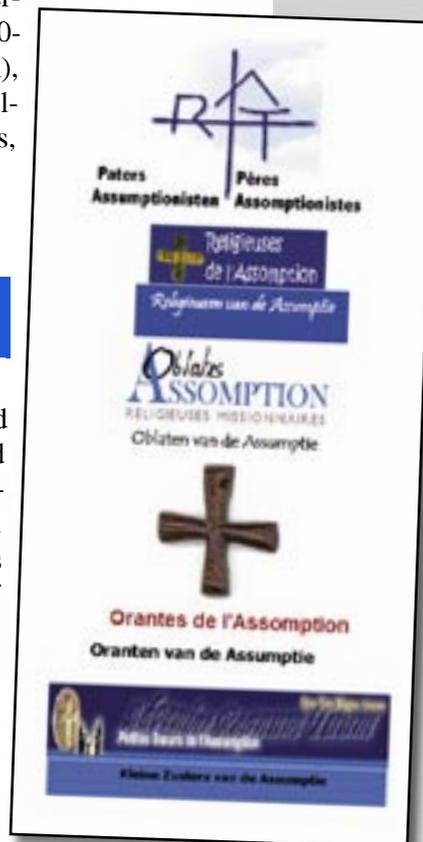
A pilgrimage in the footsteps of Father d'Alzon while staying at home!

For many years, groups of religious, sisters and laypeople follow "in the footsteps of Father d'Alzon" in Nîmes and Le Vigan. And in nice weather, the bus climbs as high as l'Espérou. Some extend their visit to Lavagnac and Montagnac, to Montpellier and Lamalou les Bains, to Our Lady of Rochefort and to the Carthusian Monastery in Valbonne. Paris and Rome are also on the program of groups who organize a big European tour. To be sure, the organizers of these tours carefully prepare all these visits. To obtain information, they would sometimes write to our archivist, Fr. Jean-Paul Périer-Muzet,

who would obviously refer them to his book, **Volume 17 of the Letters of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon (Rome 2005): Geographical index, Pilgrimage to the sites.**

During this bicentennial year, why would those who are unable to travel not be able to make an imaginary pilgrimage to the sites **by reading Volume 17 of the Letters of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon, pages 491 to 661?** In the Appendix there are even three pages about a spiritual pilgrimage taken by Fr. d'Alzon between September 2, 1810 and November 5, 1880, plus information about the proceedings regarding

his canonization, starting with the opening of the diocesan informative inquiry on February 1, 1931.





DRC Congo

The bulletin of the Province of Africa of September 2010 gave echoes of the bicentennial by speaking of the solidarity shown by sending to Kasando, in the southern part of the diocese that has suffered enormously from the war, a delegation of Oblates, Assumptionists and laypeople who brought humanitarian help they had collected from the inhabitants in Butembo.

It was decided to close the bicentennial on August 24, 2010. A play was staged by the d'Alzon Missionary Children, and a Mass was celebrated in Kitatumba

by Bishop Sikuli.

According to an e-mail received by Fr. Lucas Chuffart, the Oblates in the Congo had a sarong made to mark the Bicentennial! "All of the houses are marking the bicentennial of V.R. Fr. d'Alzon in various ways. Today we just received a sample of the bicentennial sarong from the OA. It's terrific." Sahani Ferdinand, L.A. [Lay Associate].

France

At the invitation of the Assumptionists of the parish of Saint Theresa in Montpellier, the historian Louis Secondy will give a lecture on Friday, October 21 on the theme: *Father d'Alzon and his sons in the Hérault area*.

The Provincial Chapter, which will take place in Valpré, will close with an unusual celebration in the evening of Saturday, November 20: **Commitment in the Assumptionist Lay Alliance**, according to the "way of life of laypeople connected to Assumption." After a period of initial development, of formation to the Assumptionist spirituality, and of reflection and prayer, some laypeople asked the Provincial to commit themselves, and to perform a public act that would express their attachment to the Assumptionists as well as their desire to live by its spirit and to participate in its mission. The end of the bicentennial year will come to an end on Sunday, November 21, during the televised Mass from Valpré.

Diocese of Nîmes: a colloquium open to everyone was organized under the chairmanship of Bishop Robert Wattebled of Nîmes in the Art Square of Nîmes on Wednesday, September 29, 2010.

On the program: Introduction of the lecturers, then a brief **overview of the life of Father d'Alzon** by Catherine Marès of the Nîmes Academy. **Father d'Alzon's roots** by Gérard Cholvy, historian and professor emeritus at Paul Valéry University. **From the Bonne Presse to Bayard Presse, the place of the Bayard group in the world of the press today** by Vincent Fauvel, in charge of relations with the Church for Bayard. This was followed by two films, one on the bimonthly *La Documentation Catholique*, the other on the daily newspaper *La Croix*. **Father d'Alzon and faith in the public square** by Father Dominique Greiner, A.A., editor-in-chief of *La Croix*.

The Bicentennial show:

"Emmanuel d'Alzon: a man with fire in his heart."

The five schools under the direction of the Oblates of the Assumption in France organized a show on the life of Emmanuel d'Alzon and on the Assumption in the world of today. This show combined theater, song, dance and the multimedia. About sixty young actors (students from the elementary, secondary and lycée levels) from Paris, Angers, Bordeaux, and Nîmes produced this show with their teachers and played it on five occasions in Nîmes on October 8, in Paris on October 19, in Evry on October 20, in Segré on October 21, and in Le Bouscat on October 22.

