

PETIT ECHO

2021 / 09

1125



MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA



SINCE DECEMBER 1912

PETIT ECHO

Society of the
Missionaries of Africa

2021 / 09 n° 1125

10 ISSUES YEARLY

PUBLISHED BY

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY

Editorial Board

Francis Barnes, Asst. Gen.

André Simonart, Sec. Gen.

Lowrent Kamwaza

Salvador Muñoz Ledo

Editor

Salvador Muñoz Ledo

petitecho@mafr.org

Translations

Jean-Paul Guibila

Steve Ofonikot

Jean-Pierre Sauge

Administrative Secretary

Addresses and Dispatch

Odon Kipili

gmg.sec.adm@mafr.org

Editorial Services

Guy Theunis

Dominique Arnauld

Correspondents

Provincial/Sector Secretaries

Msola, Rome

Internet

Philippe Docq

gmg.webmaster@mafr.org

Archives

Photographs provided by the

M.Afr Archives are subject to

permission for any public use

Postal Address

Padri Bianchi, Via Aurelia 269,

00165 Roma, Italia

Phone **39 06 3936 34211

Stampa Istituto Salesiano Pio XI

Tel. 06.78.27.819

E-mail: tipolito@donbosco.it

Finito di stampare aprile 2021

EDITOR'S WORD

When I asked the question, what is a missionary on Google, I got 19,200,000 results in 0.50 seconds. Certainly, this is not a very thorough search on the paradigms of missionary life, but it has the effect of letting me see how the image of the mission and of the missionary is as varied as the people who proclaim the gospel and those who receive it.

Wikipedia defines a missionary as follows: "He has a call to mission and a mandate given by a missionary organisation or church ... In practical terms, missionaries share the gospel on an individual level by giving their testimony...". This is a simplistic definition in which the word gospel appears almost accidentally, but it has the merit of reminding me of the obligatory union between the words: call, mandate, sharing, gospel, without which the definition of missionary and mission is possible.

In Jesus Christ, the image of the mission and the missionary is perfect. Our faith in him gives us the right dimension of everything; the hope he gives us pushes us to the ends of the earth and the charity in which he immerses us unites us to those who need God's love the most.

Salvador Muñoz Ledo

Cover:

Nouvelle Espérance, Bujumbura.

PHOTO SALVADOR MUÑOZ-LEDO

Charles Lavigerie: What is needed now are men with an apostolic spirit.

Towards the 29th Chapter

The 29th General Chapter of our Missionary Society is underway. It is the 29th since the first Chapter was held in October 1874 under the presidency of the founder himself. At that time, the Society was only six years old and had 52 members. Seventeen capitulants attended that first Chapter. The 29th Chapter will bring together 42 capitulants, but we have had much larger Chapters in the history of the Society in terms of members. For example, the 1967 Chapter had 75 participants.

The Chapter is the highest authority in the Society for all its spiritual and temporal interests, as stated in CL 157. According to CL 190:

- its mission is to evaluate the activity of the Society during the period elapsed since the preceding Chapter; to give general orientations for the government of the Society;
- to take decisions which foster missionary activity in accordance with the charism of the Society;
- to elect the Superior General and his Council.

In this capacity, it is the legislative power of the Society and can modify the articles of the Constitutions and Laws (CL 189).

Didier Sawadogo
Assistant Général



Beyond the juridical terms, a Chapter is always a time of grace and renewal, allows to be available to hear the cry of the earth, the cry of human beings, and welcome with docility the inspirations of the Spirit. Our dream is that this 29th Chapter is for the capitu-



FOREWORD

lants and the confreres in general:

- a time of prayer;
- a time of mutual listening and attention to the signs of the times; a time of detachment and openness;
- a time of welcoming the light that God gives us;
- a valuable time of verification, reflection and orientation in a common search for the will of God for our Society.

Through the General Consultation, we felt a deep desire to maintain in an inclusive and participatory way the original freshness of the fruitfulness of our Society awakened by the experience of the 150-year jubilee. Thus, the General Council has chosen the method of SEE - JUDGE - ACT, a well-known and straightforward approach that will allow the involvement of all.

In the SEE, we want to have a global view through a critical observation of life and reality. It is a stage that has already begun with the General Consultation. It continues with the Pre-Capitular Assemblies and will continue during the first days of the Chapter with the appropriation by the capitulants of the syntheses, the report of the Superior General and that of the General Bursar.

The JUDGE is the discernment stage, the interpretation of reality in the light of faith. As a Society, we must discern the calls of the Spirit.

And finally, ACT, which consists of responding to the situation with concrete proposals and adherence to the decisions taken, trusting in the Spirit and the confreres.

This issue of the Petit Echo is dedicated to the preparation of the Chapter, to what we have experienced and what we are experiencing. After the General Consultation, which saw the effective and generous participation of the communities in all the Provinces and sections, we are now, since mid-September, in the stage of the Pre-Capitular Assemblies. The personal contributions of some confreres to the General Consultation are included. They deal with different topics of concern



that the General Council, with the authors' permission, wished to share with the whole Society to enrich reflection. Allow me to present some of these contributions.

I begin with Father Jean Moriaud, a veteran of Burkina Faso and former resident at the Maison Lavigerie in Billère. He was the first to send his contribution to the General Council. Did he sense that the Lord was inviting him to take his place at his side in eternal glory to follow the Chapter? He leaves us a message in the form of a testament that challenges us about the place and the animation of the elders in our Society. He also gives us some guidelines for a participative approach open to the action of the Spirit in light of the Chapter.

Charles Bailleul is an old confrere who worked in Mali where he is affectionately called Ba ble, the red father. He is also a former director of the Falajè Language Center, author of several books in Bambara, of which a Bambara-French, French-Bambara dictionary is highly appreciated. In his contribution, he challenges us to learn the local language and asks us about the means deployed to reach this objective today.

Herman Cornelissen, a veteran of Burundi, proposes a working method that would start with a careful and critical study of the decisions of the previous Chapter and an examination of the implementation of the strategic plan in order to identify the strong and weak points of the Society in all aspects of its life: internal organization, mission, spirituality, community life, formation. In his approach, he proposes fidelity to the Spirit of our founder as a guiding principle for our exchanges. It is in this Spirit that we can look to the future with hope.

Sean O'Leary, a former missionary in South Africa and moderator of the 2004 Chapter, drew on his experience of moderating Chapters in different congregations to propose a simple method, tried and tested and known by the majority of confreres in order to encourage a participative and inclusive approach. This method is none other than See - Judge - Act.

Luc Lefief, former formator and former coordinator of ongoing formation, shares his distrust of well-organized Chapters like synods with



FOREWORD

their Instrumentum laboris. Such organization may not leave enough room for the involvement of the Holy Spirit. Inspired by the letters of the General Council on personal and community conversion, missionary and pastoral, he proposes conversion as the inspiration and guiding principle of the Chapter. It would act as a leaven in the dough of all projects through a three-step process that you will discover in his article.

John Gould, Superior of the Asia Chapter (SOA), reminds us of the need to take into account the impact of the Covid pandemic and its long-term consequences in our deliberations: what do we think about mission when countries are locked down, parish ministry when churches are closed and families are locked in? His contribution seems pessimistic, but it is a call to radicality to reconnect with the Spirit of Jesus in a world that needs prophets.

Finally, the article by Frank Nolan, one of our Society's historians, challenges us on the issue of the Society's representatives at the Chapter. He gives us historical information on the evolution of the procedure for electing deputies. He asks whether it is not time to restore the traditional right of all confreres to vote for their representatives, rather than leaving it to the Pre-Capitular Assemblies to proceed with the election when no one has reached an absolute majority in the general consultation counted at the opening of the assembly. These and other contributions await you in this special issue of Chapter 2022.

With this 29th Chapter, the Lord invites us once again to advance into deep waters and cast our nets in the world of today. For us, Missionaries of Africa, this world of today is first of all Africa, whose evangelization is the *raison d'être* of our Society. She will always be in the heart of our deliberations, she who today is torn by insecurity, violence and terrorism. In the wake of the Chapter, we make our own the words and the wishes of our founder, who wrote: "Peace, I repeat, it is peace that is needed above all inside Africa! Providence has given it everything else: a sky without equal, a diversity of climates, an abundance of water, the fertility of the earth, the fecundity of the populations. All it lacks for its prosperity is harmony, mutual respect for the rights of all, tranquility ; in a word, peace". One hundred and thirty

FOREWORD



years later, these words are still relevant today. This is our prayer for our dear continent.

May the Lord grant us the grace to listen to the Holy Spirit in order to discover new ways of mission today.

Sawadogo Didier
General Assistant





Some notes concerning the Language Centres in view of the next Chapter of 2022



The following wise words come from our Founder: “That you never lose sight of the character and spirit of your Society. This character is to get closer to the people by all the local customs: first of all, by language, by clothing, by food, to be all things to all people in order to save some”.

Concerning the study of languages, our first-generation of confrères did their best wherever they were sent. The archives in Rome and the libraries of the language centres bear abundant witness to this. But it must be recognized that the decision to found Language Centres (around 1958) was a most beneficial decision.

Where do we stand in 2021? (we were 13 or 14 directors to present our pedagogical methods at a mini-meeting in Nairobi in 1978). It remains fundamental that the six-month stage with a full-time animator is still all important for making rapid progress in mastering the language and immersing ourselves in the culture of the people to whom we are sent.

With the decline in vocations, the Falajè Language Centre has been without a full-time coordinator for the past ten years, leaving the initia-



tion to the language to an experienced but ageing instructor, who finally passed away in 2020. This course has recently stopped welcoming members of other missionary societies. This was a valuable service to them.

Is this really the solution? Thank God, vocations are increasing, and there are more births than deaths. Is there no way of finding someone among the former students who is interested in this work, even if it means giving them an excellent linguistic and anthropological formation? On the whole, many confreres of African origin have proved to be more gifted than we are at speaking Bambara fluently.

In many African countries, the elite, political or otherwise, whatever their religion, are grateful to us for taking an interest in each of the national languages, not hesitating to grant us honorary titles. Those confreres contributed to the understanding between the political authorities and Church leaders by valuing the culture of all ethnic groups.

It would be a shame not to have such centres as references in countries like Mali, where Islam is in the majority.

May the Holy Spirit enlighten you in your subsequent decisions of the next Chapter.

Fr. Charles Bailleul,

former director of the CEL of Falajè from 1970 to 1986

Reflections for the 2022 Chapter in Rome



1. It seems to me that it would be good to dedicate the first week of the Chapter to re-examine carefully all that was decided during the last Chapter and ask ourselves what, exactly, has been implemented and to what extent has it been realized.

For the points that received positive feedback, we should ask ourselves what elements contributed to its success, even if in part. Then ask ourselves if it would be appropriate or beneficial to continue this project by making the necessary adaptations or give it up in favour of another project. Most importantly, never start a project for which you do not foresee the provision of sufficient and trained personnel in the long term.

As for the tasks that have not yet been implemented, what are the reasons behind this: finances, lack of or incompetent personnel, the fact that it is not possible locally, lack of commitment, etc.?

A similar evaluation should be made regarding activities that were well and truly launched yet have not produced the expected results or



were abandoned or stopped. What are the reasons and causes? Local circumstances, bad timing, ill-prepared confreres, lack of continuity in personnel, did not respond to real, local needs, etc.?

Such an exercise will provide a lot of material for discussion and reflection.

2. Thereafter, examine the strengths and weaknesses of our Society: in terms of organization, the spirit of apostolic commitment of our confreres, spiritual life, working together, and our ability to adapt to the real needs in the African world, etc...

3. All this will depend, above all on the fundamental question: are we still living in and working with the same spirit of our founder? A spirit of total and lifelong commitment to the Kingdom of God in Africa, total surrender to Christ, a solid and ardent love for the person of Jesus and Africans, sustained by a personal and community prayer life. Are we still ready to accept any task, even those that do not appeal to us and requires from us a total abandonment of all that is dear to us: family, city or village, parish, situation or work that is rather pleasant and suits us well, studies, titles, money, etc...?

Conclusion: if in all sincerity, we can answer this question in the affirmative, then we can look at the future of our Society with confidence, because in this case, He will never abandon us. He will always be with us. The delicate question is: "Are we still with Him?"

Herman Cornelissen



A possible guideline for Chapter 2022



Background

With the invitation from the Generalate in front of me, I tried to concentrate on how to contribute to our next Chapter. At some point, there were too many trees obscuring the forest. Many themes and topics caught my attention: the Plenary Council of Kampala, which needs to be elaborated (I have not found the report); the jubilee of 150 years of faithfulness to our tradition; our charism regarding our spirituality, community life and mission; the ageing process vis-à-vis the 30 new confreres who join us every year; our relationship with the Islamic world; the special year of the Mission inaugurated by Pope Francis; his social encyclicals *Laudato si* and *Fratelli tutti* (JPIC and ED); the pandemic and its impact on the post-Covid-19 era; and all the global issues that affect our social, economic and religious life. The task is immense...

Writing a plan beforehand, from which one can choose and complete, reminds one of the *Instrumentum laboris* of synods and councils. Large gatherings are prepared down to the last detail in ecclesiastical institutions,

so much so that there is often no room left for the Holy Spirit to descend upon the participants. This does not facilitate a new Pentecost... but there too, He blows where He wills.

I re-read the invitation and came across the following sentence, which offered me a perspective: During Lent, we meditated at length on personal and community conversion and the implication of this process pastoral and missionary conversion on us.

The question is now about spirituality! It is about personal, community, pastoral and missionary conversion. Perhaps this is where we need to look for the perspective that will enlighten our next Chapter. The emphasis in previous Chapters has always been on spirituality and conversion, especially in the 2016 Chapter, where spirituality is figured in the first chapter of the Capitular Acts. I thought that all the themes mentioned above would run the risk of being reduced to technical ways of doing things, and not radiate any depth or evangelical value if they were not driven by a spirit, an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, an enthusiasm, a breath, a call. When I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, if I do not have charity (enthusiasm, breath, etc.) I am no more than sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. When I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, when I have the fullness of faith, a faith to move mountains, if I do not have love (...), I am nothing. 1 Cor 13, 1-2.

I asked myself how to maintain this enthusiasm at all levels of our Society:

- How to keep this evangelical spirit alive in the communities of elderly confreres who in their time honestly did all they could to live it to the fullest, but in whom the temptation to rest on their laurels is just as strong, as if they no longer belonged totally to the missionaries of Africa: 'It doesn't concern us anymore...'

- How can we keep this evangelical spirit alive among the confreres who are still active, who have witnessed so many changes in all domains, and who most often assume important and diverse responsibilities while running the Society?



- How can we keep this evangelical spirit alive among the young confreres who have yet to prove themselves in our Society and who are faced with so many possible choices that they risk being diverted from it? The majority of them belong to the Third World and are looking for their way in a Society of which the original structure is Western.

- How do we form aspiring Missionaries of Africa in this evangelical spirit?

A possible guideline for Chapter 2022

It would perhaps be advisable to create a moment for personal and community conversion during Chapter 2022, which would act like yeast in the dough of all the projects. Many young people desire this, but they find themselves alone and lack support when they want to put it into practice.

The Society has always been convinced that a life of prayer and conversion is the basis of the fruitfulness of its pastoral and social commitment. The thirty-day retreat at Mours, at Villa Cavaletti and in Jerusalem, as well as the various sessions of ongoing formation, bear witness to this. But taking conversion as the primary inspiration for a Chapter goes much further. For the good reason that contemporary culture is completely secularized and hedonistic in its inspiration. We lack an antidote that protects us from the postmodern spirit. The media and websites spread 'fake news' which, like jammers, influence the modus vivendi in a direction far removed from the evangelical spirit. The life of celibates consecrated for the Kingdom of God is also brushed aside as old-fashioned and anti-cultural.

Conversion can neither be imposed nor forced. It is a gift from God. As capitulants, how can we present this theme? How can we transmit it to all confreres? Do we want to reproduce the event of Pentecost? How did the twelve apostles make this transmission? The Twelve were first converted, and only then did they venture out of the cenacle. Faith is transmitted only if we start living it.

Jesus recommends that we make the talents we have received bear fruit. The gift of conversion is not a *Deus ex machina*. He, therefore,

expects us to be committed.

This conversion, which will later be called reformation, is obviously not just about going back to the past; it is just as much exploration with a keen sense of creativity towards the future. Furthermore, the vocabulary presents a problem. Conversion belongs to the biblical vocabulary and is outdated, reform also; for the moment, transformation is "in". Transformation is opposed to formation. A reformation implies a return to the previous form. Transformation does not discard the previous forms but overcomes (Trans) and transcends them.

Therefore, we must be conscious of the language we will use in the presentation of conversion as the primary inspiration for Chapter 2022. Be converted and open your heart to the gospel (Ash Wednesday, formula for the imposition of ashes) might be a good title. Or shall we opt for: Let the Spirit of God transform you and open your heart to the gospel ?

Method:

The letter from the General Council also requested that a method appropriate for the work expected of the next Chapter be proposed.

This method could be carried out in three stages:

Begin with a reflection on what the terms conversion and transformation mean for a Society like ours. Is it really necessary? Is this the right time? Is such an approach appropriate for a Chapter? Jesus began his public life with these words: The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe in the Gospel (Mk 1:15).

From the various topics proposed, choose the priorities, taking into account our charism and the needs of our time. Are we ready to face them, do we have enough people and do we have the expertise? Are there urgent calls in this direction? The fruits of the previous chapters may inspire the method to be followed in making these decisions.

Finally, each topic will be scrutinized, and we will ask ourselves, very realistically and in the light of the Gospel, where we need con-



version and transformation to undertake this project. It may be an analysis of the spirit of these times, as opposed to the Spirit of Jesus. The words conversion and trans-formation must be understood in their broadest sense: conversion (transformation) of mentalities, ways of thinking, convictions, and biases. Conversion also in the way we live our faith, our hope and our charity.

Luc Lefief



A working method for the next Chapter

(Excerpt)



I was particularly struck by your letter concerning the preparation of the 2022 Chapter.

Let's face it, not all confreres are in a condition to come or participate in a Community Council anymore, so it is easier to decide everything without consulting together! But is that way of doing things with the elders still valid today? Are we still considered a fully-fledged White Father when we are appointed to a retirement home?

During my stay in Africa or in metropolitan France, community life was the motor of our common spiritual life, mission, and life in the Church. Community life was the breeding ground for our common work. The regular house council would organize community life, pastoral work, spiritual life, and common task! Evaluations were very important for continuity and sometimes the adjustment of the community project we established together. We talked about it with the regional, with the bishop. It was our missionary life as White Fathers....

I discovered, through your letter, that the Council of Kampala invited us to look for ideas for community life, spirituality and mission. It is all connected, linked together in our missionary charism. Our " All things



to all " is there.

You asked for a work method for the next Chapter. I was deeply involved in a method (of which I have forgotten the name) in Chad on the diocesan level in Moundou and on the national level with the ACE (*Action Catholique des Enfants*). The bishop had led, with him, a dozen priests and sisters to Brazzaville for a formation to launch the pastoral work of the Basic Communities. I felt comfortable and confident in the diocesan pastoral team and the national chaplaincy of ACE. Unfortunately, the bishop was killed in the process.

Here is what I remember when we were doing formations:

- 1) A particular time of invocation of the Spirit (He is the one who directs everything).
- 2) The present situation (we go to war with the men we have, and for what).;
- 3) What we would like to do ideally, in our dreams;
- 4) What we could really achieve;
- 5) Plan specific activities within a specific time frame;
- 6) Foresee an evaluation that will be useful for the next phase of the project.

Jean Moriaud



A brief personal note about the topics proposed for the Chapter

(March 14 2021)



It suddenly struck me the other night that, at least here in SOA, we completely failed to give any consideration to the effects of the pandemic and the long-term consequences for the world. I think we made a big mistake.

I wrote to the confreres of SOA this time last year, quoting the passage from the book of Daniel that we read in mass the other day - 'we have no prophet, no priest, no leader, nowhere to offer sacrifice'

What is mission with countries closed down? What is parish ministry with churches closed and families locked down? What use are we as priests in these circumstances? Have we formed people to be able to manage without us? How is clericalism challenged? What kind of men do we need to serve effectively in the world as it is? Is our formation programme fit for purpose? What can small communities in Africa show to the rest of the Church?



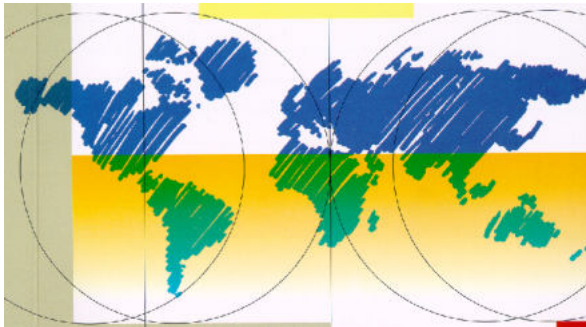
Whatever topics will be discussed at the Chapter and whatever decisions are made, whatever vision comes out of it, the pandemic is the context and the lens. What are the lessons we have to learn from it if we are to understand too the challenges we will face and find a way to meet them?

As St Paul wrote to the community in Corinth: ‘the world as we know it is passing away’ (1 Cor 7: 31).

In this changed and changing world, how is our Charism to be made alive and relevant?

I think of the generation before ours, who lived through two world wars and then end of colonialism, which few saw coming and even fewer were ready for. I remember Konrad Berg, one of the German Fidei Donum priests in Mpika, Zambia, telling me that he read through the parish diary in Chilonga for 1964 - and there was no mention of Independence.

We have lived through the Cold war, the formation of the European Union. Now there is a widespread and growing reaction against globalization. We have lived through the Second Vatican Council and its reforms. Now with the child abuse scandals and cover-up scandals,



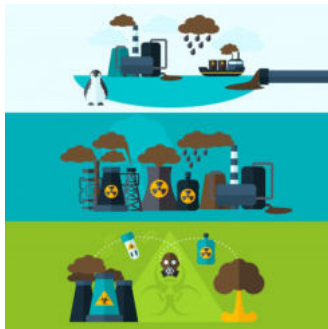
there is a growing reaction against the Church, and within it there is a strong movement back to pre-Vatican 2 days.

I am reminded of the scene in ‘Titanic’ where the orchestra played and the priest prayed while the ship sank – and most of the lifeboats were half empty.

There is another striking ship image these days; the sight of luxury cruise liners being driven on to the beach in Turkey and in India to be cut up for scrap – no longer wanted, too expensive to maintain and incapable of adaption for another purpose.

I was thinking that the next Chapter would be more of the same, but it might need to be pretty radical.

John Gould





A Methodology for the 2022 Chapter



Having been a Moderator for a Chapter and a Plenary Council and having been a Moderator for a number of other congregations; I have a keen interest in different models used. A methodology can lead to a successful outcome or it can lead to frustration and a lack of decision making. There was a fair bit of criticism of the methodology used in the last Chapter. The ‘positive input for positive outcome’ method of discovery, dream, decision and execution, was neither understood nor efficient according to a number of delegates and confreres. The methodology used should be understood by the whole Society and not only those that attend the Chapter.



In this regard, I would favour a simple, tried and tested method such as SEE JUDGE and ACT. This method is well known throughout the Society.

The **SEE** has already begun with the December 8th 2020 launch by the General Council to identify possible topics. Everyone can feel part of this and feel they can make an input. As topics are identified, I suspect there will be further discussion throughout the Society to clarify what aspects of each topic identified needs to be addressed? This is Phase One of SEE.

Phase Two will be the Pre-Capitular meetings. Here there is need to establish a link between what comes up in Phase One and these Pre-Capitular meetings. In other words all Pre-Capitular meetings should be working on the same major issues. Other topics may also emerge at these meetings from each individual Pre-Capitular.



The first week of the Chapter can fine tune the work done in Phase One and Two. This would constitute Phase Three and hopefully give a good overview of the issues the Confreres throughout the Society would like to see addressed at the Chapter. It is further enhanced by the Superior General's report given at the beginning of the Chapter.

The **JUDGE** is largely the work of the Chapter and should be given two weeks. Here the work would take place in groups and agreements reached in plenary. Each group could work on one or two major topics. Not all groups need to discuss every subject. This allows for plenty of time for serious work to be done. It also allows for sufficient time for plenary discussion; something I feel has been lacking in the past. There is need for a mechanism that allows participants to at least table issues that may not be covered by the identified topics.

The **ACT** is the work of the following six years (2022 to 2028) to be driven by the new General Council. A week ought to be given over to this 'Do It Phase' in much the same way the 2016 Chapter did it. However, some discussion needs to take place around what happens in the event the ACT cannot be carried out as planned. In other words it is no harm to foresee a plan 'B' or a modified plan 'A' as well.

In the two Chapters I attended, the spiritual days of input were well



presented and appreciated. The same cannot be said for the ‘Invited Speakers’; which often turned out to be an unnecessary distraction and a waste of valuable time.

In conclusion, I submit these thoughts as humble contributions towards finding an inclusive and participatory methodology as possible for the 2022 Chapter; a methodology that is clear and easy to follow.

I wish you all the best for Chapter 2022!

Seán O'Leary



The British sector responds to the GC letter announcing the Chapter

(Excerpt)



A General Chapter is the supreme authority of the Society. As representative of all the members of the Society, its function is to define the common rules and give instructions to the elected General Council for the administration of the Society during their term of office. Ideally, all members of the Society should take part but obviously this is not possible so they elect delegates to represent themselves. It is of the essence of a Chapter that it truly represents all the Society's members as far as possible.

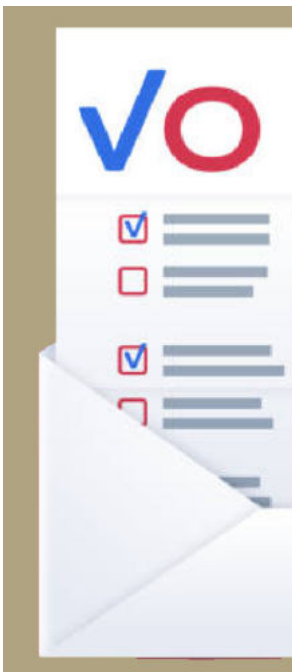
The Society's first General Chapter was held in 1869, only two years after its foundation. Apart from the Vicar General, Fr Deguerry, and members of his council, and those appointed by the Cardinal, the members were elected by all the professed members of the Congregation aged twenty-four years and over. In 1894, the first after the death of the Cardinal, apart from seven ex officio members and the provincials, the rest of the delegates were chosen by all the missionaries. There have always been a majority of elected members and popular election was the norm.



This used to be safeguarded by the Constitutions.

The first time the popular vote was threatened was in the Chapter of 1954. A commission was appointed to review the convocation of future Chapters. It proposed that if delegates were not chosen on the first ballot, they should be chosen by the Provincial and Regional Assemblies. Two reasons were given for the change. It was said that confrères knew only a limited number of the eligible missionaries. Secondly it would reduce expenditure. The proposal was passed by the General Assembly on a show of hands without discussion. However, it was not put into effect in the next edition of the Constitutions. Either the Canonists revising the Constitutions, or the Holy See to whom they were submitted for approval, maintained the existing custom.

Nevertheless, the traditional system of elections, which had been maintained throughout the first ninety-nine years of the life of the Society, was abandoned in 1967. The capitular documents for 1967 state (page 360 paragraph 925): When the pre-capitular assembly meets, the votes for the delegates to the Chapter are counted. If one (or more) missionary has an absolute majority of the votes, he is declared elected to the Chapter.... If nobody has this majority, the Assembly proceeds to the election of one (or more) deputies and substitutes..... In this case the votes cast by members of the circumscription as a whole merely serve to indicate their preferences.



In the elections for recent Chapters, very few candidates are elected on the single round of voting. Most delegates have been chosen by provincial assemblies of which not all the members have been elected. Moreover Assemblies often ignore the preferences expressed in the preliminary round of votes. Experience has shown the actual choice of delegates by pre-capitular assemblies has sometimes been heavily criticised by our confrères not attending the assemblies.

So, contrary to the older tradition of the Society, which was insisted on particularly by Bishop Livinhac in the Chapter of 1894, the actual choice of elected delegates to the Chapter is made by a small number of the Society's members. The Chapter does not now represent the Society as a whole.

Nowadays there is much more movement within provinces and across provinces. We are familiar with more of our confreres than our predecessors were. Moreover, the number of members of the Society is only a third of the number it was sixty years ago. Perhaps the Chapter should restore the traditional right of all our confrères to vote for their own representatives and not have them chosen for them. If the previous more democratic and less patronising system were restored, it might happen that an election would require more than one round of voting. But if a second round was considered possible in the nineteenth century and practised for most of the twentieth, are we in the twenty-first, with much easier and faster communications, less able to manage it? Surely the expense of a second ballot does not impose a great burden on the Society?

An added consideration: as one of the older members of the Society whose memories go back to the 1957 Chapter, I have noticed that while, in the past, Chapters used to provoke intense interest, most of our confreres today pay little attention to their proceedings. There is no longer the same feeling among us that it is "our" Chapter. How many of those who were not present at the 2016 Chapter remember even a single resolution it took?

Frank Nolan





Three young confreres in South Sudan to start a community of Missionaries of Africa



Cletus Atindaana, Innocent Iranzi and Jean Dieudonné Mohamadi Nare landed in Juba on Tuesday, October 19, to begin a Missionary of Africa community in the Diocese of Malakal, South Sudan. They were thus formalizing their response to the call launched especially to the young confreres by the General Council on November 23, 2020 for the mission in the youngest country of Africa. In Juba they were welcomed by our confrere Jim Greene, the only missionary of Africa in the country so far and who is serving ‘Solidarity with South Sudan.’

The idea of a return to South Sudan came about in the General Council during the 150-year jubilee commemorations. From the very beginning of the reflection on the jubilee, the General Council sought to commemorate the event also with gestures worthy of our founder by committing ourselves to our missionary vocation. When it was decided to celebrate the closing of the jubilee in Uganda, we, together with our Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, decided to go on a visit of



solidarity to the Church that our elders in the mission had established in this country which today is facing the influx of hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese refugees. From the visit was born our commitment to give a strong hand to the Diocese of Arua in its apostolate with the refugees. Three confreres have been appointed. One is already there with two sisters. The other two confreres have been there and will join the third one soon.

The call from South Sudan rang loudest when Father Stephen Nyodho Ador, then newly appointed bishop of the Diocese of Malakal, stopped by at the Generalate one day in July 2019 to ask for additional personnel for his diocese. Having recalled how our confreres had gone to his diocese in the 1980s but unfortunately without settling there, he reiterated the invitation to the Society for a missionary presence among populations hard hit by the conflict that erupted in South Sudan in 2013 and which was still a source of great suffering until the latest peace agreement signed in 2019 which saw the advent of a government of national unity.

In March of this year, Martin Grenier, Assistant General, Aloysius Ssekamatte, Provincial of EAP, and I left to bring a message of solidarity to the Church of the Diocese of Malakal on behalf of the General Council. On our return to Rome we shared what we had seen and in council we decided to launch an appeal to the young confreres. Officially erected in 1974, the Diocese of Malakal covers the Upper Nile region, including Upper Nile, Jonglei and Unity States. It is a vast territory of 238,000 km² with more than 5 million inhabitants of which about one million are Catholics.

Cletus, Innocent and Jean Dieudonné will begin learning Arabic at Christ the King Parish in Renk. They will then go to Jonglei State to St. Paul Parish in Bor. We entrust them to the prayers of all so that the mission in South Sudan, which had been intended many decades ago will be successful this time and that other confreres will soon follow them.

Stanley Lubungo
Superior General



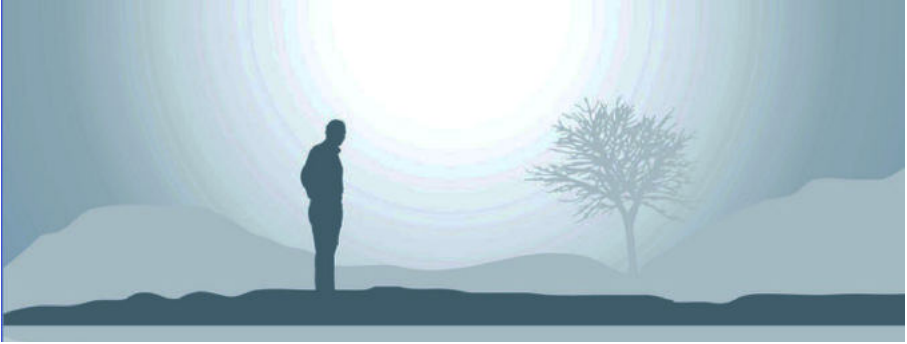
Is there anyone?



Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 said: "Today, loneliness is a widespread condition, and I do not believe that the noise and conformism of the group will provide a real remedy. Considered even healthier than smoking and obesity by scientists, loneliness is claiming more and more victims in Quebec. It is said that 40% of people live alone in Quebec and that one in five Canadians (one in four of them elderly) also live alone. Loneliness is an epidemic; we can perhaps say an invisible pandemic that impacts physical and psychological health. Will we go so far as to create a Ministry of Loneliness one day? Why not?"

The pandemic has made us realize how much we need others. We have learned that life is about true relationships. This pandemic has highlighted and amplified the loneliness from which so many people were already suffering. It is said that 80% of health depends on relationships. It has also made us appreciate the richness of our human relationships and value them, thereby minimizing loneliness.

As I said, life is all about true relationships. It is not for nothing that I titled my article using the title of Damien Robitaille's song 'Is there anyone'? The refrain reads as follows: "Is there anyone who can help



me live? Is there anyone I can follow? I am desperate for love in this village, in this country, on this earth.”

This refrain makes me conscious that I need first of all to be loved, to discover that I am loved by my close ones, by others, by the Lord, if I want to love myself and love others in return.

Jacques Brel's song, written in 1956, very famous throughout the world, "Quand on n'a que l'amour", ends with these words: "With nothing but the strength to love, we will have the whole world in our hands, friends". This song can provide a solution to loneliness, but one must have experienced love. To love and be loved, isn't that what is essential?

The songs say so

In his way, Jacques Brel reminds us of the name of our Triune God: God is Love.

God is Love; yes, isn't our God a God of relationship? His relationship with the Son and the Spirit is what constitutes him: "In the beginning was relationship" wrote the philosopher Gaston Bachelard. Doesn't Jesus of Nazareth reveal to us that God exists only as a relational being, the divinity not enclosing him in his solitude? It is because God himself is relationship that this relationship opened itself to us and gave us existence. Since we are created in the image of God, we are called to be no-



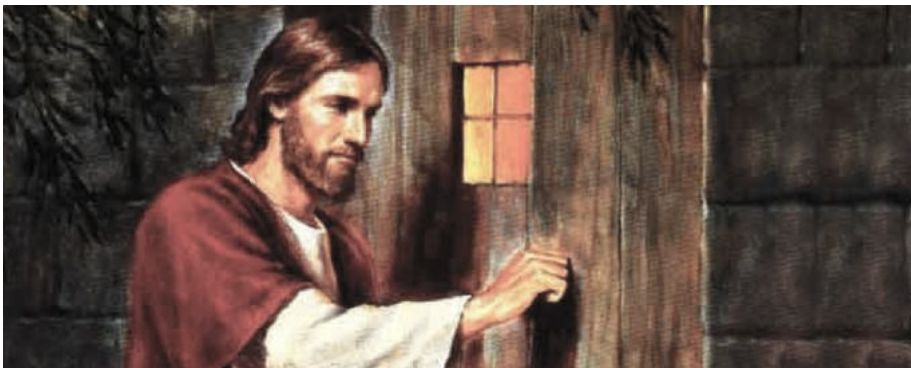
thing but relationship and a vocation to communion.

"Solitude is an art," said Vilhelm Ekelund. It must be said that solitude also has its good sides. We are not alone in solitude; this reality is the lot of everyone. Even if Gilbert Bécaud sang 'La solitude n'existe pas', I believe that solitude exists, and I would add that we are fortunate that it exists. Isn't it true that it is in solitude that one can reach a deep understanding of oneself? Serious work often requires solitude. In discovering solitude and silence, we rediscover who we really are; we finally understand the things we value, those that give meaning and taste to our lives.

The benefits of loneliness.

Robert Lebel's song "Silence around me, what a blessing..., I can go deep inside myself, I discover God by discovering my soul..." is a confirmation of the good side of silence and solitude.

Haven't we all experienced that taking time to be alone has been salutary, that it has given us strength? Sometimes we are afraid of solitude! Seeing a person alone in a park, in the forest, can give the impression of someone isolated, lonely, forgetting that they are not isolated nor lonely but inhabited by nature. The chirping of the birds, the rustling of the leaves, the scent of the flowers, the light breeze allow her to become more aware, pray, and meet Him who is only Love, who is only Relationship. Silence speaks of God in all life. Of course, to do this, you have





to put on your faith glasses, but this seemingly wasted time allows solitude, silence and prayer to be the opposite of a waste of time.

I like to think of what I heard at my father's funeral, on October 9, 1988, by the missionary priest who gave the homily, Julien Papillon: "Mr Lepage was a man of solitude, a poet and a dreamer in the nature that he explored with tenacity and ardour; a man of the forest, a man of the trail... and, he added, when you are in the woods, it is important not to lose your bearings".

And what about the Pilgrim Walk, which is so popular nowadays? This long hike often confronts the person with profound questions about the meaning of life. This walk is also a walk, a journey towards oneself. The tired body, the effort and the solitude allow the pilgrim to touch something deep inside. It is said that there are more than 800 pilgrim routes in the world, half of which are inspired by Compostela. In Quebec, there are about ten routes. There are many ways to connect with oneself, with others, with God.

I want to end this article with the words of Ermes Ronchi, Servite, at the end of the retreat he preached to Pope Francis and the Curia in 2016: "The most beautiful word of God is you, where his gestation recommences, the perpetual journey of the Incarnation". I like to reflect, deepen, pray on this word in my moments of solitude and also, of course, try to take it seriously and live it in my everyday life.

Gabrielle Lepage



Stéphane Joulain, Karlijn Demasure and Jean-Guy Nadeau

L'Église déchirée. Bayard 2021.

Thirty-three contributors have co-operated with the editorial board, Stéphane Joulain, Karlijn Demasure and Jean-Guy Nadeau in writing this book. One notices the variety of backgrounds and professional commitments of the authors.

Looking at the contents, the book begins from the side of the victims, then it explores the situation of the aggressors. It concentrates specifically on the Catholic Church, reflecting especially on the ordained ministry and the tendency to protect the institution or simply to deny the existence of abuse. The final part deepens the reflection on ways which



may help the Church to heal from this wound, taking into consideration the formation process as well as the canonical status of the victims of abuse. Possible ways of preventing further abuse are elaborated upon and the book ends with an element of hope.

The first part of the book

I appreciate that the starting point, the first part, is an ample reflection concerning the victims. With regard to the victims, in fact, one realises that people may speak of having been abused years after the events: children may well repress that memory because it is painful. The stress is on the art of listening to children actively, but without being intrusive, considering their psychological makeup. The aim is to attain the truth, as one realises that false accusations also may exist.

The word ‘victim’ carries a variety of meanings. The book introduces the notions of both secondary victims, that is, the family of the abusers and of the abused child and of tertiary victims, which are the religious or parish communities where the abuse has taken place.

Also one needs to be aware of the fact that abuse may take place in church institutions, as well as in families and in the society at large. In families children may be abused either by their siblings or by their parents - this is called incest – and relatives, whereas in the society at large, sexual abuse is often used as a weapon of war to submit communities which are considered the enemy.

In addition, the attitude of forgiveness is reflected upon. We are made to realize how complex the process of forgiving is. Forgiveness in the Gospels is not a linear event. It considers various situations and at times it is even denied.

Forgiveness has to be given freely: forgiveness and freedom are linked to one another.

Jesus on the cross asks the Father to forgive those who made him suffer so much. Forgiving here is like continuing to have trust in God.



The second part of the book

The second part of the book deals with the authors of abuse. The term commonly used to indicate this evil is paedophilia. Basic elements as to its meaning include the distinction between attraction and behaviour, the study of motivation and the way people speak about it, whether they are professionals or not.

Paedophilia, as a social evil, is somehow a modern version of the taboo of incest. Nowadays, the development of the sexual dimension of the young is less controlled by adults, if we consider that initiation ceremonies have practically disappeared. In addition, traditionally, very little was said openly about sexuality. Yet relationships in the church are referred to in sexual terms.

The question is whether acts of sexual violence point to an illness, whether any cure is available and what kind of therapy is possible.

Studies point out that therapy must be undertaken in a holistic way, by counsellors and psychotherapists. The interdisciplinary approach to therapy must include also the spiritual dimension.

Research is not extensive enough to state clearly whether clerics have greater tendency to abuse than others. But one can notice some risk factors like the commitment to celibacy, or also authority problems within an institution, persecution and anxiety complexes, the need for affection and the painful experience of having been abused during childhood. On the other hand, the homosexual tendency seems largely irrelevant for a person to become an abuser.

Part 2 closes with a chapter on the rights of accused. If the authority acts immediately upon receiving an accusation by placing the accused on administrative leave, it is done for the good of the faithful at large. According to Canon Law, the person accused of abusing retains the right to know who the accusers are and what he is accused of, the right to have a lawyer, the right not to admit to a crime and to be helped in the necessities of life even if removed from the clerical status. The proscription is a special case, as in the circumstances of abuses it can be waived.



The judge must reach at least a moral certainty before sentencing an accused, who retains the right to appeal.

Should the accusation prove to be unjust, the accused has the right to be fully reinstated.

The third part of the book

The third part reflects on the situation in the church, especially the Catholic Church. Historically the church grew in the Greco-Roman world where the father of the family exercised an absolute authority over his subjects. It was confronted with legalised forms of violence towards children, like infanticide, abandoning of babies and sexual abuse. The church opposed infanticide and the exposure of newly born babies if considered weak as well as the sexual abuse of children and adolescents. But the situation of abandoned children was tacitly accepted and institutions developed to take care of them.

The strengthening of the rule of celibacy at Trent in the 16th century and the setting up of seminaries were meant also to stem sexual abuse by stressing that the moral life of consecrated people had to be free of transgressions in the area of sexuality. As a matter of fact, whatever the success it remained partial.

The roots of the crisis are attributed to clericalism, based on the power of ordination as opposed to the non-ordained. Secondly, the notion of ‘perfect society’ as the church describes herself, leads to instilling an attitude of obedience to God and to God’s representatives on earth. Thirdly, the way the Roman Curia works is another cause of crisis.

We can affirm that sexual abuse is taboo in all cultures. If immoral, it is sinful. But is the author conscious of the gravity of the matter and is consensus given? In society today, abuse is sinful, but it is also a crime in law, because compulsion does not suppress responsibility. It may be ascribed to the category of intrinsically evil acts. Consequently, abuse is a grave sin which, according to the Gospel (Mt18,6), cannot be forgiven.



In all this, until recently the weight of attention was focused on the abusers, while the victims were largely ignored. As in the case of slavery, it took long for the church to become aware of the evil of paedophilia and how to prevent it.

The initiatives of the last three Popes are examined, leading to a reflection on the meaning of ordination and baptismal priesthood: the ordained person lets Christ appear in some transparent manner yet, he does not replace Christ. The ministerial priesthood is a means, the end of which is the common priesthood of all believers. Also the stress on chastity as a virtue recommended to all whereas celibacy is for some, is valuable with its appeal to authenticity in life.

A rather technical contribution on the canonical duties of the bishop suggests that he should not continue to be considered the only judge when accusations of abuse are raised.

The impression that the church as an institution largely protected the abusers and covered up their actions is confirmed in these chapters. Another contributor reacts to those who attribute the existence of abuse to churches in some countries only, but it is pointed out that fear, silence and guilt as the prevailing attitudes among the victims, prevent them from speaking up.

I find that the concluding remarks of the last chapter of this part are interesting at this stage, namely that there must emerge the individual conscience and the sense of value of the human body.

The fourth part of the book

The fourth part develops the reflection on the new ways which the church may undertake to build a better future.

Starting from the experience shared by some victims, now adults, the reflection deals with listening to the victims, both as adults and as children through welcoming, hospitality and listening. All this is based on the fundamental tenet of human dignity. Welcoming includes empathy on the part of the helper. But also the professionals themselves must be



able to rely on help to avoid burn out and to cope with their own reactions to what they hear.

Furthermore, the argument of compensation is brought up, stressing the wish that the church set up a compulsory system of compensation. It is also stressed that the victims' status in Canon Law has been clarified by Pope Francis' apostolic letter *Vos estis lux mundi*. Naturally, all this leads to the reflection on what kind of formation would be required for priests. The accent is put on human, integral formation, where sexuality is understood as a total gift of oneself for Christ.

In the interview form of Fr Joulain with Archbishop Scicluna, the evolution of Papal magisterium is described and a community based approach is advocated in the case of abuse, considering also that many victims of abuse by priests may not be able to approach the sacraments. Yet an ancient tradition has affirmed that God is not bound by the sacraments!

If it is necessary to develop a theology of childhood, it is also imperative to focus on the theology of the universal call to holiness enhanced by Vatican II. Consequently, when selecting candidates, the topic of sexuality must be approached, not just presupposed, as well as preventive measures based on ethical charts of behaviour. It is here that the Centre for Child Protection (CCP) of the Gregorian University in Rome may give its contribution.

Yet, the question still remains where is God when such abuse takes place? Authors respond by pointing to Job, who recognizes his lack of knowledge, and to Ezekiel, with the image of the dry bones which acquire new life, as emblematic figures of revival.

Naturally, one must distinguish between hope as a virtue and forced optimism. The latter is fruit of naivety.

Language still matters because when an ordained minister is found guilty of sexual crimes it is said the he is 'reduced to the lay state', as if to be a lay person would be the bottom of the scale of the followers of Christ! The appropriate designation is: 'dismissal from the clerical state'.



READINGS

The way forward lies in the practice of the virtue of humility, because weakness is part and parcel of the life of all the disciples.

It is by looking at just how such scandals are speaking to us in the church that we can grasp and understand the relevance of the Gospel calling to be disciples of Jesus. By leaving aside privileges and power, people may become builders of hope. One recognizes here that the possibility of making mistakes is always present.

The grave situation we are in as church is not desperate, so we recognize those signs of hope that are indicated in the gospel account of the sick woman who could not stand. (Lk 13,11)

The author concludes with reference to the opposite attitudes of the apostles Peter and Judas: one hoped and the other despaired!

This highly readable book is to be recommended: the numerous contributions allow the reader to approach the topic needed in any particular circumstance, finding stimulating incentives to move forward.

Luigi Morell



- Apollinaire Chishugi Chihebe (Executive Editor.), *Philosophy and Education. Necessity of Alliance or Divorce*, Limuru-Kenya (Franciscan Kolbe Press), 2021, 157p.

- Francis Nolan, *The Church in Sudan and the Missionaries of Africa*, Khartoum-Sudan, 2020, 176p.

- Anipu Ignatius, *À temps et à contretemps. Aux périphéries de la violence terroriste*, in SPIRITUS n°244, septembre 2021, pp. 296-307.

- Michael Fitzgerald, *Keynote Address. Dialogue and Proclamation : origin and relevance*” in Pontificium Consilium pro Dialogo inter Religiones, Dialogue and Proclamation 30th Anniversary (1991-2021), PRO DIALOGO n°167, 2021/1, pp.12-22.

- Jacques Cusset, *Unique amour en toi, unique amour en tous*. Editions St Léger, 2020, 257p.

- Andreas Göpfert, *Gemeinsam den Weg der Erneuerung gehen – Die Laudato Si-Aktionsplattform* in ORDENS KORRESPONDENZ, n°62, 2021/4, pp.397-404

- Venerato Deus Babaine, *Hitze, Hunger und andere Herausforderungen –Klimawandel im S, dlichen Afrika* in ORDENS KORESPONDENZ, n°62, 2021/4, pp.455-460.

- Boris Yabre, *Life as a Gift in Gabriel Marcel: a Call towards a Fraternal Interpersonal Relationship*, Thesis presented to the Department of Philosophy, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines, June 2021, 97 p.

The Archivist



André Douillard 1935 - 2021



André Douillard was born on January 6, 1935, in La Roche-sur-Yon. His family lived in L'Herbergement, a large town in the department of Vendée. The father had a large grain and fertilizer business. He remarried twice following the deaths of his two wives which did not prevent his eight children from living happily in an environment very marked by the Catholic atmosphere of the Vendée. One of his uncles was a canon, and an aunt was a religious sister. All his life André remained very attached to his Vendée origins, he liked to talk about them,

and he made many visits to his brothers and sisters who were always happy to welcome him.

Before his teen years he was already thinking about a vocation to the priesthood. He did his secondary studies at the minor seminary of Les Herbiers. He then studied philosophy at the major seminary in Luçon from 1954 to 1956 before being called to military service in Algeria. He would later recount that he was very struck by the example of a White Father who, despite the war, went around without weapons, celebrated Mass for the soldiers and continued to visit the villages of Kabyles. This led him to the consideration of committing his life to the mission. He added that he had already thought about this when reading the encyclical *Fidei Donum* of Pius XII (1957). It was customary for seminarians leaving the Diocese to serve for one year to reimburse the Diocese for the costs incurred during the years spent in the seminary. Thus, he spent a year as a warder in a Catholic boarding school. He did not have the best of souvenirs saying that he was unable to enforce



discipline!

He entered the White Fathers' novitiate in Gap in 1960 at the age of 25, and there he proved to be a well-balanced and esteemed member of the community. He was especially noted for the frequent and thunderous laughter that characterized his entire life. He continued his formation in Heverlee, Belgium. He took full advantage of the courses and showed interest and enthusiasm for the conciliar renewal of theology and pastoral ministry. All appreciated him, and it was only natural that he was admitted to take his missionary oath on February 16, 1963, and then ordained to the priesthood on June 30 of the same year in his home parish of l'Herbergement.

On mission in Rwanda, France and Chad

His first appointment was to Rome, where he studied theology at the Gregorian University for two years. In 1965, he left for Rwanda, where he spent a dozen years in several parishes: Rwaza, Busogo and Runaba. Besides his parish ministry, which he loved very much, he devoted himself mainly to the service of rural youth, striving to balance development and spiritu-

ality. Although it was difficult for him to share and work with others, everyone admired his work among the Rwandan youth. Meanwhile, he continued to read and study to be updated. In 1976, he participated in the session-retreat in Jerusalem.

He was invited to France in 1985 to be part of the missionary and vocational animation team in the region of Paris. The group lived in flats on rue Patay. André spent three years putting his experience and energy at the service of the Pontifical Mission Societies, mainly through contacts with young people.

The Missionaries of Africa had agreed to direct a school for catechists in Moundou at the request of the bishops of Chad in 1977. Having volunteered to join them, André arrived in N'Djamena in January 1988. He immediately left for Moundou, where he began to learn the local language, Ngambay, before embarking on the Center for the Formation of Community Animators (CEFAC) in Doiti. Andre enjoyed it very much, especially considering that he was involved in parish ministry. After ten years, he was appointed to the parish of Bendone, where he integrated himself with his customary generosity. But in 2001, the Provincial Council, with its headquarters in Ouaga-



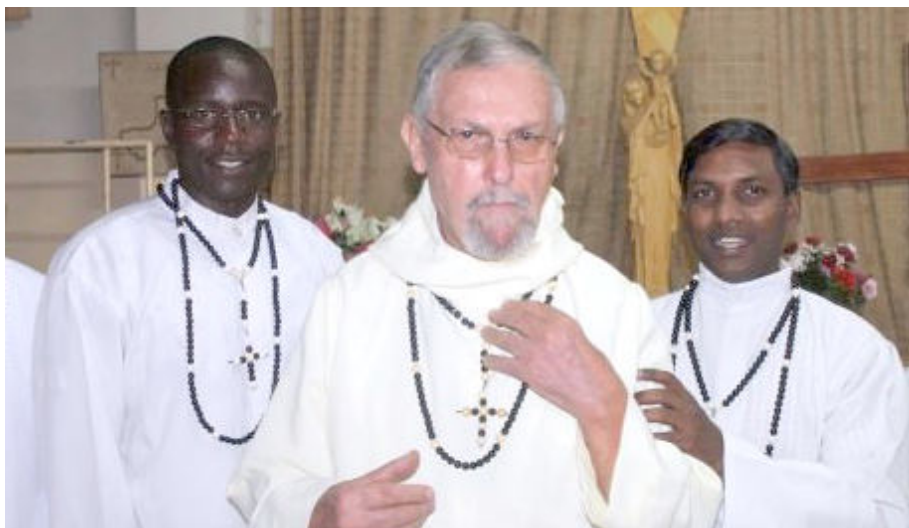
dougou, decided to withdraw all the confreres from Chad. And for André, it was a departure for a new way of life.

Change of missions!

In 2001, André, who had always liked to work with young people, was appointed superior to our house for elderly confreres in Bry sur Marne. It was certainly not a ministry he was looking out for, but he embraced it wholeheartedly and, after a few months, his legendary laughter invaded the house. To begin with, he had to animate a community of about thirty confreres who all had different backgrounds but who had a common vocation and a shared love for our Society

and Africa. Additionally, André was responsible for the administration of the house, contacts with the outside world, and the management of all the minor material problems inherent in a large house. All this was not really his cup of tea. He consoled himself by engaging in ministry in the neighbouring parishes.

The years went by quickly, and in 2008, at the age of 73, he left for a new challenge in a new country, Niger. He stayed in Niamey where he did ministry at the cathedral: masses, confessions, reception, visiting the sick. He was also the house bursar, welcomed confreres from the other two communities in the country and maintained com-



Golden Jubilee of Ordination of André Douillard, Niamey, 2013



munications with the Provincial in Ouagadougou. He was happy. However, as the years went by, André, who was in his eighties, thought it wiser to return home, which he did in 2015.

Not wanting to remain idle, he accepted to be the receptionist at rue Verlomme. He was somewhat bored but read a lot. Above all, always animated by his missionary zeal, he went to St Louis d'Antin parish every week for the ministry of the sacrament of reconciliation and was always available to celebrate the Eucharist when there was a request for help. Moreover, his confreres asked him to be the superior of the community.

A deep faith always animated André. He would take time every day to meditate and contemplate his Lord. Prayer was his driving force from which he drew the strength and graces necessary to continue to say yes and move forward. But little by little, he felt that his health was deteriorating: he was losing his memory, had difficulty concentrating, and became more dependent.

After several health problems, he asked to return to Bry sur Marne and arrived there in September 2018. He knew the house, the con-

freres and the staff well, which should have made his adaptation easier. But Andre gradually let go, isolating himself, becoming inactive, reacting less and less to the external world. His cognitive problems made him more and more dependent. The Covid 19 pandemic isolated him even more. Eventually, he suffered a stroke that required hospitalization and then rehabilitation. It was expected that he would remain quite diminished. But his condition worsened, and despite all the care he received, he died on May 26, 2021.

The funeral was celebrated in the parish church of Bry-sur-Marne on February 6. It was followed by burial in our vault in the Bry cemetery, in the presence of many family members from the Vendée. The gospel of the celebration said: "No one has greater love than the one who gives up his life for those he loves". Fr. Michel Girard explained that André had generously lived that in Rwanda, Chad, Niger and France.

François Richard



Gérard Grimonpont (1924-2021)



Gérard Grimonpont was born on February 24, 1924 in Armentières. His father ran a transport and sanitation company. It was his mother who left a lasting mark on Gérard. She raised very well her eight children, including the only daughter. Gérard did his secondary education at St Jude Institute in Armentières, where he was well known for his piety, daily attendance at Mass, generosity, and involvement in the YCS. No one was surprised when he asked to enter the White Fathers' seminary. He later

admitted that he made his decision after seeing a movie about Charles de Foucauld.

Missionary Formation

In 1943, Kerlois was occupied by the German army, making it impossible to cross the Mediterranean and to join our seminaries in North Africa. The Province of France then transferred its philosophy seminary to Béruges, near Poitiers. There were some forty candidates. Gérard spent two years there (1943-1945) before studying theology in Altkirch, Alsace. It was not until 1946 that he was able to begin his novitiate at Maison-Carrée. This was the year of the General Chapter making it possible for the novices to meet and to listen to a good number of bishops and confreres who had come to Maison-Carrée for the occasion. He completed his theology in Tunisia, in Thibar, where he took his oath on June 29, 1949, and in Carthage, where he was ordained to the priesthood on February 1, 1950. His Formators noticed his shyness and his little physical resistance, but emphasized his docility, his artistic



side, especially in singing, and the fact that he was well accepted in the community.

Missionary in Malawi for 50 years

Although he had asked to be appointed to Bobo-Dioulasso, he was sent to Nyasaland (present-day Malawi). After three months of initiation into the "British way of life" at Cloughton Hall (Lancashire), Gerard left in January 1951 for what later became the Diocese of Mzuzu, where he would remain for fifty years. He began to learn the local language, Tumbuka, which he practiced first as a curate and then quite quickly as a parish priest in several parishes: Msusu, Rumphu, Nkhamenya, Karonga (where he had to learn another language, Kiangonde), Nkhata Bay (again a new language: Chitonga), Kaseye, Katete, Mzuzu, Kaseye. He found fulfilment and growth in the apostolate; he opened up and proved to be a precious and pleasant confrere in the community. Having always been interested in the apostolate of the laity, he devoted himself to it with enthusiasm. The bishop entrusted him with the chaplaincy of several movements: Xaverians, Scouts, Young Christian Workers, Legion of Mary, Marriage En-

counter. He gave his all and improved his approach; he did not hesitate to go and see how the movement worked in various countries: Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, Belgium, and England. He also invested time in the translation of liturgical texts into Tumbuka. He had a tendency to be discouraged but had a solid spirituality and regular prayer life. He had the benefit of participating in the Spiritual and Biblical Session in Jerusalem in 1977.

The extended stay in the service of the Malawian Church was interrupted by the few years he spent in France (1982 to 1985) doing missionary animation in Lille. He was happy to have a change of environment and to return to his roots after spending some thirty years in Africa. He was appointed superior of the community, but he was challenged by his introverted temperament, being sensitive, shy, not organized and not inclined to take initiatives, despite his generosity and fraternal participation in community life. He was not at ease with the situation. He asked for a sabbatical year in Paris, where he followed and appreciated Father Moigt and Father Xavier Léon-Dufour's courses before leaving for Malawi.



He continued to exercise his missionary zeal in several parishes: Katete, Karonga, Nkhata Bay, before being appointed in 1994 to look after the family apostolate in the diocese, residing at Mzuzu Technical School. Again he contributed to the translation of liturgical and biblical texts by assuming the secretariat of the diocesan commission for translations. He remained in Mzuzu until 2000, the year of his final return to France.

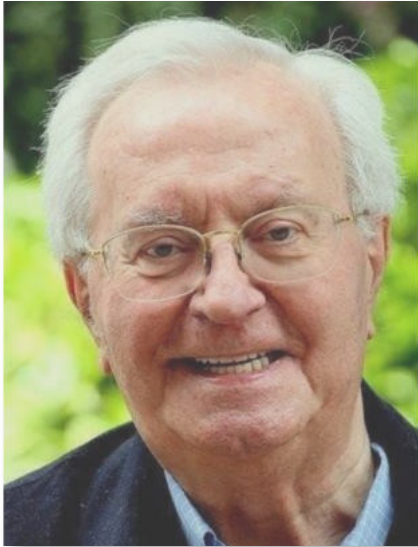
Return to France.

After the session for the senior confreres in Rome, he accepted to assist the chaplain of the retirement home of the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa in Verrières-le-Buisson, near Paris. In 2003, he moved to Mours but left in 2007 for our community for elderly confreres in Pau-Billère. Finally, he asked to be transferred to Bry sur Marne in 2017, (his last appointment) to be closer to his family, who resided in the north of France. In his old

age, he was inclined to be anxious and tense, he did not like the tensions inherent in a community, and he felt the need to be understood and loved. In 2020 he was hit by the first wave of Covid and remained between life and death for some time. Oxygen saved him, but he never fully recovered. Confreres supported him by taking him in his wheelchair for a walk in the park, but his health deteriorated rapidly, and he was hospitalized urgently in a clinic in Saint Maur. He died there on June 3, 2021, at the age of 97. The funeral Mass was celebrated in the church of Bry sur Marne, presided over by Fr. Emmanuel Lengaigne, Superior of the Sector, in the presence of several family members, including his brother Michel, a priest of the Diocese of Lille. Gérard had asked to be cremated. The urn was placed in the Society's vault in Bry sur Marne.

François Richard

Alfons (Fons) Heymans 1933 - 2021



Alfons, called Fons, was born in Sint-Amands aan de Schelde on September 27, 1933. His parents, who were farmers, died when Fons was still small. Fons was the youngest of seven children. As a youngster, he was a real rascal who liked to fight. The parish priest agreed to pay for his education on the condition that he would go to the minor seminary, but Fons refused outright and was opposed to any vocation. He wanted to be an Agronomist. He studied the so-called "modern humanities" at the Institute of the

Immaculate Conception in Sint Niklaas. He started to learn Latin in his penultimate year. In any case, God seduced the recalcitrant young man. In September 1952, he joined the White Fathers in Boechout, though his older brother did not believe in it. Fons turned out to be an enthusiastic sportsman who excelled in soccer and basketball. After the novitiate in Varsenare, Fons went to Eastview (Canada) to study theology. He was ordained a priest on January 31, 1959. His balanced character and good sense made him stand out from the very beginning. He was a good organizer and a hard worker. What was most striking was his great kindness, his pleasant and understanding character, his simplicity. After his ordination, he was sent to study pedagogy in London.

Mission in Malawi

Following his appointment to what was then called Nyasaland, now Malawi, Fons began in October 1961, in Lilongwe by studying the language, which he mastered quite quickly. He then was allowed to work for a few years in parishes,



in Visanza, Likuni and Lilongwe, respectively. "He regrets not having been left longer in ordinary ministry," noted Father Sormany, the regional superior, in 1964. He was entrusted with catechesis in the diocese, a task he started with a visit and consultation of all the mission stations. He was also in charge of the Catholic newspaper 'The African', published twice a month. "Under the impetus of Vatican II, we have to carry out the *aggiornamento* here as well," he wrote to Father Plessers, the provincial. He coordinated the publication of the first bible in the Chichewa language. He was chaplain at St. John's Teachers Training College in Lilongwe, two secondary schools, and a nursing school in Likuni. He also served as chaplain to the lay helpers and the WF Brothers in three dioceses. Fons was also a member of the national catechetical commission. In 1967 the Confreres chose him as a delegate to the Chapter. Upon his return to the country, he managed to be appointed by the bishop to a parish in Namubuma. However, the appointment did not last long because he was appointed regional superior at the beginning of July 1968. When Fons heard the news, he went to the church where he cried like a child, fearing that from then on, he would

spend his life in large structures and that his dream of parish life would never come true. During Fons' time as regional superior Malawi became an autonomous region separated from Zambia. At first, he remained in Likuni, but Rome soon allowed him to build in Lilongwe, opposite the bishop's residence. Some confreres criticized him for this decision, arguing that missionaries should no longer have their own houses... Fons was not only an excellent organizer, but he was also a visionary. Thus, he sent the first confreres to South Africa to care for the thousands of Malawians who worked in the mines.

Provincial n Belgium

However, after the Chapter of 1974, Fons had no choice but to remain in Belgium due to health reasons. It was not until 1976 that specialists diagnosed him as suffering from hemochromatosis, causing chronic fatigue. At that time, he was superior in Leuven. The treatment was very severe and long. He was asked to become provincial of Belgium that same year, but he refused for health reasons. An assistant general came especially from Rome to convince him. In July 1976, he succeeded Lucien Van Wielendaele. At that time, the



Belgian Province had some 600 members, 185 of whom were in Belgium. Fons showed a lot of understanding of the situation of each confrere and tried to find solutions. He was concerned about the different communities and worried about the well-being of the confreres expelled from Burundi. He did not forget the confreres of the "diaspora", whom he tried to put in contact with a community; the missionary animators, such as those of the "Blauwe Torre" in Varsenare, could count on his active support. "A few days before my replacement as provincial, a confrere who knew what to be a provincial entailed asked me how I felt leaving the office. Well, I left the office with great gratitude; it is not really about the feeling 'that it is finally over,' but gratitude above all for all the beautiful things I have learned to discover in the confreres and their work. "

Other missions

In July 1981, Fons became a member of the editorial board of the inter-congregational magazine WERELDWIJD. He stayed in the community of Berchem. He was always interested in the print media and recognized the importance of Wereldwijd for the missionary min-

istry in Flanders. He was also elected managing director of the magazine. On week-ends he went to celebrate in Bornem (St-Anna parish in Weert); in 1983 he became its parish priest, but he continued to work in Wereldwijd until 1985. "I feel so happy when I can work directly with the people". At the end of 1986, the archdiocese offered him a bigger parish in Kalfort, where he went to live in the rectory. His relationship with the Society had been on the back burner for quite some time; there had been too much misunderstanding on both sides and he had suffered from it.

Nevertheless, he still accepted to be part of the Financial Council of the Province. In 1994, he also became the parish priest of Liezele and was in charge of three parishes. During fourteen years his dream of working full time in a parish became a reality. The church in Kalfort, small and modern, attracted a lot of people since Fons' arrival. A witness had this to say: "His sermons are based on real life. They make you think. They start from the reality of everyday life. For Fons, a liturgy is an event, a process. When he is at the altar, you can feel that he believes in it. He is in mourning at funerals, radiates joy when he celebrates a wed-



PROFILES

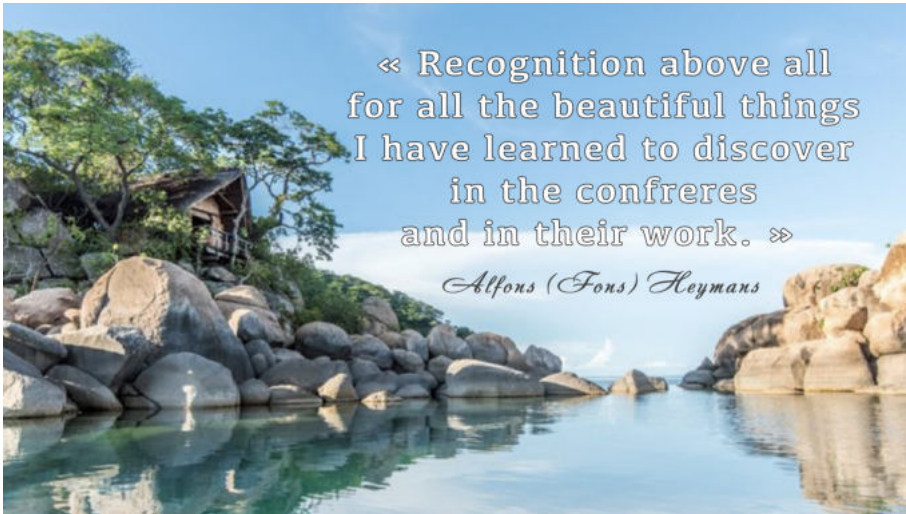
ding and is enthusiastic with the children during the celebrations for the families"

He resigned as parish priest in 2001 but continued to help out on weekends for a few more years. In 2005 he accepted the position of chaplain of the Civil Aviation in Zaventem. It was a kind of an interim position that he fulfilled with all his heart because he met many people there. His last official appointment, in 2008, was as chaplain

of the institute "De Hazelaar" in Kontich. He retired there in 2016 while still helping other people. In January 2019, the hard fighter had to surrender. He accepted to join Avondrust (Varsenare).

Fons was convinced that God always accompanied him through people and in the heart of events. May he now rest in peace!

Jef Vleugels



Pierre Aucoin 1930 – 2021



Pierre was born at Sainte-Cécile parish in Montreal on 7th May 1930. His parents were Amédée Aucoin and Marie-Anne Lanteigne. His family comprised eleven children; he had six brothers and four sisters. Pierre received a good education, which always marked his relationships. During his elementary school years, he loved theatre. At the same time, he was introduced to the violin, which remained his lifelong passion.

He attended Assumption College in 1943, because he wanted to be-

come a priest. He was a boarder. He was in the Boy Scouts for about three years. Let's listen to Pierre talk about the birth of his desire to become a missionary: "In my second year of philosophy, a White Father came to give a conference at the College, at the very beginning of the school year, in October 1949. He was accompanied by an African bishop, Bishop Joseph Kiwanuka, Archbishop of Kampala in Uganda. One of my confreres had decided to become a White Father, and he wanted me to follow him. I was not interested, but he insisted and to clear my conscience, I went to see my Spiritual Director, hoping to be told that the need for diocesan priests in Canada was even greater. To my astonishment, his answer was very brief, and I quote verbatim: "Why not? You have everything necessary for this, except perhaps your health. But you have all that is required. Think about it, pray and then come back to me." His answer lingered in my mind, and I slept very little that night. An intense struggle was going on inside me until the day I asked myself the question, Why not? Since that



day, the 24th October 1949, I started to feel a great peace. I can say that the final decision goes back to that day." We should also add that his brother, a priest, was secretary to His Eminence Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger, Archbishop of Montreal.

Pierre joined the White Fathers on the 2nd August 1950. The report from his College indicated that he had excellent interpersonal skills and good judgment. The Novice Master later wrote of him, "A good candidate who will become excellent if he continues to work as he is doing now." He took his Missionary Oath at Eastview on the 18th June 1954, and was ordained a priest on the 29th January 1955, in his parish of Sainte-Cécile in Montreal by Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger.

During his theological studies at the Eastview Scholasticate, he revealed a deep artistic spirit. He manifested a highly developed sensitivity. He was very gifted in music and singing. He also looked after his spiritual life. He was very attached to his vocation and wanted to be a good Missionary. He was devoted and loved to be of service. He had a sharp and clear mind and a straight and firm judgment. He also loved to laugh and tease. He was considered a valuable person.

Unfortunately, he suffered a lot from headaches during his studies at the Scholasticate.

His first appointment after ordination was to Moncton, where he did a few months of Missionary Promotion. There, he visited parishes and secondary schools to make the vocation of the Missionaries of Africa known. Then he left for Great Britain in 1956, to St Boswells, in Scotland, where he was a teacher. Two years later, he was in London studying for a degree in Education.

Mission in Malawi and Zambia

He spent some time at Likuni, Malawi, where he learned Chichewa in 1960. The following year, he went to Zambia, first as a curate and then as a teacher of religious studies and other subjects in the region's secondary schools.

In 1967, after his Long Retreat at Villa Cavalletti near Rome, he left for Zambia. He served as curate and pastor in various parishes and acted as community Superior on several occasions over ten years. After that, he returned to Canada to rest.



Mission in Canada and in Rome

After 17 years of missionary presence in Zambia, in 1977, he was appointed as socius in the First Cycle at Riverdale, Ottawa, and then took a year of studies at St. Paul University. A year later, he was appointed to Toronto for Missionary Promotion. It was at this time that he expressed a preference to remain and work in his home Province. He was happy at Toronto. In 1982, he was asked to return to Zambia, but he preferred to stay in Canada until 1985. He displayed his extraordinary musical talent on the violin with excellent performances in various orchestras in the city. On the 13th February 1980, he celebrated his 25th anniversary of priesthood in St. Luke's Church in Thornhill among many priests and faithful.

He was subsequently appointed to administration services, particularly to the General Secretariat at Rome in 1985. It is a very demanding service that requires a lot of competence and generosity. He oversaw this service for five years. He was so appreciated that he was asked to extend his stay for two more years.

In 1992, he was appointed as assistant to the Provincial Bursar, continuing in this job until 2009. Throughout these years, he showed great rigour in his work, and he demanded the same rigour from the confreres. After 17 years of exemplary service in this function, he moved to our house on St-Hubert Street, where he placed himself at the service of the Bursar of the Sector. From that moment on, he was resident at the new Provincial House on St-Hubert Street at Montreal. He could often be found in the basement trying to finish crafting his violin, in his spare time. He was an excellent violin maker; he had perfected his knowledge in this field while in Italy.

In 2018, he agreed to go to Sherbrooke for a much-deserved rest. He quickly felt at home. Relieved of all responsibility, he was more relaxed, always smiling and pleasant. Some said they didn't recognise the Montreal Pierre. Not long after we moved to Les Terrasses Bowen, still in Sherbrooke, he had a mild stroke, leaving him with a slight paralysis. He was then moved to the St-Vincent de Paul Long Term Care Center in Sherbrooke. He was gentle, welcoming, happy to be visited and



PROFILES

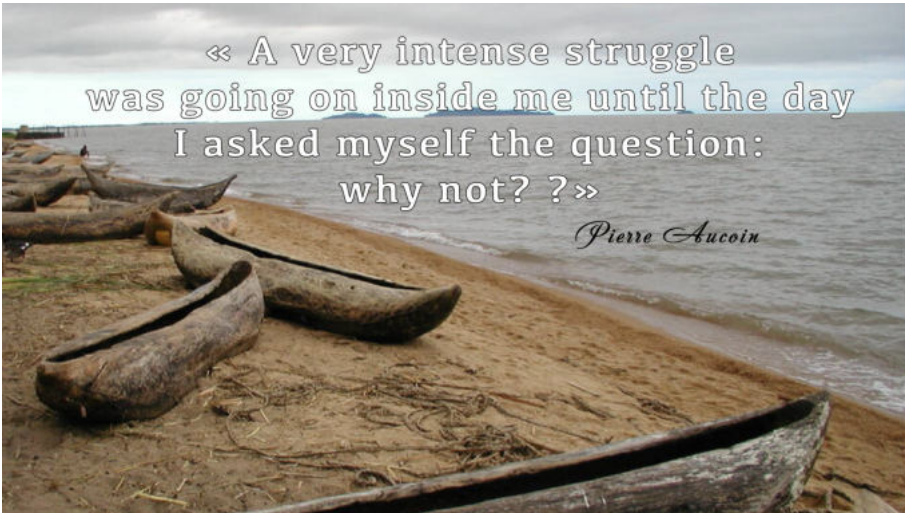
very grateful for all those who cared for him.

He returned to the Father on the 29th July 2021, at the age of 91. He lived 67 years of missionary life in Great Britain, Malawi, Zambia, Italy and Canada.

A Mass for his intentions was celebrated on the 21st August at the Provincial House. A beautiful celebration took place with the

family at the Funeral Home in the afternoon of the same day. The burial of his ashes took place in the Missionaries of Africa section of the St. Martin de Laval Cemetery.

Jacques Charron



Jules Deprez 1926 - 2021



Jules was born on the 17th July 1926 at Verviers. His father worked as an accountant in public service. Jules had his secondary school education at St-François-Xavier College of the Jesuit Fathers at Verviers before joining the White Fathers at Thy-le-Château in September 1944. Having completed his novitiate at Varsenare, he went on to study theology at Heverlee, where he took his Missionary Oath on the 22nd July 1950, and was ordained a priest on the 24th March 1951. Jules was generous and helpful, enthusiastic, and single-minded. He was a happy person. Jules was

docile, humble, and careful not to hurt anyone. He never imposed himself. Although he was not a great intellectual, his judgment was sound.

On mission in Mali

After following courses at the University of Louvain, instead of military service, he embarked at Marseille on the 19th March 1952 for Abidjan; Bishop Lesourd drove him from Nouna to Ségué, a post high up in the cliffs among the Dogon, a region newly discovered by the Missionaries. He learned Tomokan, one of the many varieties of Dogon languages. As early as December 1953, Jules wrote enthusiastically to Father Mosmans, the Provincial, "Midnight Mass was a success. On Christmas Day, there were popular games, dances and horse races. Christian Feast days are slowly becoming 'Dogon' feasts - a good counterbalance to the Muslim feasts." In 1954, Father Demassiet, the Regional, noted, "Tends to want to stretch himself beyond his strength, more particularly since journeys on horseback are rather difficult. In 1955, he was



appointed parish priest of Ségoué. He was also a Regional Councillor. The parish had some primary school classes and a training programme for catechists. Jules built the church and installed electricity, maintained the roads, visited the 'active prayer communities' in various villages and trained lay collaborators. Jules noted that the Muslims' aggressiveness had dramatically diminished thanks to the development work of the Mission. In 1959, shortly after his first home leave, he became Superior at Bandiagara and Director of the Catechetical Formation Centre and increased its training programme from three to four years. The Centre accommodated about forty households. They cultivated the fields with a plough and a donkey. All the training there was conducted through an interpreter. He was strongly criticized for that. He tried to introduce the teaching of the Second Vatican Council in his classes. Jules was also Vicar General and highly esteemed by his confreres.

He had the Gospels, the Epistles, and the texts of the Mass translated. When famine struck the country in 1973, Jules did what he could to help. Many young people moved away from the villages to look for work in the cities. When locusts

devastated the fields, he organised anti- locust campaigns. The desolation of the people touched him deeply. He took advantage of his leave in 1975 to attend a long course at L'Arbresle, before returning to Ségoué.

In October 1982, he accepted with generosity "as a call from God" to take charge of the Diocesan Bursar's Office at Mopti (a town 99% Muslim). He switched from bookkeeping to the computer. After a somewhat difficult start, "most of the confreres appreciates how he performs his duties and attitude towards them; he knew how to listen. He never hesitates to go out and to visit the parishes. He also maintains good relations with the lay leaders." (Aymar de Champagny, Regional). His work compelled him to go to Bamako regularly. On the 15th December 1988, in a letter to Father Huybrechts, Provincial, he described with enthusiasm and pride the celebrations for the centenary of the arrival of the first Missionaries in Mali. He wrote that Christians are appreciated in the country, even though they represent only 2% of the population.

In 1993, he took a sabbatical at Paris. It was about time, because exhaustion compelled him to take



more rest. He took a three-week trip to Central Africa, followed by a pilgrimage "In the footsteps of Saint Paul ". He took a wide range of courses at the Catho, rue de Sèvres (SJ), and at the Dominicans in Paris. He later returned to Ségué, where he was welcomed "like someone from the village who had gone on a trip and was returning home to the family..." This was not for long, because in February 1994, he was appointed to the Regional House at Korofina as Regional Bursar and Bursar of the house. "As for the Bambara language, it was not that easy for him..." He had the joy of attending the ordination of two priests from Ségué, whom he had known very well.

In Belgium, chaplain of the Carmelites

He spent his leave at Heusy in March 1997 and subsequently was appointed to Belgium. On the 15th August 1997, he became chaplain of the Carmel (Convent) at Rochefort. He also served as Spiritual Director ("it's a grand title", he would say) of a house next to the Carmel, where small groups gathered for recollection. In November 1999, he returned to Ségué, which was celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the par-

ish. On the 19th May 2001, he celebrated his 50th anniversary of priesthood at the Carmelite Convent. He readily gave a hand in the parish, visiting the sick and the lonely. In 2005, he took part in the 70+ Session at Rome. The Carmelites left in 2009, but Jules stayed and continued to guarantee the Eucharist and other spiritual services. He broke his hip in November 2016 and endured a long recovery. Since the former Carmel belonged to a foundation, the Diocese of Namur claimed for the expenses of his stay at the beginning of 2017; the White Fathers dictum was that the worker deserved his wages. His eventual departure sparked a public outcry; the Christians and the parish became involved, but everything was eventually settled. The documentary "White Fathers, Black Priests" was released in 2018, with Jules as the star.

Jules died at the hospital of Marche-en-Famenne on 7th August 2021 after an unfortunate fall a few days before. The funeral Mass took place at Rochefort and Jules was then laid to rest in our cemetery at Varsenare.

Jef Vleugels

Felix Hoffmann

1937 – 2021



Felix Hoffmann was born on August 1, 1937, in Tuntschendorf, a small village in Lower Silesia. His parents owned a farm, and Felix grew up there with his four sisters. His childhood was quite disturbed by the war. He started school in September 1943 at the age of six, but after a few weeks, he got sick with diphtheria and could only return to school for a few months in January 1944. However, in September 1944 the school was completely closed down because the building was used to house German refugees from Upper Silesia and East Prussia.

His village became part of the Polish-Russian administration in 1945. His father's farm was nationalized in March 1946; his mother fled to the Hannover area in the West in the British zone with her five children.

Felix began his second year of the elementary school in the spring of 1946. In 1949, his father returned from Russia, where he had been a prisoner of war. Unable to find work, he moved with his family to southwestern Germany, settling in Horb near his brother, who was a priest there. Felix would attend the village school. Thanks to the intervention of his uncle-priest, who had good relations with the White Fathers, Felix entered the minor seminary in Haigerloch in 1950. He completed the first four years of secondary school. He ended his fifth year at the minor seminary in Zaitzkofen, Bavaria, and finished his secondary education in Großrotzenburg in 1959. His missionary vocation was confirmed during his years in the minor seminaries of the White Fathers. He entered the seminary in Trier in September 1960 to study philosophy. He did



his novitiate in Hörstel and studied theology in Totteridge, where he took his missionary oath on February 1, 1965. He was ordained a priest on September 3, 1965, in Horb.

Thirty years in Zambia

Felix was appointed to Zambia, but before going there, he returned to Totteridge for a course on Pastoral Ministry. He arrived in Zambia on April 11, 1966. After the language course, Felix became active in pastoral activities from 1966 to 1996. During these years, he worked in the parishes of Mbala, Mambwe, Mpulungu and Isoko. He lived and collaborated with confreres and members of the diocesan clergy. He was a faithful servant in the Lord's vineyard; he was happy in the different pastoral activities. He was a quiet and reserved confrere: he did not talk much but was present in the community and the parish; he was appreciated by all and conscientious in his work. He spent his later years alone in the parish because the confreres were engaged in other activities, and the diocesan priest became ill. Felix became tired and suffered increasingly from high blood pressure.

Return to Germany

In 1996, while on leave in Germany, the superiors advised him to remain in Germany, where he would live a life not as demanding as the pastoral work in Zambia. He joined the confreres' community in Trier, where he was entrusted with the bursar's office. In March 2002, he moved to Cologne, where he rendered excellent service dealing with the provincial accounts.

After a hip operation and high blood pressure in 2011, he had to stop his work in the province's administration and returned to the community of elderly confreres in Trier. When the diocese of Trier took back the house in 2016, Felix relocated with the entire community to the retirement home run by the Brothers of Charity.

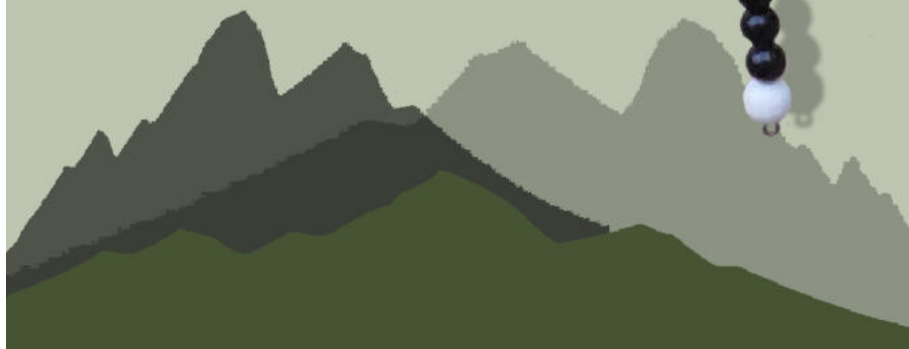
On the evening of September 3, 2021, Felix suffered a heart attack. Considering the seriousness of his condition, the doctors put him in the palliative care section, but after a few hours, he passed away suddenly and peacefully

Hans Vöcking



One topic
I would like to suggest:
to make the local Church
an evangelizing and missionary Church
(including ecumenical
and interreligious dialogue
and dialogue with the culture);
what role can we play
as a Missionary Society
working in a local Church?

Mgr. Jan De Groef



Missionaris of Africa

Father Roger Labonte of the Diocese of Manchester, USA, who died in St Petersburg, USA, on the 11th of October 2021, at the age of 86, of which 60 years of missionary life in Uganda, Great Britain, Canada and United States.

Father Alphonse Tuzya of the Diocese of Kilwa-Kasenga, D.R. Congo, who died in Lubumbashi, D.R. Congo, on 31th of October 2021, at the age of 58 years, of which 23 years of missionary life in Burundi, Zambia, Tanzania and R.D. Congo

Father Stanislas de Jamblinne of the Diocese of Mechelen-Brussels, Belgium, who died in Brussels, Evere, Belgium, on 12th of November 2021, at the age of 99 years, of which 74 years of Missionary life in Rwanda, Burundi and Belgium.



CONTENTS

FOREWORD

- 515 **ROME** Towards the 29th Chapter, *Didier Sawadogo, Assistant General.*

FORUM

- 520 **PEP** Some notes concerning the Language Centres in view of the next Chapter of 2022, *Charles Bailleul*
- 522 **PEP** Reflections for the 2022 Chapter in Rome, *Herman Cornelissen*
- 524 **PEP** A possible guideline for the 2022 Chapter, *Luc Lefief*
- 529 **PEP** A working method for the next Chapter, *Jean Moriaud*
- 531 **SOA** A brief personal note about the topics proposed for the Chapter, *John Gould*
- 534 **PEP** A methodology for the 2022 Chapter, *Seán O'Leary*
- 537 **PEP** The British sector responds to the GC letter announcing the Chapter, *Frank Nolan*

MISSION

- 540 **ROME** Three young confreres in South Sudan to start a community of Missionaries of Africa, *Stanley Lubungo, Superior General*
- 542 **Montreal** Is there anyone?, *Gabrielle Lepage, MSOLA*

READINGS

- 547 "L'Église déchirée". Bayard 2021, *Stéphane Joulain, Karlijn Demasure and Jean-Guy Nadeau. Luigi Morell*

IN PRINT

- 553 Books and articles published by the confreres.

PROFILES

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----|-------------------|-----|----------------|
| 554 | André Douillard | 558 | Gérard Grimonpont | 561 | Alfons Heymans |
| 565 | Pierre Aucoin | 569 | Jules Deprez | 572 | Felix Hoffmann |

R. I. P.

- 575 Confreres and Msola who died recently.

