



Passionist International Bulletin

N° 8 - New Series, July 2005



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"The Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ, all the men and women religious and the laity of the Passionist Family have received the announcement of the election of your Holiness as Successor to Peter with faith, trust and joy.."

Letter of Father General to His Holiness Benedict XVI (p. 34)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Curia Informs

Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General, C.P. Letter and Questionnaire of the Superior General . . .	p. 3
Fr. Luis Alberto Cano, C.P. The Present Situation: The SANG Province	p. 6
Fr. Jefferies Foale, C.P. The Asian Tsunami	p. 7
Fr. Robert Joerger, C.P. Permission to live!	p. 9
Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, C.P. The Passionist Presence in Bethany	p. 11
Fr. Floriano De Fabiis, C.P. Toward the Future with Hope-Filled hearts	p. 14
Fr. Christopher Gibson, C.P. The Missionary Legacy of Pope John Paul II	p. 16
Frs. Fabiano Giorgini, C.P. and P. Paulino Alonso B., C.P. A Special Passionist Apostolate	p. 18
Fr. Giovanni Zubiani, C.P. Concerning The Discipline Of The Cult Of Relics	p. 21
The General Archives An open door to the cultural and spiritual patrimony of the Passionist Congregation	p. 25

Passionist Life

New from the Conferences	
PASPAC	p. 26
CLAP	p. 28
CIPI	p. 29
CPA	p. 30
CII	p. 32
Justice and Peace	p. 32
Religious and Laity	p. 33
Passionist Nuns and Sisters	p. 33
Special Events	p. 34
Witnesses of the Passion	p. 37
Ordinations and Professions	p. 39
New Publications	p. 42
Obitus	p. 43

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LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

*Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio
Superior General, C.P.*

My dear brothers, The month of May, the month of Mary, is

the fact that Restructuring is not merely about "making some minor adjustments"; rather it involves a revision and a global rearticulating and thus we feel that it is necessary to involve everyone so each individual may make a contribution to the process.

These questions will be sent, together with the same questionnaire, to all the Consultors of the major Superiors of the Congregation and to all the communities and the individual religious. Every religious may submit personal responses, however it would be better if the

communities met to study the questions and offer a common response.

These questions have been prepared during several meetings which the general Council had with the Commission for Restructuring.

The three main inter-related questions concern the Passionist Charism, Passionist Presence, and the Passionist Mission.

The Charism refers to the fundamental, unifying elements of our specific vocation: the Passion of Jesus; present-day human suffering; our unique identity; the characteristics of our life and our spirituality. This

means that each act of restructuring should be founded upon a more in-depth exploration of what the Passionist charism means today. While intellectual research may be important, even more important is the experience of the charism.

Presence, above all refers to the Passionist communities, to their composition and the structures upon which they are established, their situation in the Church, in society and in their particular localities. Presence is the basis of mission. It is the starting point for mission and the reality to which we return to live the common life, to pray together, to encourage one another and from which we are sent forth.

Regarding our Mission, this mean re-focusing the mandate God gave us by means of our vocation and reflecting on the apostolates that we are presently undertaking and on those that we can or may yet assume as well as those where we are not present. Who are those who are the privileged recipients of our mission and what are the appropriate languages to use so that we are comprehensible and successful in communicating the power of the Cross to those who are suffering in our post-modern world?

The General Council and the Restructuring Commission would greatly appreciate your specific contribution to help us and to explore, as far as possible,



Rosa Calabrese witnesses the blessing of St. Paul of the Cross

nearing its end and, as was announced to you in the Letter commencing the process of Restructuring of 20 March 2005, 3b, Part II, I am sending all of the Major Superiors, the Provincial Superiors, Vice-Provinceals, Regional Vicars and their Consultors, as well as to all the communities of the Congregation, several questions aimed at soliciting reflections that may help to formulate the initial steps of the eight year program that is planned for the Process of Restructuring. The period of eight years for this process was designed precisely because of



the wonderful potential of what it means to be a Passionist.

We would be grateful if you would share with us some your hopes for the future, so that your reflections may help us to formulate strategies for planning the subsequent stages of the process.

What life style, what mission can we envision today for a Passionist future? How are we present and effective in the current globalized world? What kind of Congregation can we envision? What are possible dreams?

It is necessary to send the responses and reflections to the Secretary of the Commission, Fr. Elie Muakasa, as soon as possible but no later than next August 15. The Commission will have an opportunity to study the responses and to integrate some or all of your reflections or suggestions into the upcoming work phase.

We are looking forward to the ideas that you have to offer us so as to proceed more efficiently.

Together with this letter you will find the questionnaires and the three main questions: Charism, Presence, and Mission, as well as other points or questions to keep in mind while formulating the responses.

Then the reflections and the responses will be studied and categorized by the Restructuring Commission in the form of a report and which will then constitute the basis of dialogue and further study by the Commission and the General Council next September in Australia where

the PASPAC Assembly will take place and during which the General Council will meet among themselves and with the Major Superiors of the Region.

At the September meeting the Commission will prepare the third phase by means of more specific questions directed toward the Major Superiors and the Regional Conferences. This will also be the point at which we wish to enlist the involvement and consultation of the women religious and the laity of the Passionist Family.

Obviously the Restructuring process which was initiated with the mandate of the Synod of last November/December, wishes to involve all the religious of the Congregation and the various components of the Passionist Family. We must all be involved in searching out paths to be taken and in offering concrete suggestions for actualizing Restructuring. It must truly be a collegial undertaking because we are convinced about the presence of the Spirit of God in the Congregation and about the living dimension of the sacrament of salvation that, according to the Council, is the Church.

Therefore, in a spirit of simplicity and humility, may no one feel inadequate to be able to give a response, because "the

Spirit blows where he wills" and because through the "mouths of little ones God is glorified". Today, 31 May, the feast of the Visitation of the most Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Elizabeth her cousin, "the barren one who gave birth". We entrust to her, the Mother of Jesus, our journey, she who "set out and traveled to a town of Judah". (Lk. 1:39) Her presence and her greeting also make new life for Congregation "leap" within us. "And blessed are you who believed what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Lk. 1:45)

As I leave for a week's pastoral visit to our mission in Bulgaria, I send my fraternal greetings to all the religious of the Congregation, especially to the sick who in their flesh experience the Passion the Jesus, to the young and to the women religious and the laity of the Passionist Family.

Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, C.P.
Superior General
Sts. John and Paul, Rome
Feast of the Visitation
31 May 2005

The address to which you may send your responses is as follows:

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The Passionist church in Metoro, Mozambique



Questionnaire n.2

To the Communities of the Congregation

In order to share your dream for the future of our Congregation, please answer the three major questions below. These are being shared with every Provincial, Vice Provincial and Vicariate Council and every community in the Congregation in the second stage of the consultation process.

Q A. In light of the call to restructuring of the Congregation, our Community is committed to deepening our experience of the Passionist Charism now and for the future in the following ways:.....

Q B. In light of the call to restructuring of the Congregation our Community is committed to development of Passionist presence now and for the future in the following ways:.....

Q C. In light of the call to restructuring of the Congregation our Community is committed to re-focusing the Passionist mission now and for the future in the following ways:.....

In responding to these three questions please take account of the following issues that have emerged in the process so far. Grouping these issues under a particular question may help you. However some may apply to more than one question. For example:

Q A: 1, 2, 3, 4;

Q B: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14;

Q C: 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14;

1. The ways in which the Congregation can remain rooted in its charism and yet have the strength and flexibility to adapt and develop new ways of life.
2. The ways in which the prophetic witness of the Congregation could develop.
3. The ways in which our Passionist Formation can develop.
4. The ways that your Community could assist the Province, Vice-province or Vicariate to

experience, express and communicate the Passionist Charism?

5. The ways that diminishment of the number of religious can call us to new ways of life.
6. The ways we can widen our Passionist presence to welcome others in.
7. The way in which that the experience of the poor & suffering of our world impact upon us.
8. The ways that new forms of leadership and governance could develop for the Congregation.
9. The ways in which we could re-focus our mission as Passionists.
10. The ways that communications within the Congregation could be enhanced.
11. The ways we can respect the needs of younger and older religious.
12. The ways we maintain and promote a positive relationship between developed and developing parts of the Congregation.
13. The ways that the Passionist Congregation can understand and promote the priesthood of all the baptized.
14. The ways we can finance our life and ministry for now and the future.



"The strength and the flexibility to adapt..."



THE PRESENT SITUATION: THE SANG PROVINCE

Editor's note: Usually this space is dedicated to the column of Fr. Luis Alberto Cano, First General Consultor and moderator of the CII Conference (Inter-provincial Iberian Conference). However, for this issue we will offer an interview with one of the Provincials of the CII Conference, Fr. Eulogio Cordero of the SANG Province in Spain.



Fr. Eulogio Cordero, C.P. Provincial SANG

1. Fr. Eulogio, can you briefly tell us something about the present situation of your Province with regard to the number of religious, the median age, areas where our religious are present and the ministries that they undertake?

The SANG Province presently consists of 117 religious situated in Spain, Panama and Ecuador, and in the Vicariate of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Chile and the Vicariate of the Exaltation of the Cross in Bolivia. The median age of the religious is 55 distributed in the following manner: in Spain, the median age is 62.28 yrs., in Chile, 65 years; in Bolivia 48.3 yrs., and in Ecuador and Panama, 44 yrs.

2. With regard to vocations, in what condition is your province? How has the vocation program fared that you have undertaken in recent years?

Those religious in formation until priestly ordination are 12, plus one novice and 12 postulants of which four or five are ready to begin the novitiate. The initial formation centers are located in the communities of Peñafiel, San Gabriel (Madrid); Quito and Conocoto in Ecuador; Bellavista in Bolivia and Santiago de Chile.

The last Provincial Chapter stated the following as our objective for vocation ministry: "We commit ourselves to undertake vocation ministry that presents our community of life and mission as an invitation to a specific vocation." Among the various initiatives that were proposed are these: a) Consciousness-raising on a community level regarding the importance of a community that gives witness to its community life and that is open to be

experienced. b) Enable and coordinate the elements that facilitate the presentation of our charism. In addition to encouraging the vocation delegate in each community, the Vocation and formation Commission takes concrete steps to accomplish this objective. Those programs already realized are: vocation

awareness days; shared living experiences and meetings in coordination with the Youth Ministry Commission.

3. Is there some program in place with regard to the Passionist Family (Passionist women religious, Passionist laity) in your Province? What kind?

Yes. In the Plan of the province apostolate we propose the following: "To continue to incorporate the laity in the task of spreading the faith, beginning with the Word of the Cross." From this point the Commission for the Apostolate and the individual communities of the Province have enabled groups of the laity to have a sense of being Passionist. Together with them we are planning meetings on a provincial and inter-provincial level, as well as for the youth involved in the movement entitled "youth with a single focus: Passionist", as well as for adults.

4. How do you envision this process of Restructuring that the Congregation has undertaken as we move toward the General Chapter? Is it applicable in your Province? In what way?

I view it positively, keeping in mind that it is a "process". And I understand this as meaning a road to undertake what is possible, but at the same time it seeks pertinent information so that it may be assumed by everyone. Formation, availability and a generous spirit are the qualities which must necessarily move toward greater vitality in the Congregation. In order for this message to be applied it must be understood by the majority of the religious.



THE ASIAN TSUNAMI

Fr. Jefferies Foale, C.P.
General Consultor

Note: This article originally appeared in the publication entitled "Paspac", the magazine of the Passionist Asia-Pacific Region.

Day by day news reports are bringing the latest death toll from the Indian Ocean Tsunami. This morning I heard them say 280,000; and it is still rising. In fact it is clear that nobody will ever know the true total of the dead or measure the ruin of lives of the survivors. At first people could not believe what had happened. When word reached Australia that a football star had been swept away, the news report was followed by the voices of his fellow athletes assuring us all that he had the strength and spirit to over-come the raging water and emerge unscathed. Soon enough everybody understood the basic truth that the force of nature is irresistible.

People everywhere are responding with amazing generosity to this disaster. There are stories of very poor people in China making real sacrifices to help those in need, and of millionaires who have dug deep for humanity. There is a story going around that the Passionist Sisters in India simply gathered up all their resources and used the lot for the suffering people. Worldwide, Caritas, the Catholic charity, alone has collected five hundred million dollars, alongside other charities. The Australian Government is spending at least one billion. There is a fair hope that many of those who lived through the tsunami will be able to survive as communities with the means to rebuild for the future. This is a miracle of human solidarity.

Some observers are helping us understand the situation by making useful comparisons. They take the fact that over 50,000 children

were swept away in that moment, and place it alongside another less visible fact -- that more than half that number of children dies every day from preventable causes relating to poverty and hunger. They look at the vast effort to bring relief to this one very visible situation and to give the people there hope for a future, and they ask, what about the rest of the world that struggles day after day in similar distress? One third of humanity is permanently in a desperate situation not too different from that of the tsunami survivors. Can't that too be relieved? And of course, the answer is yes. All it takes is human solidarity.

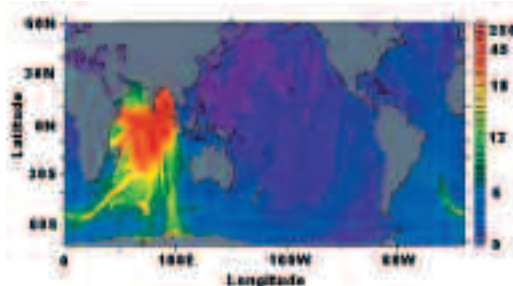
All 191 member states of the UN have signed up to the Millennium Development Goals. They have committed themselves, at least on paper, to solving the worst of this problem in ten years, by 2015. By that year, if they keep their promise, they will achieve major steps along the way towards the following: Eradicate extreme poverty, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality by two thirds, promote maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development. The means are at hand to achieve all this in ten years. Unfortunately, the result is far from assured while the world is distracted by war and indulges in economic exploitation. Perhaps the Indian Ocean Tsunami

may have triggered a new awareness that will increase the resolve of people everywhere to make peace and work for justice.

As Passionists we cannot be idle observers of this scene. Our calling places us in solidarity with the crucified of today. It is not enough to tell them that Jesus loves them; even that he loves them enough to give all for them. Our calling compels us to stand in solidarity with them in their struggle. A Passionist gives.

A tsunami is a wave. Usually there are several waves following each other. The phenomenon is not unlike what happens when a child throws a pebble into a still pond. The ripples move out in a circle till they break on the bank of the pond. A tsunami is created when there is a huge release of energy in the depths of the ocean, perhaps from an earthquake or a landslide. In the deep water far out at sea the waves may be kilometres long from one crest to the next, and very shallow. Though they may move at more than 600 kilometres per hour, their passage is almost imperceptible. People on ships at sea during the recent tsunami had no idea such a wave had passed beneath them. But as the tsunami approaches shore, the wave motion is impeded by the shallow water and it slows down. As the waves get shorter their height increases. The huge volume of water being displaced suddenly becomes startlingly evident to those on the shore, who have little time to run for their lives as it sweeps all before it.

I have chosen the title, "The Asian Tsunami" for this reflection in order to highlight the way events are unfolding in this region. Sometimes the most powerful forces in human socie-



Map showing the extent of the Tsunami



ty operate at a great depth, with little obvious change on the surface. So it is in Asia at a number of levels.

People remember the economic transformation of Japan which astonished the world in another generation. Later came the "Little Tigers", as several smaller economies took off. These developments even produced ripples on far-off western shores - "ripples". The world order was not disturbed.

Perhaps today the keenest observers in the west may already be looking out to sea as another motion of the waters begins to take shape in the form of the economic transformation of China and to a lesser but still very significant degree of India. When this wave crashes on the shore one day in the future it will not be small. The economic balance of the world will be transformed.

I turn now to some aspects of the spiritual landscape.

The world's major religions originated in Asia, Christianity included. Christianity came to India very early and to China a little later.

Though it did take root in India it did not spread. Meanwhile the Faith took root outside Asia, and in Europe it clothed itself fully in all the textures of the western philosophical and cultural inheritance. A hundred years ago people in the west could only nod in agreement when Hillaire Belloc said, "The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith". It was like a universe unto itself. This self confident and self absorbed Europe, armed with wave after wave of scientific and technological innovation, found new worlds to conquer and possess. The colonial period saw most of the world's nations subjugated by European powers. Some colonialists were driven by faith and a desire to spread the Gospel, most were driven by greed, pride and power.

Thus Christianity irrupted upon the

scene in Asia as a companion to colonialism. To this day the Church in many parts of Asia remains an alien presence in many ways. Even in communities with a long history, there is a big gap between the Church and the culture of society. Sometimes one sees signs of schizophrenia, as individuals struggle with two identities, the Catholic self and (for instance) the Indian self. Often enough I have heard the lament of those who strive to open the Church to society as they are frustrated by entrenched tradition or by the long arm of the Vatican. People are naturally attached to their own roots and history, and if that includes being a Church that is over against

imagine for one moment that this will eliminate poverty and suffering in Asia. Quite the opposite, new wealth will bring new inequalities and new forms suffering for masses of Asian people.

The transformation I dream of will involve the convergence of all the great spiritual traditions, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc, and the religions of the book, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, not leaving aside the surviving traditional cosmic religiousness of many Asian peoples. I do not speak of a kind of syncretism, but of a new awareness in which followers of distinct traditions will joyfully acknowledge one another and honour the riches of all.

How will this come about?

Religion will flourish when it discovers once more its own roots. We are with the poor man of Nazareth, and when we lay aside our riches and power, however small they may be, and cast our lot with the poor, we will find our true voice. On that day a tsunami will arise in the depth of the ocean that will move out

in ever expanding circles with the power to truly transform our lives and the face of the Church.

Such a transformation is desperately needed in every corner of the globe. It is in Asia that the lines of it are already discernible. The human solidarity called forth by the Indian Ocean Tsunami, is but a shadow of the power of human solidarity wholeheartedly embraced in the spirit of Jesus by those who live by the power of the Cross. Passionists will always come to the aid of their Passionist brothers and sisters in need. But far more important is that all of us let go of what lifts us above our brothers and sisters in the flesh, the blessed poor of our own societies.



The effects of the Tsunami

society and culture, they do not desire to change it. Indeed, why should they?

Change will come, but in another way. It is in the spiritual domain that I sense the most important wave approaching. Somewhere very deep in Asia a consciousness may be surfacing that will indeed transform the situation.

Since the time of Pope Paul VI's historic visit to Manila in 1975 the Asian Bishops' Conferences have had a series of dialogues. One constant theme in their deliberations on the Asia and the Church in Asia has been poverty, indeed poverty and suffering. I have already mentioned the large economic developments taking place, and I do anticipate they will manifest themselves powerfully, but I do not



PERMISSION TO LIVE

*Fr. Robert Joerger, C.P.
General Consultor*

They told him he had six weeks to live. A malignant tumor had spread to his liver. He was prepared. My father was a man of deep faith. The hospice nurse told me I needed to give my father permission to die. My words to him were terrible but tentative, but he rescued me. "I'm going to miss you. I'll see your mother again." Then he said, "You do what you want with your life." I went to give my father permission to die, and he gave me permission to live!

Permission to live. When I read the letters of our Father and Founder, St. Paul of the Cross, it often occurs to me that he followed his own charismatic inspiration wherever it led him. His own deep faith inspired him not only to gather companions into a community committed to the Cross, but also to endure in hope the setbacks that are part of any new apostolic venture. And in the end he exhorted his brothers only "to love one another." Was he giving them permission to move forward within this foundational impulse, to proclaim Christ Crucified and live as brothers, no matter where that life might take them as Paul let go of his own? If a father's love can so gift us in our individual lives, cannot a Founder's love also gift a community in the very same way?

I believe our own Father General did the same for us in his presentation at our recent Synod in Rome, permitting the group to think freely and creatively. Much of the sharing following this talk centered on the theme of "hope". It will be important in the next stage of this process to ask, "What specifically makes us hopeful?" It could very well be the starting point of our dialogues.

Some of the best viability studies of religious life that I have seen begin by testing the assumptions around religious life. They permit the religious to think freely and creatively.

For example, is there an assumption about Passionist community life, i.e., that there is only one way of being a Passionist community? What if that one way is no longer life-giving, or in fact, drains the energies of its members and the resources of the Province? Or what if a particular mission requires a different way of coming together? Must we always live in the same physical space in order to be a community, or can we commit ourselves to gathering "intentionally" at regular times for faith-sharing, prayer, mutual support and a meal? Are there other models of common life that are supportive and nurturing while, at the same time, allowing space and time for both a particular mission to the Crucified and contemplation? Of course, these models are already operative in many parts of the Congregation.



The cupola of the Chapel of St. Paul of the Cross, Rome



Archbishop Oscar Romero

"No set of goals and objectives includes everything"

We can "test the assumptions" around ministry to the Crucified, how we govern ourselves, and how the laity are part of our charismatic movement within the Church. Judged by one set of assumptions our religious life might not seem "viable". Change the assumptions and our life together may take on a whole other dimension of vitality.

My hope is that we will create the structures we need to live out the values we mutually espouse, and to do a particular mission. Out of these dialogues may come new relationships and new missions. If restructuring is also "permission to live", then we need to allow people the freedom to create the structure they need and trust their integrity in doing so. My guess is that whatever structures emerge, they will come out of a shared ministry, even crossing international borders. We need not begin with geographical amalgamations of structures that might already have passed their time.

The prayer of Archbishop Oscar Romero, whose journey of faith brought him from being an ecclesiastic to a prophet, might well be our own:

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.

The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted.

Knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something.

And to do it very well. I may be incomplete,

But this is a beginning, a step along the way,

An opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see end results,

but that is the difference

Between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.



THE PASSIONIST PRESENCE IN BETHANY

Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, C.P.
General Consultor

The "pilgrim" who goes down to Jericho from Jerusalem passes through the Kedron Valley, with Gethsemane on the left and comes out onto mount of the "scandal" (Ras al Amud) with the large Jewish cemetery on either side. From this height, directly ahead, there is a large area of cypress and maritime pine trees. In the midst of this green mass the small bell tower of the church of St. Martha appears. Along side it is an impressive structure composed of local rock: the retreat of the Passionist religious dating to 1903. In 2003 we celebrated the centenary of our presence in the community of the Holy Land.



Fr. Charles de Pichard, founder of the Mission

Some history...

(We are grateful to Fr. Giuseppe Martinelli for these historical notes and for his intervention at the last General Synod of the Congregation regarding our community of Bethany.)

Following the decree of the suppression of religious orders issued by the French government, in May 1903, a group of 12 Passionist religious headed by Fr. J. Charles de Pichard, a former member of the General Curia, landed at the port of Haifa. The first group of religious arrived in the Holy Land after surmounting several sizable obstacles, without a house, nor protection nor any type of security. They were the guests of the Assumptionists while they searched for and found a small building in Bethany, formerly belonging to an Institute of French Sisters and not yet completed. In 1905 Brother Albert, a Belgian, arrived in Bethany and for thirty years he served as the infirmarian for the benefit of the Arab population. He subsequently became well known not only as

a great doctor but also as a miracle worker. Fr. Charles, who died at the age of 83, ten years after his arrival in Palestine, greatly desired to go and

live there, above all, to be near the places of the Passion of the Lord. The Passionists would also encounter the passion and suffering in the people they serve and throughout the history of our presence in Bethany -- a presence that would be marked by sorrow due to painful and serious events such as wars. It is also a presence that is characterized by the testimony of lives spent in contemplation and in solidarity.

From the beginning we can say that the house was founded and re-founded various times in the course of its history, passing from

the rule of the Turks, to the British protectorate, to Jordanian rule and finally, after 1967, to Israeli rule.

During World War I the house was closed and was looted. In the years 1919-22 the so-called first re-foundation took place with the return of French Passionists and the initial presence of young American Passionists who studied at the Ecole Biblique of the Dominicans. During World War II and immediately afterward, the house was occupied by a group of Polish military personnel from Russia and then, because of local fighting, the house was inhabited by Palestinian refugees (1946-1950).

It was during the second re-foundation (1950-1967) that the house was placed directly under the Superior General and became a type of pilgrim center, a part of the local church. It was also re-established as a center for welcoming our religious, especially for the purpose of biblical studies.



Beginning in 1968, following the second Arab-Israeli war and the closing of the borders (1967), the Superior General entrusted the house to the CORM Province of Northern Italy.

Some speak of a third re-founding of the house of Bethany: its becoming a house of formation and studies for Passionist students, as well as a center for guided experiences in the Holy Land and for groups interested in on-going Biblical studies and experiences within the context of the Holy Land. There are moments of political calm and moments of tension and conflict such as the "intifada" that climaxed in the construction of a dividing wall between the Jews and the Palestinians that cuts directly through our garden.

And now...

On 24 June 2004, Fr. General wrote to the Major Superiors of the Congregation to inform them that the CORM Province had decided to relinquish the house in Bethany to the General Curia since it could no longer guarantee a Passionist presence, the result of a re-organization of the Province itself.

While we thank the CORM Province for 36 years of uninterrupted and dedicated presence in the Holy Land at the service of the local Church, the Province and the Congregation, we now wonder whether the presence of Passionists in the land of Jesus is a good for the entire Congregation and a place that can also be significant for the formation of our Religious and therefore, something that should continue to exist.

Fr. General stated: "For these reasons and to be able to proceed, as far as possible, toward a

consensus of opinion in order to study new possibilities that would be in harmony with the new perspectives of the Restructuring of the Congregation that are currently being addressed, we are asking you to offer your opinions and recommendations regarding this matter. How should we proceed with regard to the future of the house of Bethany? Should it again be entrusted to a single province or should an international community be created? Are there any other kinds of presence or collaboration that should be considered? What specific initiatives should be taken into consideration and evaluated?"

In September 2004, Fr. Gianni Sgreva, C.P. was appointed the superior of the community in order to oversee the house and to study possibilities for developing pastoral ministry within that context and that reality. Some additional Passionist religious have agreed to share this ministry for limited time periods. Even in recent times, our presence in Bethany continues to be marked by "suffering" and difficulties due to the serious political, social and religious situations.

Shortly after his arrival Fr. Gianni wrote: "Here the situation of the house in the midst of an occupied land, inhabited not by hundreds, but by thousands of Palestinians, worsens day by day. On Sunday afternoon, 7 November, the Israelis began to construct a wall in the street which faces our property and which abuts the property of the Comboni Sisters (who are now in Palestinian territory). The following day the Arabs made a large opening in the wall that surrounds our property. As if this were not enough, in the remainder of the wall, not far from our gate, they removed the

fence...and therefore everything is open to everyone... At this moment, in the region of Bethany-Abu Dis, our courtyard and property is the only passage way for the Palestinians who come and go from Jerusalem, the only opening in the wall that divides the two peoples..."

It is precisely this last phrase, that of being "the only opening in the wall that divides the two peoples..." that succinctly describes the plan of our future presence in the Holy Land.



Bro. Alberto visiting the sick in Bethany



The house consists of about twenty rooms with private bathrooms. Presently there are two Passionists permanently in residence: Fr. Gianni Sgreva and Fr. Juan Llorente (FAM) (the General Archivist of the Congregation until several months ago), as well as several lay people who spend short and medium-length periods of time there, sharing in the life of the community.

Future plans?

Based on the responses to the letter of Fr. General, there is a consensus that we retain a presence in Bethany, a presence that should develop in a project for the well-being and the peace of this wounded and divided people that inhabit the land of Jesus, as well as for the local Church, the Mother Church of Jerusalem, for the Middle East, for our Passionist Congregation in its geographic and cultural entirety, and extended to all the members of the Passionist family (men and women religious, Passionist nuns and Sisters, and laity).

The suggestions that have been offered address the situation of that land which is currently experiencing the Passion of Jesus as played out in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, on the road that descends from Jerusalem to Jericho. Precisely at the gate of the house there are examples of this conflict. Therefore it is important to maintain a presence that is characterized by peace and communion with the local people, by means of personal dialogue and various small projects.

Attention also needs to be given to the Church of Jerusalem, the Mother Church of all Churches, which welcomes the Passionists and offers them the opportunity to keep alive the memory of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord that took place in Jerusalem, and which extends to this very day.

It is important that the religious of the local community have knowledge of or are willing to undertake learning Arabic and Hebrew, at least on a basic level and, as a common language in community, have an adequate knowledge of English. Treasures to be received and offered, in addition to Ecumenical ventures, would not only be knowledge of other faiths, Churches and Christian rites, but also greater understanding of Judaism and Islam.

With a little bit of imagination we might think of Bethany as a community that, in collaboration with others, has the possibility of becoming an international center for formation and the renewal of the charism of the Memoria Passionis for the Passionist religious and for the Passionist family (religious, Passionist nuns and Sisters, laity) in keeping with the restructuring of the entire Congregation, so that "there might be a greater flow of life from one part of the Congregation to another", and that there be greater spiritual and cultural growth as a result of "thinking more as a Congregation and less as a Province."

The scope is that of seeing the Congregation of the Passion within a global vision which, while deepening and promoting unity, values and promotes the richness of diversity. In this way we can discover the unity of one charism and the sole theology and spirituality of the charism of the Passion even amidst the diversity of expressions and within the wealth of specific geographic and cultural expressions. Thus, the possibilities that are being considered for the renewal of Bethany are international as much as the Congregation is international in its geography and culture.

It's a dream! But we have sought and have been given permission to dream of the Congregation of the future in this phase of Restructuring in which we are presently involved: "the reformulation today of our Passionist vision for the world of tomorrow for the purpose of addressing the changes that God has placed before us." (Commencement Letter of Fr. General, 20 March 2005)

We are seeking religious who are willing to make this dream a reality!



Israeli wall dividing our monastery garden



TOWARD THE FUTURE WITH HOPE-FILLED HEARTS

Fr. Floriano De Fabiis, C.P.
Secretary General

Editors' Note: On January 15, 2005, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General, announced the appointment of Fr. Floriano De Fabiis (PIET) as Secretary General of the Congregation. For many years the assignments of General Secretary and General Procurator were held by one person, Fr. Umberto Palmerini. Due to Fr. Umberto's health condition, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio and his General Council have decided to separate the two offices. The General has appointed Fr. Floriano as General Secretary, while Fr. Umberto Palmerini will continue to serve as Procurator General.

The ministry of the General Secretary is described in N° 89 of the General Regulations: "The Secretary General dispatches the business of the General Government as secretary to the General Council, as chancellor in drawing up decrees and rescripts, as moderator of the statistical and administrative archives, and as notary for the Congregation." He has likewise been entrusted with the responsibility – with the assistance of his collaborators – of editing and publishing the Passionist International Bulletin, as well as overseeing the Information Office of the Congregation.

During the period of December 2004 to May 2005, there has been an intense level of activity in the General Council. Below is a synthesis of the most noteworthy aspects of the work:

- the visits of the Superior General and the celebrations of Chapters and Congresses;
- the visits of the individual Consultors to their areas of responsibility and their participation in various meetings;
- official Consulta meetings dealing with various issues of importance concerning the governing of the Congregation, according to prearranged dates;
- minor consultas dealing with urgent matters, together with the Council, although not necessarily with all of its members present.

There were three official Consultas: 12-16 December 2004, in Rome; 21-26 February 2005 in Rome; 12, 16-19 May in Kenya. In addition to these there were also numerous mini-consultas to deal with more urgent matters.

The Restructuring of the Congregation

The main topic of the three Consultas was that of the Restructuring of the Congregation, as mandated by the Synod and assigned to the General Council with a "Recommendation" (see Restructuring, p. 32).

During the month of December 2004 the General Council reviewed the work of the Synod which revealed

many positive aspects as well as citing several aspects that need to be improved. Therefore addressing the task of the "Recommendations" of the Synod itself, the General Council made several decisions regarding Restructuring.

The Council was in unanimous agreement about issuing the Superior General's "Commencement Letter" of the process of Restructuring as a way of making the entire Congregation aware of this reality. It is clearly stated in the letter that by "Restructuring" we mean: the need in the Congregation to discover new ways of being and acting as Passionists in the Church and in today's world beginning with our Identity, the "Memoria Passionis" and its implementation; the Mission; the urgency of inculturation in a globalized world. Additionally several phases of the development of this process were also addressed.

At the end of this extended sharing of insights and opinions, a Restructuring Commission was named for the purpose of assisting the General Council in developing a process to initiate and guide the Restructuring of the Congregation. The members of this Commission

are: Fr. Denis Travers, SPIR Provincial; Fr. Nicholas Postlethwaite, IOS Provincial; Fr. Adolfo Lippi, PRAES Provincial. These religious have accepted this responsibility.

Convinced of the fact that information about the Synod and its decisions for all the religious is a given essential for the commencement of



General Consulta in Kenya



Restructuring, the Council decided to print two booklets: "Part I - ACTS" of the Synod for the communities and the archives, and "Part II - Restructuring" for the individual religious.

Furthermore, during this Consulta, the situation of the new SALV Vice-Province was analyzed (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and a plan to sustain and guide the young Vice-Province in the beginning of its existence was studied and initiated. This was done especially in preparation for its first Congress.

The Consulta of 21-26 February 2005

The General Council dedicated part of its Consulta to meeting with the Restructuring Commission. The Superior General named Fr. Nicholas as President of the Commission. Then he also named Fr. Elie Muakasa (SALV) as secretary of the Commission with the main task of organizing communications and enabling an exchange of material that will arrive from various parts of the Congregation.

The Superior General delineated the fundamental task of the Commission as that of helping the General Council in the process of Restructuring. There was a long, detailed discussion to define the role of the Commission, in particular regarding the following areas: Focus the Congregation on the need for Restructuring, which is a process of re-vitalization; Delineate means of Restructuring; prepare a feasible project for Restructuring and its phases; Name viable means for dialog between the various areas of the Congregation; Assist the Congregation to overcome any resistance that may emerge with regard to Restructuring: reservations, fears and objections.

It is the responsibility of the General Council to guide the process of Restructuring. Additionally, a timeline for the next eight years of the process was prepared. During the next two years the Congregation must be given the opportunity to reflect on the main question: What image do we have of the Congregation today and how do we envision it to be in the future? The Chapter of 2006 must confirm this process.

The Council agrees with the profound spiritual and institutional meaning of such a process as well as its urgency: the Superior General "calls" (in the Biblical sense) the Congregation to this process in preparation for the Chapter of 2006. It should be like the call of the Holy Father, John Paul II, at the beginning of the third millennium. Faith alone will help us to confront fear of the unknown, when we sense that it is God who is calling us through various means. "This process, the fruit of reflection, dialogue and prayer is necessary if we wish to offer a particular style of Passionist life as a model for the future." Structures and their implementation will follow upon this vision.

In this perspective the role of the Moderator of the General Chapter will have a unique importance and consequently we must work at naming those qualities that

this person should possess. He should be an expert in Restructuring, a helper and not an architect of the project that we are trying to realize. The moderator must be the one to guide the work, however Restructuring must be born of reflection on our life, our spirituality and our tradition and should be elaborated in our plan for the future.

The Consulta of 12, 16-18 May in Kenya

The third Consulta took place in Kenya, in the new house of the CARLW Vicariate in the city of Molo. Although it is situated at the Equator, it is at an altitude of 2,500 Meters, and consequently, more than heat the climate is quite cool.

The Consulta was preceded by meetings with the General Council and the various elements of the Conference of Africa Passionists (CPA): the formation personnel, the administrators and economes of the Vicariates, the Major Superiors. It was a very rewarding and interesting experience for the General Council as well as for the various local entities.

The General Council, after having dealt with the various issues concerning the government of the Congregation, met with the Commission for Restructuring and, together, planned the steps to be taken in the near future. Questions were prepared for the Congregation during the second phase; they will be sent to the Provincial Councils, the Vice-Province and the Vicariates, as well as to individual communities. Three key questions were elaborated regarding the Charism, Presence and Mission. Naturally this is not a sociological study; rather it is a means of reflection for the Congregation. The questions will not deal with concrete aspects, but will be focused on the future. In order to involve the Congregation it is necessary to contact all the religious, therefore the letter will be personalized. The religious must meet as a community and the reply must be made as a community; however it is also possible to respond on a personal level.

This is the first phase of the process and its purpose is to gather reflections about the future of the Congregation in order to move on to the second phase when we delineate how to restructure the Congregation. Thirteen religious have already been consulted; now all the communities and the individual religious will be involved and shortly the Regional Conferences will also be part of the process. All of this will also serve as preparation for the General Chapter.

The upcoming meetings between the General Council and the Restructuring Commission are as follows: in Australia, 13-14 September 2005 and Rome, 5-6 December 2005.

Thus the Consulta in Africa was concluded. Early the next morning, the Council departed for Kanruno (on Lake Victoria) to participate in the priestly ordination of three Passionists of Kenya: Frs. Andrei Okeyo, Paul Mbugua and Evans Fwamba.



THE MISSIONARY LEGACY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

*Christopher Gibson, C.P.
Secretary General of the Missions*

Not too long ago Rome was overflowing with people from all over the world to say farewell to Pope John Paul II who had become such a prominent world figure. It was significant to note that among the crowds were many young people and many current and former world leaders. I would like to take this occasion to reflect on the missionary dimension of his reign that contributed much to what we have experienced through him. This can give much food for thought in our own missionary outreach to others.

1. JP II was a man who had a deep personal relationship with Christ. I have no doubt that the strength and stamina of this pontiff to accomplish all that he did even in the midst of great physical hardships came from his personal relationship with Christ. It is this relationship that launched him to reach out to try to make a difference on the world stage of his time guided by the Gospel values he treasured.

2. Mission for him was not only writing and preaching, which he did in abundance, but also taking direct action

in addressing the problematical issues of his day and making a difference in doing so. We can all think of examples of this, which have been treated profusely in the mass media in recent times.

3. In responding to issues that needed addressing, he took risks. Towards the very beginning of his pontificate he accepted to take on the mediation between Argentina and Chile over their mutual claim to the Beagle islands which could have led to a lot of bloodshed. Four years of negotiation between the two countries through the pope's envoy led to an agreement between the two countries. Not only was there the risk of mediating between two Catholic countries, but it also was a wonderful example for the world to see that differences between countries or differing parties can be solved through peaceful means. But taking risks can also lead to making mistakes. I, along with many others believe he did make mistakes. So it was since the

beginning with Peter. Both Christ and St. Paul highlighted that. Even great people have their limitations. To expect the contrary would be unrealistic.

4. We also see in the above-mentioned matter, John Paul II's desire for unity and peace that he fostered between nations and diverse religious groups. This is central to mission.

5. However unity doesn't presuppose compromising gospel truths. He was fully aware that what he said or did would not please everyone. On one of his visits to the US he quoted the apostle St. Paul regarding preaching in season and out of season. The important thing for him was to preach the gospel message of



John Paul II - Good Friday 2005



John Paul II - Visit to Mexico

“Do not be afraid to open the doors to Christ”

Christ and not cater to what others wanted to hear even with issues that were more 'democratically' acceptable by others.

6. John Paul II preached an incarnated word. He put into practice what John XXIII taught us: to have one hand placed on the heart of God and the other on earth. The combination leads to reading the signs of our times and addressing them from a perspective that is not of this world while remaining with our feet well planted in this world. It's a difficult choice but the only message that can be yeast in the dough. Part of this incarnational process presupposes an inculturated one. It also presupposes an outward looking attitude that addresses serious issues of our time especially issues of Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC). Our very existence as a human family as a Church and as Passionists depends on how vividly we keep before us these issues and commit ourselves to them. It's also vital that we don't lose sight of this as we face the restructuring of our Congregation.

7. John Paul II reached out to others and didn't simply wait for them to come to him. This is important to mission.

8. He preached not only in words but with his person. That's part of every Christian's responsibility: to be an extension of Christ who not only preached the Word but was the Word for others. John Paul was aware that he had a message to give not only when he was young and strong and preaching to the crowds, but when he was old and infirm and in the way he died; that was part of the message.

8. John Paul II knew how to make use of the mass media. While we Catholics have been slow in making use of mass media, we are slowly using it more. Think how many millions for instance were able to partake in John Paul II's funeral thanks to the mass media, even within Rome itself: people could even receive communion at the appropriate time in different sections of the city as they participated in the funeral with the help of large screens.

I hope these insights are as helpful to you as they have been for me.



A SPECIAL PASSIONIST APOSTOLATE IN THE PRISONS OF ROME DURING THE 18TH CENTURY



Fr. Fabiano Giorgini, C.P.

Fr. Paulino Alonso, C.P.

The Roman prisons of the 18th century were characterized by good, stable organization thanks to various state institutions and to Christian confraternities who offered material and spiritual assistance to the incarcerated. Those in charge of pastoral ministry frequently chose the Passionists as retreat preachers.

The Superiors General chose these religious from the Roman communities of Sts. John and Paul and the Scala Santa. There were almost always two priests - sometimes four -- each designated to different groups and different places. When necessary, confessors were also added. Usually they preached twice a day: a meditation on the Passion and then some kind of catechesis. The Passionists were always aware that their ministry was in collaboration with the prison ministry and they sought to offer to the detainees the most convenient means for doing penance and for returning to a moral and Christian lifestyle. Encouraging all to go to Confession and Communion was the ultimate goal and the criteria for measuring the successfulness of the retreat.

The Hospice of "San Michele A Ripa"

The Hospice of St. Michael, which during the 1800's encompassed four branches: elderly men, elderly women, boys and girls, was established on 20 May 1693 and was located in the Trastevere section of Rome near the central banks of the Tiber River, called the "Ripagrande". In 1703, Pope Clement XI instituted a reformatory facility to correct the vices of underage offenders and for those found guilty of petty crimes. It was called: "St. Michael's for delinquents". Pope Clement XII (1730-1740) erected a correctional facility for women involved in prostitution to which were also added those who were found guilty of crimes against the common good. Pius VIII (1829-1830) used the buildings provided by

Clement XI and Clement XII to form a single institution for incarcerated women called the "St. Michael's House for the guilty" . Sometimes the number in this facility reached 250 and they were divided into three classes: those who had committed crimes against the common good, those who were first-time offenders and those who were habitual offenders.

A pious union of priests, founded in 1838, was entrusted with the pastoral care of the entire establishment. A prelate, the "chierico di camera", possessing all the necessary and opportune faculties, directed the spiritual dimension of the establishment and also cared for material matters. One of these prelates was the future Pope Pius IX. The hospice was declared a parish by Leo XII (1823-1829).

In addition to the apostolic ministry undertaken by the Passionists on behalf of groups of elderly men and women, boys and girls from 1840 to 1886 there were also four triduum and four retreats that were preached to those sentenced, including eight retreats to young men and four retreats to young women.

The New Prisons

The massive edifice of the New Prisons, found on Via Giulia, also called the "innocenziane" because they were begun by Innocent X (1644-1655), were praised for their consistency, security and internal order. In 1828, the young men and under-age boys that were found guilty or in need of disciplinary attention were transferred by Leo XII to the hospice of St. Michael.

From 1854 to 1890 the Passionists preached 19 week-long retreats in the prisons and four three-day retreats. During the years 1860-1861 Fr. Pio Cayro, General Consultor, preached on various



Ven. Fr. Norberto Cassinelli, C.P.



Sundays to those in solitary confinement, i.e. those in small cells with little lighting. During some years all would receive the sacraments. In 1854 the Passionists preached retreats lasting three days to incarcerated politicians, and about 150 went to Confession and Communion. In 1855 there was "a general Communion by everyone". In 1864 the two preachers remained for dinner in the convent of St. Gerolamo della Carità. In 1886, although the administrators themselves were being investigated, and were therefore uncertain and agitated about the sentence of the court, nevertheless many went to Confession and Communion.



The complex of the Hospice of San Michele

Life-sentence Prisons

In this center, called the "Beneficenza", there were homeless young men, boys, orphans, unmarried women and older women; however we are concerned with the incarcerated. During the years 1849-1850 the Passionists preached retreats to those who had received life sentences. The three preachers, Frs. Emidio Cherli (1813-1873), Sisto Tedeschi (1813-1874) and Pio Cayro (1800-1864) testified that those imprisoned listened attentively to the preaching and to the catechesis and almost all of them went to Confession and Communion.

Prisons for young offenders of Santa Balbina and other prisons

During the years 1854-1906 the Passionists preached at least 15 retreats to under-age offenders in the prison of Santa Balbina. Along with their meditations and catechesis the Passionists added material on the Passion and in 1854, all went to Confession and Communion. In 1860 the preachers experienced a particular grace. The Passioists

preached on two occasions in the prisons on Via Altieri: in 1883 when the preacher was the Ven. Norberto Cassinelli (1829-1911) and the other in 1890. The Passionists preached four retreats to the prisons at Castel Sant'Angelo.

In 1828 Frs. Francesco Maria Stocchi (1776-1832) and Blessed Lorenzo Maria Salvi (1782-1856) preached retreats at which all went to Confession and Archbishop Soglia, elimosinary of the Holy See, gave Communion to 209. During the retreat of 1830 one of the missionaries was Blessed Dominic Barberi (1792-

1849) and in 1837 the preacher was the Consultor, Fr. Bartolomeo Arnaldi (1776-1856). In 1897 two retreats were preached, one for women and one for men. It should also be noted that preaching was done in the hospice of the Madonna del Rifugio in the complex of St. Onofrio where there were some prisoners.



Blessed Lorenzo Maria Salvi, C.P.



The interior of the prison for juvenile offenders

The Preachers

Among the thirty or so missionaries who were assigned to one of the prisons, we find the following listing: Fr. Diego Alberici (1846-1904), co-founder of the Daughters of the Passion, (Mexican Sisters); Fr. Giuliano Brezzo (1816-1884), assiduous missionary; Fr. Stanislao Cerri (1841-1901), and Fr. Emidio Cherli (1813-1873), General Consultor and much sought-after missionary; Fr. Giuseppe Maria Falco (1817-1886), Fr. Roberto Torraca (1806-1880), the rector of Sts. John and Paul; Fr. Raimondo

Vaccari (1804-1864), who in 1842 was assigned by Fr. Antonio Testa to the missions in Australia as Apostolic Prefect; Fr. Vincenzo Grotti (1820-1883), Provincial of St. Joseph's (England) and Procurator General, and Venerable Norberto Cassinelli (1829-1911), the Director of St. Gabriel. In 1886, Fr. Norberto, then General Consultor, preached in the prison of St. Michael a Ripa and realized that, during the inauguration of the Reign of Italy, the religious did not participate, not even at Easter. So in addition to retreats, he took it upon himself to explain the

Faith and to refute the errors that they had been taught. The dedication of all these religious in serving their impoverished brothers and sisters is truly admirable. Even those preachers who were in demand and who were very capable, voluntarily undertook this apostolic ministry. Thus we have some insight into how they truly understood their vocation as missionaries and of the value of communal, apostolic ministry.



CONCERNING THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CULT OF RELICS

Fr. Giovanni Zubiani, C.P.
Postulator General

At this point in time in which the return to the veneration of the Relics of Saints and Beati are confused with the collection of the same and, at times gives way to motives that are far from devotion, in this article I hope to offer a short excursus to help to shed some light on the need for prudence in using these objects and to urge the observance of the Law of the Church in this matter. It would seem that this is necessary in light of the appearance of relics of our saints in places that sell religious articles and which are not prepared by the Postulator General, but which, none-the-less bear the "de visu" unauthentic, and therefore false, Passionist seal in wax on relics of various of our saints. These are sometimes found in the sacristies of our Passionist nuns and Sisters and bear forged seals, despite the protests of some Postulators, and other individuals, which go against a sense of honesty and propriety that one would suppose exists in our houses.

In particular we wish to restate that relics, and even more so the bodies of the Saints and Beati, do not belong to individuals or to religious Orders, Congregations or Dioceses, but to the Church, which oversees, in the person of the Supreme Pontiff through the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, the proper use of these materials.

We also point out that with the Code of Canon Law of 1983, the very precise legislation that was found in the Code of 1971 regarding the discipline of the cult of relics has been abbreviated. However, if that which was described in detail as normative has been eliminated, there is still exists in the present code elements that have been restated from the preceding norms. And as such Can. 19 of the 1983 text, in the case of the absence of "express prescription of law" it states that "the jurisprudence and the praxis of the Roman Curia, and the common and constant opinion of learned persons" should be employed. It is this praxis that is applied and it is this praxis that is followed by the postu-

lators and which is permitted by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

Therefore it is necessary to return to the application of that legislation that is recognized and used by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, the particular legislation that is not found in the present Code of Canon Law, and which, however, is already contained in the Code of 1917 and which is referred to in an article by Cardinal Palazzini, the Prefect of this Congregation, in which he states: (1), "Regarding the norms provided for the discipline of the cult of relics: Any unofficial (not-formally recognized) relic, old or recent, whether of canonized or beatified saints, or of those who died in odor of sanctity, even if the relic is not officially recognized and approved, may be venerated privately. (...) unofficial relics worthy of the same honor may be retained in private homes or carried by the faithful (can. 1282 § 1). This is not the case with legitimate relics of the saints and beati, except with the permission of the Ordinary of the locale (can. 1282 § 1). (2) In order for relics to be used in public worship prior ecclesiastical authorization is always required, by which a decision is made regarding the authenticity of the relic that is being displayed for public veneration.



Authentics documentation and relic with wax seal



Consequently, (a) during public worship in public churches and oratories, even those currently existing, only those relics that are designated as genuine or which are accompanied by the document of authentication by a cardinal, the local Ordinary (excluding the vicar general, except with a special mandate) or of some ecclesiastical authority who possesses the faculty to authenticate by means of an apostolic indult (e.g. the Postulators general; can. 1283, §§ I-2). (b) The approbation of the local Ordinary should be given according to the spirit of the Tridentine Council, i.e. the Ordinary will make his own deliberations, after having consulted with theologians and prudent advisors, and as always, guided by the criteria of truth and piety. In dubious cases, prior to resolving any controversy, the Ordinary will listen to the decision of the Metropolitan and of the bishops of the province in the Provincial Council. Where this not possible, recourse to the Holy See should be sought (Tridentine Council, sess. XXV; AAS, 18 (1926), p. 262). (c) When previously approved relics for public veneration are transferred to another diocese, the verification of the local Ordinary should be sought not for a new approval but so that he is aware of an approbation that was previously given; and then he will give authorization for the exposition of the same in worship. (d) The local Ordinaries will prudently remove from worship any relic which they know with certainty is not authentic (can. 1284). (e) Relics, whose authenticities have been lost, should not be publicly displayed except following a decision of the local Ordinary, excepting the vicar general not in possession of a special mandate (can. 1285 § I). (f) Nevertheless, antique relics may be venerated in worship as they have been in the past, unless by means of convincing argumentation they are deemed to be bogus or altered (can. 1285 § 2). (g) Whoever consciously confects or sells false relics ipso facto incurs excommunication reserved to the

Ordinary (can. 1326). The reason for this severe sentence on behalf of the Church is to preclude ignorance, lucrative enterprises and superstitious faith that this very delicate matter may cause."¹

Given the current practice, one can also object citing the that the Council of Trent belongs to the distant past and that the legislation of the Code of 1917, from which the norms come that were cited above, is no longer in use and which was superseded as is stated in the Preface to the 1983 Code, where there can be found the following interesting lines: "When the meeting of this group took place at the beginning of month of April 1968, there was general agreement concerning the necessity to not include in the new Code any laws concerning the liturgy, or norms concerning the processes of beatification and canonization, or norms concerning relationships of the Church ad extra."²

The exclusion of norms concerning Causes of Beatification from the Code of 1983 requires a new ad hoc legislation which is found in the Apostolic Constitution of 1983 *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*, and in the *Norme della Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi* approved and ratified again by the Pope in 1983 through the office of the then Prefect, Cardinal Palazzini who basically, in the case of relics, restates: "To

the same the same Congregation (of the Causes of Saints) is left the decision regarding all matters concerning the authenticity and the conservation of relics."³



Relics prepared by the General Postulation

1. P. PALAZZINI, *Reliquie*, *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, X, 758-759.
 2. *ENCHIRIDION VATICANUM* 8, *CODICE DI DIRITTO CANONICO promulgato da S. S. Giovanni Paolo II, Prefazione*, p. 39.
 3. *ENCHIRIDION VATICANUM* 8, *DIVINUS PERFECTIONIS MAGISTER*, Titolo II, art. 3. Cfr. *REGOLAMENTO DELLA S. CONGREGAZIONE PER LE CAUSE DEI SANTI*, Titolo I, art. 1, pp. 467-499 e in *Appendice a R. RODRIGO, Manuale delle Cause di Beatificazione e Canonizzazione*, Roma 2004, pp. 378-490.



Given that "the causes of the canonization of the servants of God are regulated by special pontifical law" (CIC 1983, can 1403 §1), which is not inserted in the new code of 1983, if not for those dispositions that refer to universal law, not containing anything contrary to the new Code, we can therefore conclude that there is nothing that was stated by Cardinal Palazzini has been modified, except for the norm 2g concerning the excommunication reserved to the ordinary - no longer in force - but which, however, still prohibits the confection and distribution of false relics. By "false" I think it would be good to clarify that by this is meant not only the supposed authenticity of the particle, but also the use of false seals and authentications, so that the veracity of a relic is not compromised by its resemblance to authentic seals, but by authority to issue decrees of authenticity, without which, a fallacy is created by which one is morally responsible.

One recent example that illustrates the particular law cited above was the peregrination of the urn containing the remains of the Founder at the Provincialate of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross in Ciampino, at the end of March 2004. Under my direction, the *nulla osta* was requested from the bishop where the relics were located, i.e. the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, and from the bishop of the place where the urn would be brought in pilgrimage, i.e. the bishop of Albano. The two documents, together with the request of the Postulator, were sent to the Holy See, i.e. to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. This Congregation issued an *Istructio* directed to both the local Ordinaries, requesting from the first one that a tribunal be composed consisting of the Delegate, the Promotor and a Notary to verify the seals and to prepare the urn, properly sealed, for the pilgrimage; the second, the receiving Ordinary, was requested to inspect the integrity of the seals upon arrival so as to permit veneration. When the urn was returned to Rome, again the Tribunal of the Vicariate had to verify the seals affixed by the Episcopal Delegate and the placement of the remain of St. Paul of the Cross under the altar.

The final seals of the Vicariate closed the encasement that sealed the tomb. With the reports of those that accompanied the relics - the Mother Provincial and the two bishops, a folder was prepared and was sent to the Holy See which is the ultimate guarantee of the authenticity of the relics. The Postulator provided small relics to be left as a gift to the pastors. Such relics were placed in thecae to which was affixed the authentic seal in red wax and were accompanied by documents of authenticity which only he can issue with his embossed seal.

This required process confirms the use and the need for such procedures. Therefore, according to the norms expressed above, and exemplified in the case cited, and which are still valid and permitted by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, it can be stated that:

It is the sole right of the bishop, not of other local ordinaries or religious - since it is not their area of competence - by their proper authority and in communion with the Holy See, to guarantee the authenticity of relics and how they are managed. In the case of canonical recognition of the mortal remains of a saint, as well as their removal to a place other than that church where they are pre-



Relics of St. Gemma Galgani



Various relics at Sts. John and Paul

served, permission must be sought from the Holy See prior to the *nulla osta* of the local Ordinaries.

The authenticity of relics, of significant nature or particles, is guaranteed by a document of authenticity that may only be issued by a Cardinal, a bishop, by an ecclesiastical authority who possesses an apostolic Indult and by a Postulator accredited by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

The Postulator General is so designated and specifically entrusted with this ministry by the Superior General and his Council. This personal nomination for a specific task that is given by general Authority - the same that ratifies Provincial elections for another service, that of the provinces - is not sufficient:

it is the Congregation for the Causes of Saints - the only competent authority - after having been duly informed, ratifies such a request for nomination and inserts it in the *Acta Congregationis pro Causis Sanctorum*, thereby accrediting and recognizing the nomination of the Postulator for the purpose of the Causes of Beatification and also the ordering, creation and distribution of relics to the faithful.

Therefore, it is the sole authority of the Postulator General to create, authenticate and distribute relics of all the members of the Congregation (Servants of God, Venerabili, Beati and Saints), or to whomever he specifically delegates such a faculty. The theory that

with the Canonization of a member of an Institute the competence of the Postulator general ceases in this regard is not juridically valid. The only exception would be in a case where the Postulator expressly and personally delegates with specific parameters, as in the case of the Vice-postulator within the provinces, named as such by the Postulator general with the recommendation of the provincial Superior. Anyone else who illegitimately assumes this right commits a fallacy and is in violation of the canon law of the Church.

Only the Postulator general, whose nomination has been made by the authority of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, which has ratified this task before the Holy See, therefore has, by reasons of the office and by right the faculty to authenticate relics by means of a seal and a certificate of authenticity. With regard to the specific identity of the relics, this refers to those "ex ossibus" and those "ex corpore" of the saints and beati of the order or congregation of which the postulator is a member and of those causes which he has undertaken.

Therefore it is necessary for us, obedient sons of the Church, to attend to the verification of the authenticity of relics preserved in our religious houses, to the verification of the seals, to the verification of the accompanying certification and obedience to the canon law and its implementation.



THE GENERAL ARCHIVES: An open door to the cultural and spiritual patrimony of the Passionist Congregation

Editor's Note: In January, 2005, Fr. Juan Llorente (FAM) was reassigned to the Passionist community of Bethany in the Holy Land and consequently, resigned his position as General Archivist. To date a new General Archivist has not been named. There is staff of very competent assistants ever ready to serve you.

To visit the General Archives is like walking among all the former and present "giants" of our Congregation, beginning with our Holy Founder up to the present day. There are copies of everything written by and about Passionists, including all of our magazines and Province happenings, etc. Here is a place where one is able to share in the many talents, insights and stories of us Passionists. The doors are always open to those who wish to obtain any information. Many do take advantage of coming to the General Archives for different reasons - even non-Passionists, students in Rome or the personnel of various embassies

-- all are welcome. Information can also be requested via FAX, email or ordinary mail.

Presently, one project that is being undertaken is that of categorizing the many papers and letters, etc. of Fr. Carmelo Naselli, C.P. that were recently obtained. The computer data base program has been changed to Microsoft Access which now makes it much easier to save and computerize data.

Remember that anytime you are in Rome, you are more than welcome to visit the General Archives and experience all the wonders of the past and present history of our Passionist Congregation.



The General Archives



PASPAC

Asia - Pacific Conference



Religious of the CRUC-THOM Vicariate

L-R: Frs. Martin Santiago, Regional Vicar; Michael Higgins, Provincial (CRUC); Anthony Tharayil and Joseph Van Leeuwin, Consultors

The Congress of the Regional Vicariate of St Thomas the Apostle, India.

The Congress was held on 20-25 April 2005, at Passionist Jyotir Bhavan, Carmelaram, Bangalore. Father Michael Higgins CP, Provincial, presided.

The Congress coincided with the opening of the Vicariate's Silver Jubilee year. The first Passionists arrived in India in March 1981, 24 years ago.

Father Alex Steinmiller of Holy Cross Province was facilitator. Twenty six voting members were present, including the Provincial and the General Consultor, as well as two student observers.

Developments of the past four years were acknowledged. Our apostolic ministries expanded during this period, though no completely new initiative was undertaken. The Prisoner Rehabilitation Project now has a permanent home built on land we acquired for this purpose. The two parishes continue to flourish with many projects for the social betterment of the people.

Major discussions were held on the topics of Mission and Ministry, Financial Accountability and

Stability, Building Projects, Formation, Vocational Promotion, Leadership, and finally, a Vision for the Vicariate.

In order to overcome restrictions on the number of our students admitted to our school of Philosophy, it was decided to move the Philosophy community from Bophal to Bangalore.

No less than five new pastoral initiatives were proposed. All were accepted, in the sense that the Congress recommended to the incoming Vicar and Council to implement as many of them as might be opportune, along with the long-standing commitment to the mission in the north of India. These included acceptance of a poor parish, Aids ministry, broad social ministry and retreat ministry. The Congress agreed to a process of dialogue on the visitation assessment of the Vicariate and communities, and to further work on the evaluation.

Father Michael Higgins announced the appointment of Fr. Martin Gabriel Santiago as Regional Vicar. The Congress then elected two Consultors, Antony Tharayil and Joseph Van Leeuwin. The whole Congress was conducted in an atmosphere of joy and reconciliation.



The delegates deliberate at the PASS Chapter



L-R: Frs. Julito Villarente, Wilfredo Estraza, Edwin Flor, Rene Ventajar and Apolinario Plaza

Second Provincial Chapter (PASS), Philippines April 11-15, 2005

The Chapter was held at Holy Cross Spiritual Center, Calumpang, General Santos City, in Southern Mindanao with Father Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General, presiding.

Father Apolinario (Pol) Plaza, Provincial, gave a detailed and frank report on the developments of the past four years.

Much has been achieved. The bishop invited the Congregation to leave one Parish, Marikina, in Metro Manila, but divided the area and gave us the undeveloped half. A new Parish Church is under construction. Two missionaries were sent to Papua New Guinea, though the venture did not prosper. New ministries are proposed: a new parish on the Bataan Peninsula, sending missionaries to Sweden and Vietnam. A philosophy house has been opened

in the South, and the Novitiate was transferred to the South. Numbers have been increasing, and there are more students in theology than ever before. There have been difficulties too, including financial difficulties with a large rise in expenditures.

The Chapter concentrated on a revision of the "Province Legislation". The main topics discussed with were: Community Life, the Apostolate, including foreign missions, Formation, Lay Partnership, Administration and Finance.

The Chapter was conducted in a very peaceful and even joyful atmosphere.

Father Edwin Flor was elected Provincial, his consultors are: Fr. Wilfredo (Willy) Estraza, First Consultor, Fr. Reneto (René) Ventajar, Fr. Apolinario (Pol) Plaza, and Fr. Julito (Titing) Villarente.



CLAP

Latin American Conference



Center: Fr. Augusto Canali, C.P., General Consultor, religious and novices of the CALV Province (Brazil).

Canonical Visitation of the CALV Province of Brazil

In preparation for the upcoming Provincial Chapter that will take place during 25 - 29 July of this year, Fr. Augusto Canali, General Consultor, made a canonical visitation to the 17 communities of the CALV Province, situated in the southern and northeastern areas of Brazil during 28 February - 23 April, 2005. During the period of 29 April - 09 May a visitation took place to the community in the region of the mission of Metoro (Mozambique, Africa)

In each of the communities, the Consultor guided reflections about the Restructuring of the Congregation, a topic which was discussed during the last General Synod and he presented the steps of this process that are being proposed and presented by the Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano and General Council.

At this time the vocation prospects of the Province in the various phases of formation are very hopeful: 8 aspirants; 9 postulants; 5 novices (2 from the CALV Province, 1 of the DOMIN Vicariate and 2 of the VICT Vicariate) and 15 Theology students.

Open Congress

The Congress of the LIBER Vicariate took place from 14 to 17 March 2005, in the city of Hidrolandia (GO - Brazil). The following religious were elected to positions of leadership: Fr. Célio Amaro (Regional Vicar, re-elected), Fr. José Roberto and Fr. Antonio Vermeij (Consultors).

50th Anniversary of the Parish "La Piedad", San Juan, Puerto Rico



Preparations have begun for the upcoming celebration of the 50th anniversary of the "La Piedad" Parish in the Isla Verde section of San Juan, Puerto Rico on 05 January 2006. The CORI Province and the Vicariate of the Caribbean are collaborating in the planning of this celebration. This event marks 50 years of Passionist presence in service of the community of the beautiful Island of Puerto Rico. Various committees have been formed, in particular those composed of the laity whose collaboration and participation will insure a variety of activities on the parish level. It is important to note that this event has served to highlight the historical memory of our presence on the island and it is for this purpose that a research study is being done.

Passionist Parish church of "La Piedad", Isla Verde, San Juan, Puerto Rico



CIPI

Italian Conference

36th Assembly of CIPI (Inter-Provincial Conference of the Italian Passionists)

The annual Assembly of CIPI took place in Rome at Sts. John and Paul from 31 Jan. to 02 Feb. 2005. The moderator was Fr. Pierluigi Nava of the

Monfort Fathers, who spoke on the topic of Restructuring in reference to this topic that was treated during the recent General Synod.

The Assembly was introduced by its president, Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, who spoke about what was discussed during the Synod regarding the importance of Restructuring and as well as decisions that were made and the basis for these decisions. With the help of Fr. Nava, the Assembly reflected on ways to increase the vitality of the Congregation in the process of Restructuring and the criteria to used to form small groups for discussion.

The second part of the Assembly addressed the life of the Provinces and the various commissions that, following the report of Fr. Luigi, reported on the activities that took place and those being planned for the future. Additionally, the Assembly addressed the issue of the National Novitiate. Since the level of collaboration of the Italian provinces has declined, it was decided to support the establishment of a novitiate (or novitiates) on the provincial or inter-provincial levels while allowing for the possibility of the involvement of additional provinces.

During the Assembly Fr. Giovanni Pelà was elected to be the new secretary, replacing Fr. Franco Bonato and the new Assistant for the Passionist Lay Movement was Fr. Giovanni Giorgi, replacing Fr. Alberto Pierangioli.

Centenary of the Foundation of the LAT Province

Beginning on 23 October 2005 the LAT Province of Italy will begin the celebration of the centenary of its foundation. The commission established for this purpose has programmed the following events: the solemn Inauguration of the Centenary (Manduria - 23 Oct.2005); a Symposium (Manduria- 27-29 Oct. 2005); the "pilgrimage" of the relics of St. Paul of the Cross to cities in the province connected with St. Paul of the Cross: Troia Civita, Gaeta, Roma and Monte Argentario. The pilgrimage will be accompanied by a traveling exhibition highlighting Passionist life and spirituality in the Italian provinces of Puglia, Calabria and Basilicata. The centenary will conclude in Manduria with the celebration of the Eucharist at which Bishop Franc Rodè, Prefect of the Congregation for Religious will preside.



*1° Centenario della Provincia
Passionista
del Sacro Costato di Gesù
di Puglia, Calabria e Basilicata*

23 ottobre 2005 - 29 ottobre 2006

Centenary poster of the LAT Province



CPA

African Conference



Fr. Filippo Astori, C.P. Regional Vicar (CARLW)

Congress of CARLW Vicariate

The Congress of the CARLW Vicariate of Kenya took place during 8 - 10 February 2005 in Karungu, Kenya. The Provincial Superior, Fr. Giuseppe Martinelli (CORM) presided at the Congress. The theme of the Congress was: "Toward a more religious and more Kenyan Vicariate - toward a renewed way of living the charism". The focus of the Congress centered on the evaluation of projects and their development, as well as concern for on-going formation. The Congress elected Fr. Filippo Astori as Regional Vicar. This will be his second term. Two consultors were also elected: Fr. Leonardo Okuku, First Consultor and Fr. John Muthengi, Second Consultor.

Congress of the MATAF Vicariate

The MATAF Vicariate celebrated its Congress from 17 - 19 January 2005 in the community of Forest Hill, Botswana. The Provincial Superior (PATR), Fr. Martin Coffey presided at the Congress. The discussions during the Congress centered on Passionist presence and our apostolates in the two nations of South Africa and Botswana, as well as the possibility of establishing a foundation in Zambia, where the Vicariate is experiencing growth in the area of vocations. The Congress elected Fr. Arthur McCann as the Regional Vicar and Fr. Michael Ogwena and Anthony Mdhuli, Consultors.



Religious of the MATAF Regional Vicariate



The Congress of the GEMM Vicariate

From 8 to 10 March 2005 the GEMM Vicariate of Tanzania held its eighth Congress. The discussion during the Congress centered on the topic of on-going formation. The Congress took place in the Vicariate center of Veyula in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. This spirit was no doubt the result of good planning. The Congress produced 7 decisions, 9 recommendations and 1 exhortation. At this time, self-support and personnel continue to be the major challenges of the Vicariate; however it is believed that slowly these goals are being achieved.

Fr. Roberto del Corso was elected as Regional Vicar. His two consultors are: Fr. Cesare Pozzobon, First Consultor and Fr. Mzee Willfred as Second Consultor. Fr. Giuseppe Martinelli (Provincial CORM) presided at the Congress and officiated at its closing.



Religious of the GEMM Vicariate

The Congress of the SALV Vice-Province

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the first Congress of the SALV Vice-Province took place from 14-17 March, 2005. The Provincial Superior, Fr. Guy Sionneau (MICH), was the moderator, and the Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, presided at the Congress and officiated at its closing. The central theme was that of strengthening its unity. In addition to the topic of unity, self-support was a significant and challenging matter so that a sense of serenity and a stable future for the religious of the Vice-Province might be achieved. In these two areas, the new leadership of the Vice-Province must work assiduously to encourage all the religious to assume responsibility. This First Congress elected the following to positions of leadership: Vice-Provincial, Fr. Emery Kibal, and four consultors: Fr. Michel Woko (First Consultor) and Fr. Martin Fripont, Fr. Bernard Mayele and Fr. Jean-Claude Wala Wala. To the Vice-Province and to all the Passionist religious of the Congo, we offer our best wishes!



Fr. Emery Kibal, SALV Vice-Provincial



CII

Iberian Conference



Centenary Poster of the FAM Province

CENTENARY OF THE FAM PROVINCE

This year the FAM Province of Spain (Zaragoza) will mark the centenary of its foundation which originated in the retreats of Mexico, Cuba and Chile. From there it expanded to Spain, Venezuela, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Guatemala, ceding Chile to the SANG Province. Consequently, during this centenary year, the Provincial Chapter will take place where the province originated, i.e. Mexico.

Following is a description of the Centenary poster: In the center is the Passionist Sign which identifies us: "The memory of the Passion". A circle of light emanates from this center with the colors of each country and place where we are located. The olive branch envelopes us in content and tradition with definite biblical and Passio-centric roots, in addition to incorporating the palm branch in our Sign. The four branches symbolize our four areas of ministry which are, however, united in the same trunk. The sandals, on the "horizon of hope", which are easily recognizable, define us as ready for ministry. They are worn out by those who have preceded us in ministry; they await new feet for the mission. They are foot-wear of hope, light-weight and poor that project our itinerant life toward new horizons. The text: "We announce the Passion of Christ", a Pauline echo as well as an echo of our Constitutions, recall the reason for our existence -- yesterday, today y always. The background, radiant with clarity and light, and its colorful impact, is symbolic of the joy of our vocation and our jubilee celebration. In summary: the Memory-Horizon of a charism and a burst of joy.

The International Commission of Solidarity and JPIC

On April 8-9, 2005 the International Commission of Solidarity and JPIC met in Rome. As always each member spoke about the work that they realized during the past semester. Some of these are:

-- The recognition in the United Nations (UN) of the Passionist International Commission in the Department of Public Information. It is expected that within two years it will be officially recognized by the Council of Social Economy (ECOSOC).

-- Our web page, <http://www.passionistworld.org>, is now available in three languages.

-- The network between all of

the Passionists (male and female) that are working in the area of JPIC continues to develop.

-- A booklet to help raise consciousness of many issues in this area of Justice and Peace has been printed and has been distributed among many religious.

The Commission then named areas for future development:

- There are still many Passionist religious who do not know about JPIC, or are not aware of this dimension of being Passionist.

- The Solidarity Fund is increasing gradually but the participation of all the Provinces still has to be achieved. Many Provinces still do not know about the Solidarity Fund and some economically strong Provinces have hardly shown signs of life.



Fr. Jefferies Foales,
Justice & Peace Commission

- We wish every Province to have a delegate for JPIC.

- Permanent formation on JPIC is an on-going need.

- The Commission will continue to study its educational role as well as how to establish better means of communication among the different Provinces.



Lay Passionist Movement of CIPI (Interprovincial Conference of Italian Passionists)

The National Council of the Lay Passionist Movement of CIPI met in the retreat house at Sts. John and Paul, Rome on 15-16 Jan. 2005. The meeting was attended by 38 members as well as Fr. Luigi Vaninetti and Fr. Alberto Pierangioli, National Assistant of the LPM. Among the decisions that were made are the following:

- (1) The National Convention of the LPM will continue to be held every two years; in 2006 the meeting will be hosted by the Province in Sicily with a topic to be determined.
- (2) The Coordinator will study ways of reviving the publication of some means of communication for which there is an urgent need.
- (3) An LPM Day will be planned to make the Movement better known and also for the purpose of fund-raising, possibly on the feast of St. Gemma, the patroness of LPM. The results of the elections are as follows: Franco Nicolò, of the DOL Province was confirmed as the National Coordinator; Dario Simonitto, of the CFIXI Province, the Vice-Coordinator and Maria Rosa Pacchera of the CORM Province, Treasurer.

Shrine of St. Gemma, Lucca: Inauguration of Pilgrims' Reception Center

At the Shrine of St. Gemma, Lucca, the feast of the Saint, May 16, was particularly joyful this year due to inauguration of the "Casa del Pellegrino", the Pilgrim Reception Center. The Center is located on the property of the Shrine of St. Gemma and the Monastery of the Passionist Nuns.

In the past, in order to offer groups of pilgrims a place for rest and refreshments, the nuns had to ask permission of the local bishop to allow these people to enter within the monastery cloister. To respect this dimension of the nuns' life and to offer a more commodious facility, it was decided to construct a free standing building on the monastery grounds. The newly inaugurated Pilgrim Reception Center can accommodate approximately 200 people. Together with restroom facilities there are areas for the groups to rest and enjoy a box lunch.

The Superior of the Monastery, Mother Paola explained that this place for pilgrims is the gift of the devotees of St. Gemma to the citizens of the city as well as to "the friends of the Shrine" who, even from far-away places made donations toward the realization of this project. To make reservations for groups to visit the Shrine and use this new facility, contact Mrs. Maria Sivoletta at the Monastery.



The blessing of the new Pilgrim Center



“...with faith, trust and joy.”

Shortly after the election of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger as Pope Benedict XVI, our Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, wrote to His Holiness on behalf of the Congregation to offer his best wishes and prayers:

To the Holy Father His Holiness Benedict XVI

The Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ, all the men and women religious and the laity of the Passionist Family have received the announcement of the election of your Holiness as Successor to Peter with faith, trust and joy.

We assure you of our filial obedience and of our prayer that you will guide the Church in your role of Father and Pastor according to the designs established by Providence, even in deep and troubled waters, certain of the presence of Jesus with you in the boat and of the living wind of the Spirit of Truth in the sails: "The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything."(Jn. 14:26)

We fondly recall your presence and the homily that you preached when you presided at the concelebrated Eucharist on the feast of our Founder, St. Paul of the Cross, in the Basilica of Sts. John and Paul in Rome, during our General Synod of 1992, a visit that we hope you will repeat as Supreme Pontiff. We also happily remember your summer visits to celebrate daily Eucharist at our community residence in Regensburg.

Holiness, as we extend our sincere best wishes for your Supreme Apostolic Ministry, we want to assure you of our filial devotion and obedience as we kiss the ring of the Fisherman.

May the Passion of Jesus Christ be always in our hearts!

Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio CP
Superior General
Piazza Ss. Giovanni e Paolo, 13 - 00184 Roma

In response to the Superior General's letter of congratulations, Fr. Ottaviano received the following response:

SECRETARIA DI STATO

PRIMA SEZIONE
AFFARI GENERALI

The Vatican, 28th April, 2005
N. 7

Reverend Father,

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has received your message, in which you, in the name of the Family of Passionist Religious, expressed your affectionate good wishes on occasion of his holiness' elevation to the Chair of Peter, assuring him of your special prayers for the success of his universal ministry.

The Holy Father, who appreciates this gesture of devout homage, would like to express his deep-felt gratitude by granting you and all who have been joined with you in your expression of filial veneration his Apostolic Blessing as a sign of abundant heavenly graces.

I avail myself of this occasion to convey my sincere esteem of Your Most Reverend Paternity.

Fraternally in the Lord
† Leonardo Sandri
Sostituto

Fr. OTTAVIANO D'EGIDIO, CP
Superior General of the Passionists
Piazza Ss. Giovanni e Paolo, 13 - 00184
Roma



Fr. Laurentino Novoa, C.P. of the Spanish FAM Province, is a former student of the Holy Father. He is currently a theology professor in the "Centro Regional de Estudios Teológicos" of Aargón. He first met Pope Benedict XVI in 1969 when the latter was a professor of theology in the University of Regensburg (Ratisbona), in Germany. It was during the period that his friendship began with the Pontiff, a relationship that has continued to the present day. Below we offer a part of the interview that was conducted with Fr. Laurentino on 21 May 2005, in the diocesan center of Teruel, Spain.

--What is your relationship with the current Pope Benedict XVI?

I met Joseph Ratzinger in 1969 at the University of Regensburg where he taught dogmatic theology. Apart from my relationship with him as a professor, I also developed a close friendship with him when he built his residence near where we students lived in the Passionist community of Bavaria, and since we were neighbors, a strong friendship developed. As a matter of fact, even in 1977 when he was named bishop of Munich, he would always return to Regensburg to celebrate Mass in our chapel and have breakfast with us. Then in 1981, Pope John Paul II called him to Rome as Prefect of the Congregation for the Faith, one of the most important congregations of the Church.

--Have you had any kind of contact with him since he was elected Pope?

Naturally, I wrote to congratulate him. I would have liked to have participated in his inaugural Mass. Our relationship is that we know each other and we have a certain friendship, but it is also a relationship with our community, a very close relationship. Benedict XVI proved wrong the saying that he who enters the Conclave as "Pope" will exist as "Cardinal". Those of us, who have known Ratzinger well, never thought that he would have been elected, because he is a man of great simplicity. Theology and the intellectual life involving study and reflection on the Christian Faith is what he really enjoys. I believe that he had really hoped to retire. On the other hand, he has never been a man who had political ambitions, and because of this we thought that he would do everything possible not to be elected. Therefore, for believers this is one more proof that this is an act of God. Although for me his nomination has been a source of great joy, I have to honestly say that I was surprised.

-- There has been a lot of talk about his talents. Does what is reported in the press coincide with what you know of Ratzinger?

I don't believe so and the proof is that since he was elected successor of St. Peter people have had a very good impression of him, in particular they are impressed by his simplicity, his style preaching, etc. I think that the media has presented a very distorted view of him and the reason for this may be due to the mission that he has carried out for the Church. Ratzinger had to work to maintain the authenticity and the purity of the Faith and this means making decisions that not everyone likes.

--In his decision-makings thus far, has he set any standards for the Church?

John Paul II and Benedict XVI are two very different people, although they shared a great friendship and were in spiritual harmony. Regarding matters of doctrine, ethics and morality I don't believe that there will be many changes because the Pope has strong moral convictions. Nevertheless, in other areas he will surely make some positive changes.



Fr. Laurentino Novoa (FAM)



Passionist Life - Special Events

Our Passionists in the VULN Province of Germany were particularly joyful at the news of the election as Pope of one of their countrymen and also a good friend of our communities in Regensburg and Schwarzenfeld. Fr. Martin Bialas, C.P. offers the following reflections:

Fr. Martin studied for his doctorate at the University of Regensburg (Ratisbona) from 1970-1977, and it was during this period that he first met Joseph Ratzinger, a professor at the University. At this time Ratzinger had his private residence built at a distance of 400 meters from our house, "Paulusheim". His house as yet did not have a private chapel so he would go to celebrate Mass in our community chapel, usually 25-30 times a year. On most of these occasions, from 1977 until his election as Pope in 2005, when Cardinal Ratzinger would go to his residence to work or for vacation, Fr. Martin concelebrated Mass with him. Following Mass he would usually join the community for breakfast. Until his election as Pope, he was scheduled to visit the community the week before Pentecost - a visit

that never took place!

Furthermore, the Holy Father visited our community at Schwarzenfeld on more than ten occasions. In particular, the then Cardinal Ratzinger graced our communities with his presence on three "official



Pope Benedict XVI and Fr. Martin Bialas (VULN)

feast days": The 50th anniversary of the foundation of our monastery in August, 1984; the 25th Jubilee of ordination of Fr. Martin Bialas in August, 1993; and again at Fr. Martin's 50th anniversary of ordination in 1995.



*Cardinal Ratzinger, Fr. José Agustín Orbegozo and Fr. Martin Bailas (VULN),
Basilica of Sts. John and Paul, October 19, 1992*



Fr. Viktor Koch

A man of holy courage - a messenger of peace

The following article and photographs were submitted by Fr. Robert Carbonneau (PAUL), Provincial Archivist

In May 2005, German and Austrian Passionists of the Vice-Province of the Five Wounds (VULN), the American relatives of Father Viktor Koch, C.P.(PAUL), (1873-1955), three American Passionists, and the people of Schwarzenfeld, Germany joined together in a series of events to celebrate the holy courage of Fr. Viktor during the war years (1939-1945). With passion, excitement and thanksgiving, the people of Schwarzenfeld shared their personal memories with the Koch family. Especially grateful was Ms. Katherine Koch who is writing the life of Father Viktor. She gained invaluable insight. The Koch website is www.viktorkoch.com.

Father Viktor was born in Sharon, Pennsylvania, and ordained a Passionist priest in 1896 as member of American St. Paul of the Cross Province. After various assignments ministering to German-American Catholics, Father Viktor along with Father Valentine Lehnerd, C.P. responded to an appeal to assist Catholics in Germany and Austria. In 1922 a foundation was established in Pasing, Germany, outside of Munich, and by 1932 the Passionists had established a preparatory seminary there. In 1925 the invitation was accepted from the Archdiocese of Vienna, Austria, to staff Maria Schutz, located in the scenic Austrian Alps. Maria Schutz, a pilgrimage shrine, became the novitiate. More American Passionists were sent. In 1926 some men from Holy Cross Province joined the mission.

When Adolph Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, he made it extremely difficult for Germans to enter Austria. This helped Father Viktor to build, in 1934, the Passionist monastery in Schwarzenfeld, Germany, north of Regensburg. This was a tremendous economic and religious blessing for the local people. In 1935 the Passionists approved the three foundations in Munich, Maria Shutz, and Schwarzenfeld to be the Vice Province of the Five Wounds.

By 1941 World War II had reconfigured the German Passionist membership. Many German Passionist priests and seminarians had to enter the military. During the 1930s Father Viktor had received Austrian citizenship. Consequently, when the "Anschluss" resulted in Germany and Austria being formed into one country, all Austrians automatically gained German citizenship. Uniquely, Father Viktor was not deported even as other American Passionists had to return home. He was allowed to stay in part of the Schwarzenfeld monastery much of the time with fellow Passionist Father Paul Boeminghaus, who was arrested for a short time. During the early 1940s the Nazis used the monastery for a school and study center for atomic research. Nevertheless, throughout this period local Catholics known as the "Blacks" defied Nazi prohibitions and continued to



Poster: Viktor Koch (PAUL)
Historical Seminar 1945- 2005
Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P. - the friendly enemy?
The Founder of the Monastery, under the swastika



bring the priests food. All the while both priests continued as best they could to minister under the local Nazi occupation. While the monastery in Schwarzenfeld survived the war intact, both the Pasing monastery and church, as well as the monastery and church at Maria Schutz, suffered damage.

In April 1945 an end to the war seemed close. At that time American troops had just liberated Schwarzenfeld where they found a mass grave of people recently executed. Erroneously, the Americans thought that townspeople were the perpetrators and had a connection to the regional Flossenberg German concentration camp. At that moment Father Viktor met with the American commanders and let them know the truth. Eventually, he succeeded in convincing the American commanders that the citizens of Schwarzenfeld were innocent of this atrocity. The commander agreed to spare the town under one condition. He ordered Schwarzenfeld's citizens to exhume corpses buried on the town's outskirts, wash them, clothe them in donated garments, construct caskets, and give each victim a proper burial, all in 48 hours. If the townspeople failed to achieve this task, he intended to re-issue orders for Schwarzenfeld's destruction. Father Viktor coordinated efforts between the Americans and German townspeople. Every man, woman, and child in the town participated, and together they succeeded in completing this monumental task.

This knowledge saved the townspeople from being unjustly punished and proved to be first step in post-World War II

recovery. Specifically, Father Viktor began to work with the townspeople. As one lady said: "When my family had no clothing, no food in the house, he'd stop by the house with a CARE package and take care of everything." In addition, since Father Viktor was in Schwarzenfeld throughout the war years he was able to write letters vouching for civilians who had been mistaken as Nazis.

Father Viktor was made an honorary citizen of Schwarzenfeld. He died in 1955 and was buried in the monastery cemetery. Father Viktor Koch was a faithful Passionist priest. With a determined spirit he worked hard to establish the German Passionists. In many ways, his spiritual intensity was at the very heart of his character.

At the seminar on 12 May 2005, Fr. Gregor Lenzen, VULN Provincial, offered an historical perspective to the three hundred people who attended: AAs a priest and religious Fr. Viktor did not think in terms of "friend or enemy". As a German-American and as a member of an international religious community, in which all treat each other as brothers; he was not marked by any feelings of nationalism. For him it was people who mattered, and their salvation, which for him originated in the Cross of Christ. He had come to implant this Cross and in so doing became a messenger of peace.



*Passionist Monastery Schwarzenfeld. May 15, 2005 Liturgy in honor of Father Viktor Koch (PAUL)
I-r. Passionists Fr. Klaus Josef Holzer, Local Superior;
VULN Provincial Fr. Gregor Lenzen and Fr. Martin Bialas.*



Fr. Stanislas Breton, C.P. (MICH)

Death of Fr. Stanislas Breton

On 2 April 2005, Fr. Stanislas Breton (MICH) passed away to eternal life.

Fr. Stanislas was born on 3 June 1912, professed vows on 10 October 1927, and was ordained on 29 June 1936.

He was a philosopher, mystic and poet whose life was rich in vitality and thought. He helped the Congregation and the world to deepen their understanding of the mystery of the Cross and the Passion of Jesus by means of his teaching, lectures and numerous publications of books and other studies.

In October, 2003 the Congregation honored him at a Symposium at the Lateran University in Rome on the occasion of his 90th birthday, celebrating his life as well as his work. On that occasion, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General stated:

"A Philosopher, theologian and poet of the Memoria Passionis, he (Fr. Breton) is among the great representatives of contemporary Christian thought. His vast scientific work, 40 published books and 311 articles or contributions to collected works and his academic teaching have contributed to the deepening of research on the Verbum Crucis in a profitable dialog between faith, reason and intuition. Furthermore, he has enriched the understanding of the charism of the Passionist Congregation that St. Paul of the Cross summarized in the words promote grateful remembrance of the Passion of Our Lord."

For more information on the life and work of Fr. Stanislas Breton see PIB, December 2003.



Celebration in the Passionist church of Wisla, Poland

The Passionists in Wisla - Poland

Passionists have been present in the town of Wisla since the year 1970. Truly an exception in Catholic Poland, the Catholics in this town are living as in a diaspora, since Lutherans comprise the majority of the population, in addition to almost thirty other Protestant sects. Every year, on the occasion of Independence Day celebrations (11th November), the citizens meet to pray for their country in one of the various churches. Last year it was the turn of the Passionists' church and there was a large attendance of the members of many of the other churches. The local civil authorities and the clergy of the various churches were all invited. The Lutheran church choir led the singing and our parish priest and local Superior in Wisla, Fr. Leonard Zaloga, C.P., presided at the liturgy of the Word. The homily was preached by the Lutheran pastor.

PROFESSIONS AND ORDINATIONS

First vows

On 8 January 2005, the following novices of the RES Vicariate (Peru) of the CORI Province professed First Vows: José Cleider Vásquez Pasancho, Franklin Vasquez Villa, Hugo Mori Alegria and Adony Reyes Rosario of the PAC Vicariate (Puerto Rico/ Dom. Republic).

On 9 January of the same month, three novices of the CALV Province (Brazil/Mozambique) also professed First Vows: Solano Luiz Taverna, Wilson Aparecido Lopes and Francisco das Chagas da Silva Marques. Also on 29 January the novices of the DOMIN Vicariate (Brazil) of the PRAES Province professed Vows: José Carlos Souza Aquino, José Secundino Mendes Oliveira, Márcio Santos de Souza and Alessandro Dos Santos Alves (30 Jan.).

On 5 February, Luiz Martins de Freitas, of the LIBER Vicariate (Brazil) of the SPE Provincia professed Vows. And on the 27th of the same month the novices of the VICT Vicariate (Brazil) of the DOL Province professed First Vows: Vancerlan Gomes da Paz, Aurélio Aparecido Miranda, Melquíades Lima Filho and Paulo Sérgio Miranda.



Perpetual professions

On 01 November and 07 November two religious of the PRAES Province professed Perpetual Vows: Mario Barullo and Roberto Dell'Uomo; and on 02 January 2005, Luca Fracasso of the LAT Province also professed Perpetual Vows; and on 7 May 2005, Matteo Nonini of the CORM Province.



Confr. Pablo Antonio Rosero y Manuel A. Corozo (SANG - CARM)



PRAES: Bro. Mario Barullo



PRAES: Bro. Roberto dell'Uomo

Ordinations to the diaconate

Thus far this year four of our religious were ordained to the Diaconate: Luca Fracasso of the LAT Province on 26 February; José Valentín Duerto Reyna of the COROM Vicariate of the FAM Province on 13 March Pablo Antonio Rosero Del Pezo and Manuel Adalberto Corozo Banguera of the SANG Province on 23 April. On 01 May, two Passionists of the SALV Vice-Province were ordained in Kinshasha: Pierre Malongo and Calixto Mbelolo.



Luca Fracasso (LAT)



Pierre Malongo and Calixto Mbelolo (SALV)



Priestly ordinations

On 20 November 2004, Patricio Manosalvas Rizzo of the LAT Province was ordained to the priesthood. On 5 December, Eraldo Furtado de Oliveira of the VICT Vicariate of the DOL Province and on 11 December, Everaldo Galería of the CALV Province, and finally on 8 December, Stefan Neugebauer of the VULN Province.

In the year 2005 the following religious were ordained priests: on 26 February, João De Sousa Cabral Júnior of the CALV Province; on 06 March, Paul Kazuhiro Matsumoto, Francis Totsuka Yamauchi and Francis Katsunori Nakamura of the MAIAP Province; on 23 April, Darlin Iván Mendoza Prado and Rodolfo Antonio Cajar Gómez; and on 30 of the same month David Benito Martín and Juan Carlos Prieto Torres of the SANG Province.



LAT: Fr. Patricio Manosalvas Rizzo



CARLW: L-R Frs. Andrei Okeyo, Paul Mbugua, Evan Fwamba



MAIAP: Frs. Francis Yamauchi Totsuka, Francis Nakamura Katsunori and Paul Matsumoto Kazuhiro.



SANG: (standing) Fr. Juan Carlos Prieto and (kneeling) Fr. David Benito



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Usque ad diem 15 maii 2005, acceptae

DIE	OBDORMIVIT IN DOMINO	PROVINCIA	NATUS	VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT
18 novembris 2004	Sac. Ignacio Basauri Landa	CORI	1933	09 septembris 1951
01 decembris 2004	Sac. Bernardine Grande	PAUL	1917	15 augusti 1938
02 decembris 2004	Sac. José Javier Alberdi B.	CORI	1931	13 augusti 1950
02 decembris 2004	Sac. Peter Hallisy	PAUL	1923	15 augusti 1944
04 decembris 2004	Sac. Raffaele Riccitelli	LAT	1916	24 septembris 1934
18 decembris 2004	Fra. Serafino Bergamo	LAT	1919	03 octobris 1935
25 decembris 2004	Sac. Germano Ventura	PRAES	1922	09 septembris 1943
06 ianuarii 2005	Sac. José Martínez González	FAM	1922	15 septembris 1939
07 ianuarii 2005	Fra. Lorenzo Pérez Pérez	SANG	1929	08 decembris 1948
18 ianuarii 2005	Sac. Walter Kaelin	CRUC	1916	26 iulii 1936
19 ianuarii 2005	Sac. Sabin Barruetabeña B.	CORI	1934	09 augusti 1953
28 ianuarii 2005	Sac. Joaquim Gonçalves V	FAT	1940	08 decembris 1958
30 ianuarii 2005	Sac. Esteban Sola Jurío	CORI	1917	25 septembris 1935
31 ianuarii 2005	Sac. Antonio Rupérez Escudero	SANG	1917	14 maii 1941
04 februarii 2005	Sac. Bernardino Scancarello	CFIXI	1916	12 decembris 1933
12 februarii 2005	Sac. Rian Clancy	CRUC	1924	25 septembris 1948
12 februarii 2005	Sac. Placido Tonelli	CORM	1921	15 septembris 1940
20 februarii 2005	Sac. Nicholas Zitz	PAUL	1929	15 augusti 1949
23 februarii 2005	Fra. Bernard Stemplewski	ASSUM	1923	18 iulii 1960
23 februarii 2005	Sac. Paul Ignatius Bechtold	CRUC	1915	30 iulii 1933
28 februarii 2005	Sac. Ignazio Del Vecchio	LAT	1928	11 octobris 1946
24 martii 2005	Sac. Myron Gohmann	CRUC	1928	09 iulii 1948
02 aprilis 2005	Sac. Stanislas Breton	MICH	1912	10 octobris 1928
11 aprilis 2005	Sac. Eustace McDonald	PAUL	1918	15 augusti 1940
10 maii 2005	Sac. Angelico Marchetti	DOL	1918	05 septembris 1935
11 maii 2005	Sac. Colman Haggerty	PAUL	1918	15 augusti 1939
15 maii 2005	Sac. John F. Kobler	CRUC	1925	09 iulii 1947

MONIALES ET SORORES

08 decembris 2004	Sr. Raffaella (Giuseppina) Bechini	Inst. S.P.S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	1915	19 maii 1938
12 decembris 2004	Sr. M. Amelia (Marina) Ferronato	Inst. S.P.S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	1934	15 septembris 1951
19 decembris 2004	Sr. M. Lilia (Lorenza) Villani	Inst. S.P.S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	1914	04 iunii 1931
10 ianuarii 2005	Sr. Rubea Bertuzzi	Inst. S.P.S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	1933	28 februarii 1959
16 ianuarii 2005	Sr. Concetta Sloan	Inst. Crucis et Passionis (Anglia)	1916	13 maii 1940
27 ianuarii 2005	Sr. Rosalie O'Reilly	Inst. Crucis et Passionis (Anglia)	1911	19 martii 1950
07 aprilis 2005	Sr. Marta de Nossa Senhora Bontorin	Inst. S.P.S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	1918	20 octobris 1934
18 aprilis 2005	Sr. Adelaide (Antonina) Rappa	Inst. S.P.S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	1911	19 maii 1938
06 maii 2005	Sr. Gregory Marron	Inst. Crucis et Passionis (Anglila)	1913	13 maii 1940
28 mai 2005	Sr. Irene Burke	Inst. Crucis et Passionis (Anglia)	1904	01 septembris 1929



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