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Passionist Bulletin International

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INTRODUCTION

BLESSED JOHN PAUL II AND THE PASSIONISTS

Opening doors to Christ Crucified

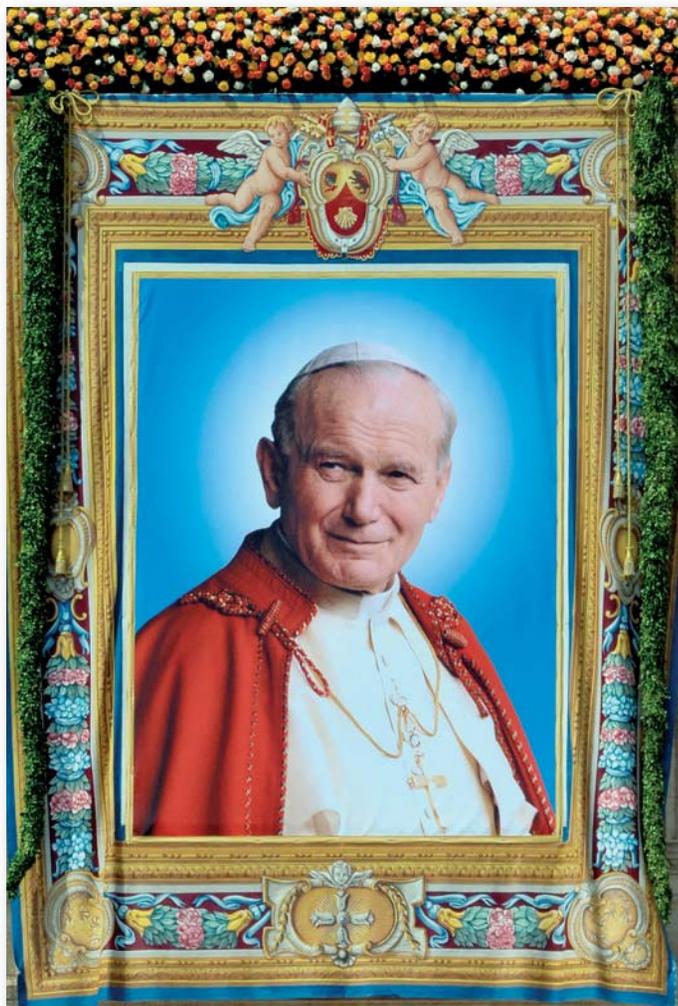


Image of John Paul II in St. Peter's Square on the day of the Beatification.

On Sunday, May 1st 2011, the Catholic Church celebrated the beatification of Karol Wojtyła – Pope John Paul II. The Congregation of Passion also shared in the joy of this day because during the twenty-seven years of his Pontificate, Blessed John Paul II was both a father and friend to the sons of St. Paul of the Cross. From his first visit to us as Pope at the Shrine of St. Maria Goretti in 1979, to his impromptu visit at the Retreat of the Presentation on Monte Argentario in December, 2000 he made it known that he was very much “at home” among us. He was “at home” not only at our shrines, but he was also very much “at home” with us on Calvary, sharing our charism.

The list of John Paul's many encounters with us is extensive: General Chapters, the Itinerant Missionary Congresses of 1981 and “The Wisdom of the Cross Today”, in 1984; visits to the Shrine of St. Maria Goretti in Nettuno,

in September of 1979 and to the Shrine of St. Gabriel at Gran Sasso in 1985 and the Monastery-Shrine of St. Gemma in Lucca on 23 September 1989 and the Shrine of the Madonna della Civita, Itri, in 1990. In addition to these planned visits he also added a brief, surprise visit to the mother house of the Institute: the retreat of the Presentation on Monte Argentario on the evening of 12 December 2000.

As signs of his esteem for the Congregation and its charism, John Paul II offered special gifts to us and to the Church as opportunities for celebrating our charism and to encourage us to persevere in witnessing and proclaiming the Passion of Jesus. Among these special gifts to the Congregation were the canonization of St. Inocencio Canoura Arnau, on 21 November 1999, and also eight beatifications (Isidore De Loor, 30/09/1984; Pio Campidelli, 17/11/1985; Bernardo Silvestrelli, 16/10/1988; Charles (of Mt. Argus) Houben, 16/10/1988; Niceforo and 26 Companion martyrs, 01/10/1989; Lorenzo Salvi, 01/10/1989; Grimoaldo Santamaria, 29/01/1995; Eugene Bossilkov, 15/03/1998), and fourteen declarations of heroic virtue, among these, 10 Passionists (Galileo Nicolini, 27/11/1981; Giovanni Bruni, 09/06/1983; Nazareno Santolini, 07/09/1989; Giacomo Gianiel, 21/12/1989; Gerardo Segarduy, 21/12/1991; Fortunato De Gruttis, 11/07/1992; Giuseppe Pesci, 06/07/1993; Norberto Cassinelli, 15/12/1994; Germano Ruoppolo, 11/07/1995; Egidio Malacarne, 26/93/1999); of the co-foundress of the Passionist nuns, Maria Crocifissa Costantini, 17/12/1982; of the foundress of the Mexican Passionist Sisters, Dolores Medina Zepeda, 03/07/1998; of the Passionist Sister, Antonietta Farani, 13/06/1993; of the laywoman and virgin, Lucia Burlini, associated with Passionist spirituality, 23/10/1987; and of an Ursuline Sister, Lucia Mangano, 01/07/1994, whose spiritual director was a Passionist.

Blessed John Paul II began his Pontificate proclaiming: “Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors to Christ!” To the young people gathered for World Youth Day in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, in 1989 he cried out: “Do not be afraid to be saints!” He himself would become a saint, opening doors and opportunities for all peoples to encounter Christ not only through his preaching, teaching and numerous pastoral visits, but also through his association with the Passion in his personal life.

This issue of the BIP is in part dedicated to this great father and friend of the Congregation of the Passion and the Passionist Family. It is our hope that by re-visiting John Paul II's many encounters with us and by reflecting on his words, we too will have the courage to open wide the doors of our hearts to Christ Crucified so that we may lead others to Him and be worthy to share the joy of his Resurrection in communion with Mary, the Mother of God and all the saints. ●



MY DAYS (TEN YEARS) WITH JOHN PAUL II

Fr. Ciro Benedettini, CP (PIET)
Vice Director of the Vatican Press Office

My ongoing acquaintance with John Paul II was a long and sometimes torturous process. The first “encounter” took place on 16 October 1978, when he was elected Pontiff. I was working as a journalist for a radio in Milan and the director sent me on a trip through city to collect the first impressions of people as soon as the name of the new Pope was announced. I was situated in the Galleria, the prime gathering place of the city for citizens and tourists. When the radio announced the name of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, I felt lost along with the people that I was interviewing. They asked me: “Who is this?” I would never have imagined that sixteen years later I would be a direct collaborator with John Paul II.

In January 1980, the Provincial, Fr. Gabriele Cingolani, suggested my name to the Press Office of the Holy See, the one responsible for the multi-lingual information bulletins of the Synod of Bishops of Holland that was taking place in Rome. I refused; I didn’t think I ranked in that class. Immediately a rebuke arrived from the Vatican: “Since when don’t the Passionists obey the Holy See?” For the following Synod devoted to the topic of the family, it was inevitable that I accept and I continued to do so for all of the synods until 1994.

When I recall these synods I remember the difficult work that at times went late into the night. However, above all I remember the time when the Pope invited me to dinner



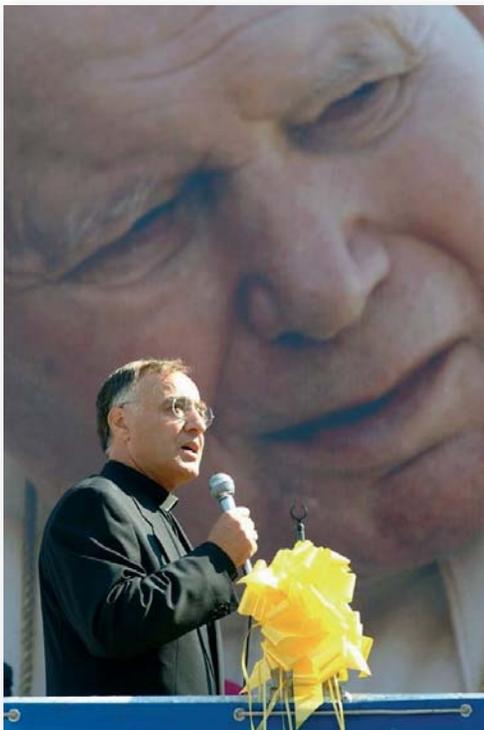
together with the other linguistic assistants. It was both an honor and a sign of appreciation for our work. I was surprised at the unassuming way that the Pope treated us and also his curiosity. He “interviewed” us one by one in our own language, learning about our origins and about our work. I remember his fair colored eyes fixed on me as if trying to understand the answers. The Pope’s food? Well, we thought it would have been better!

The second phase of my growing association with John Paul II took place on 30 June 1985, when the Pope visited the Shrine of St. Gabriel, where I was the director of the magazine *L’eco di San Gabriele* (“The Echo of St. Gabriel”). I was so involved with overseeing the journalists and the workings of the Press Office that, only days later, when I looked back on the event, did I realize that I didn’t have even one foto of the group.

In 1989 a telephone call came from the Vatican, asking if I would be willing to work at the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. In agreement with my superiors, I declined the offer.

In October 1994, I was in Rome as the secretary for the General Chapter. At the end of the Chapter, Fr. José Agustín Orbegozo, the Superior General, informed me that the Director of the Sala Stampa, Joaquín Navarro-Valls, asked for me to become his vice-director. I was very undecided; but considering that I had done the best that I could for the magazine, *L’eco di S. Gabriele*, with fear and trembling I accepted. By 2 December I was already in the Sala Stampa. One week later, 10 December 1994, I accompanied John Paul II to the Shrine of Loreto. I was presented to the Pope. It seemed he didn’t know much about me; he interviewed me briefly and wished me well in my work. On the contrary, his personal secretary, Msgr. Stanislaw Dziwisz, was very well informed. As he shook my hand he said to me: “You need to be a strong vice-director.” I don’t know that he meant by the adjective “strong”, but there is no doubt that working in the Vatican Press Office requires a good measure of every kind of strength. A week later a French cardinal warned me: “Your work is such that you can slip at any moment.” And a bishop, now a cardinal, stated: “Only a Passionist could do your job.”

I came away from that first job as spokesman for the Pope with some indelible memories. The first: when the Pope entered the chapel of the Annunciation of Loreto and he knelt down, I noted his deep spirit of recollection, to the point that he had to be “awakened” by his secretary. His capacity to immediately “fall” deeply into prayer, especially before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, was something that I noticed every time that I was near him. The second memory, and this was something that was on-going, was how much he enjoyed meeting people: the endless handshaking, kissing babies and children, playful bantering, always alert. I also remember



“John Paul II... loved to be with people... Truly passionate about God, he was also deeply impassioned about people.”



(L-R) Fr. Cirio Benedettini, Joaquin Navarro-Vals, Pope John Paul II.

one of my faux pas (and it wasn't the only one). When meeting the President of the Italian Republic, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, the Pope greeted him saying: "Courage, Mr. President". I later quoted the phrase when speaking to the Italian journalists who, the following day, speculated negatively about the content of the conversation between the Pope and the president. No one told me directly that I should not have quoted that phrase, but they made me understand my error in a thousand ways.

The task of vice-director of the Sala Stampa of the Holy See is typical of those in number two positions: a lot of work, generally in the background. It is a position that is besieged by armies: by the journalists who want to immediately know everything; and on the front, by the Institution that wants to filter the information that is made public. In reality, John Paul II was a friend of journalists. In the early days when he saw them, he would go to greet them, unconcerned about security needs. He remembered their names and he asked about their families. He did not distinguish between those who were benevolent from those who were malevolent. The Church – he said- should be a "house of glass". And he was an example of this by never making his illness a mystery. Initially, he offered himself to the media and to public opinion when he was in full physical health; and then later, he did so in his weakness. Instead the Secretary of State, upon whom we depended, was much more reticent and reserved. He continually was a cause of tension for us. It was almost always the Pope who "rescued" us.

I accompanied the Pope as his spokesman on about twenty trips within Italy and on two foreign trips. A memorable one was the trip to Cuba in January 1998. On the airplane I was trembling during the interview that the Pope granted to the eighty journalists who accompanied him on the papal jet. His secretary, Msgr. Stanislaw, instructed me to allow no more than three questions. In reality I was about to block a fourth question when the Pope signaled me that he wanted to continue. He responded to eleven questions in four languages with originality and wit. When a journalist from a French agency asked him about his health, John Paul II smiled and said: "*To know how I feel all you have to do is read the daily newspapers and there you'll find all the news about my health*". The final Mass in Havana, in the Plaza of the Revolution, was a triumph – it was the first time it was used for a religious function. There were a million people present, but it seemed as if they were only one person who

was attentive, participative and interactive. The homily evolved into a kind of duet between the Pope and the crowd that, with one voice, dialogued with the Pope.

To accompany the Pope during his trips allowed me to have an intimacy with the pontiff that was familiar in nature (but, honestly, I never became an "intimate friend" of the Pontiff). I never noticed any real difference between the official and the private sides of John Paul II. He radiated optimism (as well as vigor during the first part of his pontificate). Above all he communicated a solid image of Christianity, unshakeable and at the same time, intrepid. His faith was a combination of the candor of a child and the sophistication of a theologian. He gave the impression of "rocky" solidity and security which, during a time of uncertainty and mistrust, perhaps explains the fascination that he engendered in people and crowds.

He never reneged on his private devotions like the rosary, even after a heavy day of meetings and celebrations. He was a Pole through and through and yet, at the same time, he was international, at home in any part of the world and with any kind of person. With great self-confidence, he accepted local customs and folklore even in the liturgy, even to running the risk of being accused of exhibitionism and triumphalism. Coming from the "Church of silence", he gave Christianity a public face of strength and solidarity. In fact, John Paul II was at his best in large crowds that he dominated with a kind of magnetism. He loved to be with people. He was not afraid to touch and to be touched in a kind of healthy, integral communication. Truly passionate about God, he was also deeply impassioned about people. Among his many accomplishments, he restored the right of citizenship to Catholicism in the realm of mass media of the global village.

After the Great Jubilee in the year 2000, the Pope's health began to decline rapidly and our work became more difficult and the meetings with the Pope became rare. This was not a papal decision, but one made by his attendants. The Pope continued to greet the crowds and the media, unembarrassed by his weakness and fragility. He transformed his cane, the emblem of his illness, into an instrument of communication and joy, gesticulating with it to the rhythm of the music. It was very difficult for us to see him in this condition. He was once greeted as the athlete of God, Wojtyla superstar; and now he was incapacitated and, at the end of his life, reduced to silence. Few of us will ever forget the image of the Pope on Good Friday, during the Stations of the Cross at the Coliseum. He was helped to take his place and, holding a cross, it too began to tremor, almost as if sharing in his weakness and suffering. The Monday of Holy Week, 28 March 2005, he appeared at the window of his apartment for the blessing, but was unable to pronounce a single word. At that moment I cried.

For ten years I served John Paul II up until his final days when the Vatican seemed to be "enveloped" by hundreds of thousands of people who attended to the dying Pope. To see such a crowd in total silence seemed so strange. Even the Press Office was invaded by journalists from around the world on alert, but unusually unaggressive. There was a feeling of tension when we announced his death; but once the moment had passed, almost all of them looked for the members of the Press Office to offer their condolences, as if we were members of the Pope's family. It was very interesting that even many journalists exchanged words of condolence among themselves. However, the atmosphere in the Press Office was totally different on 1 May 2011, the occasion of the Beatification of John Paul II. Faces were radiant with joy, conscious that we had lived with a saint or, for non-believers, we had lived with one of the exceptional protagonists of our time.



JOHN PAUL II AT NETTUNO

Fr. Giovanni Alberti, CP (PRAES)

Due to the determination of Blessed Bernard Silvestrelli, the then Superior General, the Passionists arrived in Nettuno in 1888. There were two factors that determined this choice of the city on the Tyrrhenian Sea. On the part of the Passionists, following the closure of the retreat of Monte Cave, they were looking for a place that would be salubrious for those religious who were sick; on the part of the people of Nettuno, they wanted stable and diligent clergy to staff their small shrine that housed the celebrated statue of our Lady of Grace that had arrived there from England in 1550. Blessed Bernard and the archpriest of the Collegiata Church of San Giovanni in Nettuno were the two men who undertook this challenging project.

The history of the first years of the presence of the Passionist Community in Nettuno were very precarious, in particular concerning the Shrine; so much so that Pope Pius X, in order to avoid problems with the local clergy who were instigating unrest, declared that the Shrine was “of Pontifical Right, immediately subject to the Holy See and the Passionists are the custodians of the Shrine and the statue of Our Lady of Grace.” The pontifical bull was entitled “Supremi apostolatus” and was dated 14 January 1911. It was subsequently reconfirmed on 29 June 1911. When Pius XI was nunzio in Warsaw he spent some time resting in our monastery, and Pius XII was the Pope who canonized St. Maria Goretti. Even after the canonization he continued to show an interest in the Shrine.

On 14 September 1969, Paul VI was the first Pope to go to Nettuno, an event of great historical importance. In fact he inaugurated the new Shrine following the tragic collapse of the one that was financed by Pope Pius X. Present on this occasion was the Servant of God, Fr. Theodore Foley, former Superior General of the Congregation. The following year, Paul VI declared the Shrine to be a Minor Basilica. Among the treasured photographs of the event there is one of the Pope in prayer before the altar of St. Maria Goretti.

Despite various difficulties, there was great excitement on 23 August 1979 when Bishop Gaetano Bonicelli, the bishop of Albano, made the official announcement concerning the upcoming visit of John Paul II: *“I have good news to share with you and with your communities: the Holy Father will celebrate Holy Mass the evening of September 1st at 6:00 PM in the piazza of the Basilica of St. Maria Goretti. The Pope will be in Nettuno to honor Our Lady and St. Maria Goretti and also to meet with the local people. It is an act of great kindness and appreciation for your work that becomes even more demanding during the summer months. Let us prepare ourselves with great faith to receive the Vicar of Christ.”*

September 1st, 1979 was a beautiful day: clear skies and a mild breeze to cool the intense heat. A large wooden altar was constructed in the piazza of the church and Vatican flags waved in the portico surround-



John Paul II and Fr. José Agustín Orbeagozo at the farm house of Le Ferriere.

ing the piazza. There was great excitement as the people waited to greet this Pope who had “come from afar” and who, merely a year into his pontificate, was giving evidence of his charismatic personality. As the newspapers reported, from early afternoon and well into the late evening the piazza in front of the Shrine, the surrounding streets and beaches were thronged with people.

John Paul II arrived in Nettuno by helicopter from Castelgandolfo. He landed in the area of the State Police Academy and was greeted by Interior Minister and various civil authorities including the mayor and Bishop Bonicelli. Crowds lined the streets and the motorcade had to stop various times so that the Holy Father could greet the children and the sick. Gathered around the altar in the basilica were the local bishop and also the Passionist Bishop Amilcare Battistelli, Fr. Paul Boyle, Superior General, together with the General Curia, including Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, General Consultor.

The Mass began at 6:30 PM with the greeting by the Bishop of Albano who recalled that this visit coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War that had left lasting scars on this part of the world. In his homily the Pope referred to the memories that are associated with the Shrine and, above all, he recalled the message of St. Maria Goretti who he called a saint of everyday life. From the altar one could see the assembly that numbered over 10,000 people.

At the end of the Mass the Pope was offered gifts from the local area of Nettuno as well as from the local Polish community. It was well past 8:00 PM when the Pope left the crowds and entered the basilica. After a period of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament he descended into the crypt to venerate the body of St. Maria Goretti. After a prolonged period of prayer he greeted Sr. Teresa Goretti, the sister of the Saint.



At 6:30 PM the Holy Father joined our Superiors and the local civil and military authorities for a festive dinner. Currently there is a plaque in the hall that recalls this event. At 9:45 PM the Holy Father returned to the basilica for the recitation of the Holy Rosary before the famous statute of Our Lady of Grace, which was transmitted live via Vatican radio.

Before departing for Castelgandolfo, the Pope visited one of our Passionist Brothers, Michal Wiewiorkowski, who had spent many years in Italy. He died later that month on 17 September 1979, still incredulous that he had been visited by a Polish Pope.

During the period of the centenary of the birth of St. Maria Goretti, Pope John Paul II showed his particular fondness for the Saint and for the Passionists by two important events. The first was an "Apostolic Letter" that the Holy Father addressed to the then Superior General, Fr. José Agustín Orbezo on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of St. Maria Goretti. In this document, for the first time, the life and death of Maria Goretti were viewed in the context of Passionist spirituality together with other young Passionist saints such as Gabriel Possenti, Pio Campitelli and Gemma Galagani. John Paul II wrote: *"I fervently pray to Almighty God that these models inspire many other young people. I thank God with all my heart, together with the Passionist Family, for the marvels that he has done in these young apostles of the Cross of Christ and I invite all those who recalled their memory during 1990 to further meditate on their personality and their message. Thus it will be possible to accomplish other prodigious works in the Church and, as in the past, the Passionist spiritual Family will experience an abundance of vocations."* The document was dated 16 October 1990, the centenary of the birth of St. Maria Goretti and the twelfth anniversary of his election as Pope.

The following year (29 September 1991) Pope John Paul II travelled to the old farmhouse at Le Ferriere, the house where young Maria lived from 1889 to 1902 and where her martyrdom took place. The visit to Le Ferriere took place within the context of a pilgrimage to the city of Latina at the invitation of the local bishop.



"This day was a gift from God. This was a brief, but very meaningful visit by the Pontiff, a seal placed on the centenary of the birth of St. Maria Goretti that was nearly at its end."



"I fervently pray to Almighty God that these models inspire many other young people. I thank God with all my heart, together with the Passionist Family, for the marvels that he has done in these young apostles of the Cross of Christ..."

Pope John Paul II was received by the Superior General, Fr. José Agustín Orbezo at the sports arena and he accompanied the Pope by car to the farmhouse where they were greeted by a large crowd. *"La Stella del Mare"* the monthly publication of the Shrine and the oldest of the Congregation described the visit of the Pontiff as follows: *"At 10:00 AM the Pope began to climb the twenty-two steps leading into the old farmhouse. Considering the event of that dark day on 5 July 1902, when little Maria, pale white, descended this same staircase on a stretcher—this day was a gift from God. This was a brief, but very meaningful visit by the Pontiff, a seal placed on the centenary of the birth of St. Maria Goretti that was nearly at its end."*

For the occasion the body of the Saint was brought from the nearby Shrine in Nettuno to the old farmhouse and placed in the large kitchen. The Pope spent a long time in prayer and was amazed to see his signature in the visitors' book which he signed as the young bishop of Krakow during a visit to Le Ferriere from Rome during the Second Vatican Council.

For the occasions the Pope composed a prayer to Marietta that begins with the words: *"Child of God..."* Then from balcony he spoke to the crowd, recalling his predecessor Pius XII and the various steps in the process of canonization of Marietta. After greeting the crowd the Pope continued on to Latina.

Never has a "Passionist" Shrine enjoyed the presence of a Pope for so long a period of time. With his gift for communication he made the name of Maria Goretti and her association with the Passionists recognized world-wide. The concept of martyrdom recalls the folly of the Cross: an indecipherable duality that brings us into the heart of the Christian experience. For this reason Maria Goretti, as John Paul II recalled, belongs by right to the "Memoria Passionis". She experienced its various dimensions and through the pardon of her murderer she arrived at the highest level of association with our Crucified Lord. ●



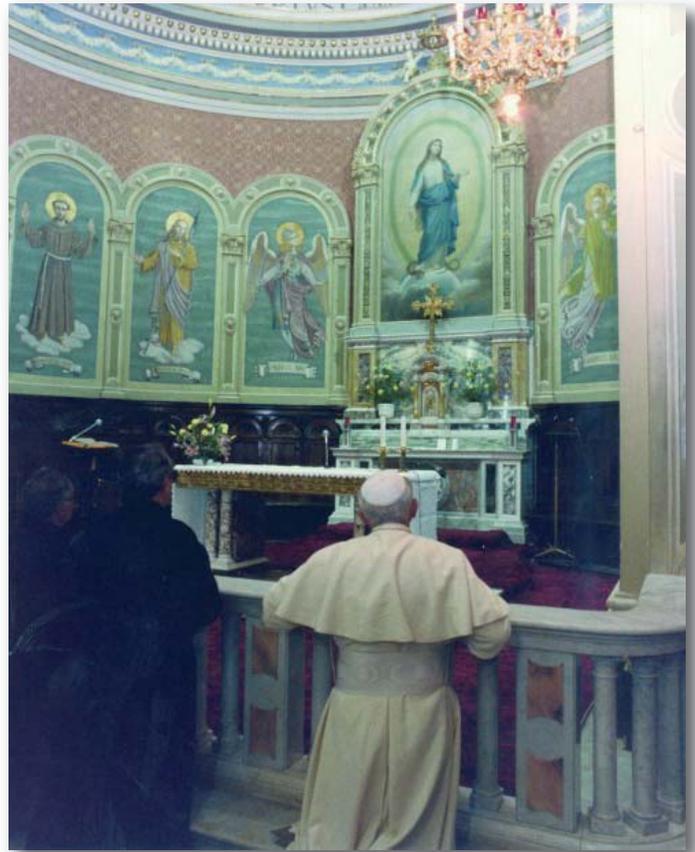
JOHN PAUL II AND THE YOUTH

Fr. Gabriele Cingolani, CP (PIET)

He was rooted in God, therefore everyone felt close to him. When someone gives himself totally to God and also gives everything to God, then God shines forth from within the personality of those who love Him.

This is one way of summarizing the personality and the sanctity of John Paul II. Large segments of humanity identified with him and felt that he was on their side: young people and adults, parents and children, workers and scholars, athletes and the sick, priests and religious of various congregations. But in a very special way, he bonded with young people.

Younger generations discovered him to be a travelling companion and a teacher, especially during the World Youth Days that were instituted by him so that he could meet with them during their life journey and offer them guidance. For the young he was a father and a model.



The Holy Father prays in the old Church at the Shrine of St. Gabriel.



“St. Gabriel... reminds you today that if you want to be Christian you must share in the Passion of the Lord and follow him, carrying your cross. If life is devoid of the cross, it has no meaning, no sense and no value.”

Now they are among the most fervent in invoking him as a protector. Because of this, John Paul II is now “Blessed”. This affirmation of his virtue is based on his personality, not on his pontificate — about which some historians have some reservations concerning certain aspects or decisions that may have been otherwise. However his sanctity is not disputable.

For many young people who were born and grew up during his pontificate, their relationship with God, their faith and their belief in the Church were intimately connected with the presence and the teaching of that figure in white that was evolving before their eyes — from athletic strength to waning health. However, his spirit always remained the same.

On various occasions, we Passionists also experienced that the life and the pastoral ministry of John Paul II was aligned with our own spirituality and our apostolate and on our part, we felt that we were in harmony with him.

Additionally, we received a particular glimpse into his gift of relating with young people. This occurred during his visit to the Shrine of St. Gabriel on 30 June 1985, when he met with a representation of young people of the Tendopoli movement. In the years following this occasion, he continued his contact with them through the various messages that he sent on the occasion of their annual meetings.

He spoke to them in his usual, captivating style, an expert in addressing crowds: *“I came for you; to see you, to speak with you, to look into your eyes as Jesus would do (see Mk. 10:20); I came to entrust to you a particular message that may serve as a stimulus for living the demands of the Gospel through the example of*



During the visit to the Shrine of St. Gabriel, John Paul met with the Passionist community and, after blessing and inaugurating the new crypt in the Shine, he spoke to them there in the crypt.

a young man who was more or less your age: St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin.” And looking up at the Gran Sasso Mountain that loomed in front of him, he referred to the opportunity to “take tourist excursions, as well as ascending spiritual heights” – references which confirmed rumors that he loved to hike along the various paths of that mountain.

The message that he imparted to the young people on that occasion was joy: joy to be drawn from an interior life imbued with God as in the life of St. Gabriel; joy to be spread in the circles of young people; and joy to be strengthened in the experience of the cross.

“St. Gabriel, a young man your age – he added – reminds you today that if you want to be Christian you must share in the Passion of the Lord and follow him, carrying your cross. If life is devoid of the cross, it has no meaning, no flavor and no value. One cannot honor Christ if he does not recognize the mystery of his holy Cross.”

During that speech John Paul II again spoke about the motives for an on-going dialog with young people. A key point was always the qualities of youth, such as openness, generosity, enthusiasm and opportunities for cooperation with adults. However, immediately the focus moved to the proclamation of Christ crucified and risen, the beauty and attraction of following him and also the challenges of morality and witness.

In the spontaneous interaction that often occurred with young people, he used to ask why were they happy to attend gatherings that he initiated. In addition to their responses that centered on being together to sing, pray or to see the Pope, he added: “You are here because Christ calls you. It is Christ who searches for you because only He can satisfy your aspirations; only He has the words of eternal life.” While taking part in their songs and their dances, he did not shy away from calling them to sacrifice, to purity, to courage in living counter-culturally and the importance of the evangelical Beatitudes. At times he challenged them: “Take charge of your own life and make it a masterpiece!”

That a Pope was able to so electrify young people is indicative of the significant turning point that he initiated, especially considering that only ten years

before, a youth movement was unleashed that produced phenomena of violence and subversion in Western society.

During the same visit to the Shrine of St. Gabriel, John Paul met with the Passionist community and, after blessing and inaugurating the new crypt in the Shine, he spoke to them there in the crypt. The prepared text contained two points for reflection: *You are spiritual sons of St. Paul of the Cross*, which included a wonderful presentation on the figure of our Founder; and second, *You are fellow religious of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin*.

While he was reading the second part he stopped and suggested that the listeners could read the remainder of his remarks on their own. Then he chose to continue to speak spontaneously, “confiding” that from the beginning of his priesthood he had always celebrated the Office and the Mass of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, liturgies of 27 February that were optional in the breviary and the Missal. However at a certain point he recalled that these options no longer existed. And smiling and he extended his arms and exclaimed: *These liturgists! These liturgical reforms!*

The close association of John Paul II with Passionist spirituality is also evident in the letters and messages that he addressed to us, especially on the occasions of our General Chapters. He always touched on key points to be internalized for fostering fidelity to our vocation and for the efficacy of our presence in the Church.

He formulated one of the most effective summaries of our charism in his message to the 44th General Chapter that took place in Itaici, Brazil, during the Jubilee Year of 2000.

“The Crucified One has loved us “to the end” (Jn.13:1), beyond the measure and possibilities of human love. This is the source from which the Passionist must draw his own spirituality in a very particular way: to love where it is most difficult to love; to love where love is most needed. Today’s society offers endless opportunities for this special apostolate.”

Having placed Christ at the center of his ministry – open, open wide the doors to Christ – his teaching continually revolved around the point of the mystery of Christ, the Crucified and Risen One. He reintroduced this point in the consciousness of the Church and he announced it to people of today through his encyclicals, speeches and actions, especially the 127 international trips totaling over a million miles.

In the first years of his pontificate he displayed great energy as he raised his crosier in the form of a crucifix before the people, a symbol introduced by Paul VI but raised on high by John Paul II as the silent cry of love – a love that endures until the very end. In the final years he himself became more like the Crucified One and his crosier, which he initially wielded as a sign of universal embrace, now served to support him, helping him to stand erect.

For those who live in God, everything becomes a source of personal sanctification and witness for others: physical strength and health and the deterioration of the body; the power of the word and the humiliation of silence; the charm of a smile and the grimace of suffering.

Additionally, he was an eloquent icon for the life and apostolate of the Passionists. ●



BLESSED JOHN PAUL II AT THE SHRINE OF THE "CIVITA"

Fr. Giuseppe Comparelli, CP (DOL)

There are over one thousand years of history associated with the Shrine of the Madonna of the Civita. It is located on a precipice within the city of Itri (Latina), 670 meters above sea level, in the Aurunci Mountains. It began as a shrine to house an icon of Our Lady that arrived there from Eastern Europe during the period of the iconoclastic heresy. For many years it was cared for by the diocesan clergy of Gaeta, however during the early part of the nineteenth century it was frequently entrusted to religious clergy. In 1839 the King of Naples, Ferdinand II wrote a letter to Pope Gregory XVI requesting that our Passionist religious become the custodians of the shrine and minister to the many pilgrims that visited it. The Superior General, Fr. Antonio Testa could not accede to the King's request because of the juridical situation of the shrine that was not under the King's authority as well as other practical matters.

However, the Passionists were already at home at the Shrine. St. Paul of the Cross and his brother, Venerable John Baptist, formed part of the community of the Shrine in May, 1726, as is recorded in a plaque in the Shrine. In subsequent years, our religious were invited to preach to the personnel of the Shrine from the nearby retreat of Falvaterra. Blessed Dominic Barberi was one of these preachers in 1836. He also preached a mission in the city of Itri two years earlier in 1834. Years earlier, in 1787, St.

Vincent Strambi, a companion of the Founder, also preached as mission there as well as in the neighboring communities of Formia and Fondi. Currently the Passionists are currently located in Itri in a Retreat that was established in 1943 on a hill in the center of the town, as well as at the Shrine that was entrusted to them by Archbishop Carli on 01 January 1985. Since then a small community of our religious have been caring for the many pilgrims that visit there primarily from the Italian regions of lower Lazio and Campania.

Among the important events at the Shrine was the visit of Pope Pius IX in 1849, accompanied by King Ferdinand II, when the Pope was the guest of the Kingdom of Naples during the brief Republican period of Rome.

When Pope John Paul II visited Civita on 25 June 1989, as part of a program that was called "*the day of Gaeta*", he recalled the event that occurred 140 years prior not only to remember the exile of Pope Pius IX (who was also declared "Blessed"), but also to highlight a significant Marian event. In fact it was in Gaeta, during that period, that Pope Pius IX decided to take definitive steps to define the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. This was a point that the Pope from Poland was pleased to recall.

The program for John Paul II's visit was carefully prepared by Archbishop Farano and he had arranged that the Pope would meet with the sick at the Shrine. Following the preparations, there were nearly six hundred sick that gathered in the piazza of the Shrine.

On the morning of 25 June 1989, the Pope arrived by helicopter at approximately 10:00 A.M. He was greeted by a sizable crowd that included the Italian Foreign Minister, Giulio Andreotti, and Bishop Fiorenzo Angelini (later Cardinal), the President of the Pontifical Council for Health Care workers. In the company of the Holy Father were also Cardinal Ugo Poletti; the substitute of the Secretary of State, Bishop Edward Cassidy; the Apostolic Nuncio in Italy, Bishop Poggi; the Prefect of the Pontifical Household, Bishop Dino Monduzzi; the Archbishop of



John Paul II and Passionists descending the staircase from the Shrine.



"It was here that he [John Paul II] showed all of his paternal care for suffering humanity as he slowly went from one person to another, encouraging them and blessing them and the members of their family."

Gaeta, Bishop Vincenzo M. Farano; the Mayor, Hon. Pasquale Ciccone; and also the Prefect of Latine Orefice and others. As soon as he climbed the steps at the entrance to the Shrine, the Holy Father was greeted by the Superior General, Fr. José Agustín Orbegozo, by the DOL Provincial Superior, Fr. Giuseppe Comparelli, by the Rector, Fr. Giuseppe Polselli and the by delegate of the Superior, Fr. Renato Santilli. Before entering the church the Holy Father admired the artistic flower display, the gift of the florists of Itri, which depicted the Pope and his coat of arms.

In the church the Pope knelt in prayer before the image of the Madonna of the Civita that was adorned with cascading flowers in yellow and white, the Vatican colors. All eyes were on the Pope who was absorbed in prayer for a long time. After the prayer, to the embarrassment of the security guards, the Pope was greeted by the Passionist aspirants, all of them in their Habits, who wanted to have some personal contact with this man who was one of the most photographed people in the world; but they especially wanted to have contact with the Vicar of Christ. In the sacristy he was offered some simple gifts and he was invited to sign two parchments for the historical archives of the Shrine. Then, after a cup of tea, he again entered the church and then descended the steps to greet the sick. It was here that he showed all

of his paternal care for suffering humanity as he slowly went from one person to another, encouraging them and blessing them and the members of their family.

In his address he said: *"Following in the footsteps of my predecessor, Pius IX, 140 years after his visit, I also wanted to come up here, as I begin this day that is entirely dedicated to the Archdiocese of Gaeta, and to be with you, the suffering members of the Mystical Body of the Church. Therefore, I am here at the feet of Mary, the health of the sick and the help of all Christians."* Then he expressed his appreciation for the work of the health care personnel that were present there, calling their work of caring for the sick a true "mission". He continued thanking the sick for their presence, telling them that he was with them not only to offer them *"human encouragement, but especially to offer them the comfort that their Christian faith affords them...Your sufferings are written in the paternal and demanding plan of God's love."* Finally, he suggested that they see their suffering as purification and for the good of the body of Christ, the Church, and he entrusted all the sick to the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Before concluding, he gazed at the area where our religious were gathered and he added extemporaneously: *"In thanking all the volunteers, again I wish to include those to whom this Shine has been entrusted: our dear* ➔



Passionists, their community and their seminarians who I was able to meet earlier in the Shrine.” When he said these words, the Holy Father could also read a large banner on the wall in front of him that stated: “*The Passionists thank you!*”

The religious were very appreciative of the Pope’s spontaneous remarks and they noted an implicit rapport with them, above all when he agreed to pose with them for a group foto. Also in the afternoon, during the meeting with the people in the city of Gaeta, prepared by the indefatigable Fr. Fausto La Montagna and assisted by Fr. Mario Corvino, the Pope exclaimed when he saw them: “*the Passionists are even here too!*”

After the departure of the Pope for Gaeta, a Mass was celebrated for the sick in the piazza of the Shrine. Bishop Angelini was the principal concelebrant and the religious that were present concelebrated, together with the Superior General, Fr. José Agustín Orbegozo, the Provincial of the “Guanelliani” Community who had served for many years at the Shrine, the local pastor and Fr. Cherubino Di Feo of the community of the Shrine and others. At the conclusion, the Provincial, Fr. Giuseppe Comparelli, thanked the bishop and the civil authorities of Itri for their efforts, including their financial support, on behalf of this event.

The various commentaries that were subsequently published were concerned with the region and its history. I wish to cite only one of these, that of Pino Pecchia, “*E venne il Papa*” (2007) (“And the Pope came”) because of his many references and analogies to Pope Pius IX. Despite the difficulties of scheduling the visit of John Paul II to Shrine during the day in Gaeta, we Passionists, who were involved with the planning of the event together with local diocese, saw this as a great confirmation of our presence in this region, a presence that dates to the time of our Founder. The geographical proximity and the historical importance of centers such as Fondi, Terracina, Gaeta and Itri seem to crisscross the biography of our Founder and is a reminder of his earthly presence. It was here that he first experienced the “tenuous” community dimension of his charism (the Shrine of the Madonna della Catena). In this region he sensed that he was chosen for a mission through the encouragement of Bishop Pignatelli and it was here that he met the artist Sebastiano Conca, the Goffredi benefactors, Felice Antonia Notarianni, the mother of Bishop Calcagnini, who knelt before the Founder in 1767 to ask for his blessing. From here St. Paul of the Cross planned his trip to the city of Troia (FG) to meet with Bishop Emilio Giacomo Cavalieri who played an important role in designing the structure of the future Congregation and in arranging his initial successes with the Roman authorities. It was here that the Congregation had a kind of stable apostolate due to the ministry of great religious of the past such as St. Vincent Strambi and Blessed Dominic Barberi. It was also here that our religious sought refuge during



A plaque commemorating the presence of St. Paul of the Cross and Ven. John Baptist at the Shrine in 1726.

the French invasion. This area was also a great source for vocations, among them the Superior General, Fr. Silvio Di Vezza.

From these mountains that face the Tyrrhenian Sea, St. Paul of the Cross was infected with what he called the “*Tyrrhenian sea sickness*” that in large part explains his mystical language. If we read into a letter that the Founder wrote from Ceccano, concerning these mountains that face the sea, we can perceive some aspect of this reality including perhaps a dimension of the Passionist “dream”: “*when I frequently admire the mountains of Terracina and those mountains nearby, I am filled with peace and happiness.*” Similarly, on numerous occasions he openly stated his fondness for the Retreat of Terracina which also faced the Tyrrhenian Sea. He would have been disappointed when the retreat was closed in 1816. Nevertheless, we are still present in this area. In our retreat in Itri we still have the portrait that Sebastiano Conca, one of the great artists of that century and Paul’s good friend from Gaeta, painted of him. It would be unfortunate to interrupt this continuity of Passionist presence, a presence which John Paul II enthusiastically acknowledged with surprise when he said in Gaeta: “*the Passionists are even here, too!*” ●



SOME MEETINGS OF THE BLESSED JOHN PAUL II
WITH THE PASSIONISTS

BLESSED JOHN PAUL II ON MONTE ARGENTARIO

*From the article
on St. Paul of the Cross (1969)
to the visit
to Monte Argentario (2000)*

Fr. Adolfo Lippi, CP (PRAES)

On 12 December of the Holy Year 2000, the religious of the Presentation Province were gathered on Monte Argentario with the Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, who had previously been their Provincial. The occasion was to form the new Curia for the Province. Suddenly, during the afternoon break period, we were informed that the Pope was in the church. The reactions of the religious ranged from incredulity to amazement. We found John Paul II in the first pew, kneeling in prayer. We knelt down next to him and then together with him we sang the hymn, *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, intoned by his personal secretary Fr. Stanislaus Dziwisz.

The Pope stayed for a half an hour, greeting and chatting with the religious and the laity present. He was pleased to learn that at that time, the house was the site of the national novitiate. We spoke to him about our Holy Founder and about vocations. He agreed to pose for some group fotos. He signed the guest registry, writing:

Cum benedictione
Joannes Paulus II
12 -12- 2000

Based on the questions that he asked about our Holy Founder, I had the impression that he did not remember that he had written an article on the spirituality of St. Paul of the Cross many years before in 1969, entitled: *"The spirituality of the Passion and the Paschal Mystery"*. At this point I could speak about the references to the Paschal Mystery – the Passion and the Resurrection of Jesus – in the numerous magisterial documents of Pope John Paul II.



The Holy Father with the religious of the PRAES Province on Monte Argentario.

However, this would go far beyond the scope of this article. I prefer to address that interesting article of 1969, first published in Italian in the journal *"Fonti Vivi"* (1969, 2, 33-43), then again in the journal, *"La Sapienza della Croce"* (XVI, 2001, 235-244).

At the beginning of this interesting article, the then cardinal Wojtyla, cited his sources: *"Hunter of Souls"*, by Edmund Burke and *"La mystique de la Passion"*, by Stanislas Breton. The study that he did about St. John of the Cross, the subject of his doctoral thesis at the Angelicum, surely enabled the Cardinal to understand the relationship between the mysticism of St. Paul of the Cross and that of the German Rhineland (*Renana*) School of mysticism from which the Spanish mysticism of the 1500's also descended. Wojtyla observed, as Balthasar would also do in that same year, that in the spirituality of St. Paul of the Cross "the Franciscan tradition was wonderfully fused with the tradition of the German (Rhineland) mystics." As the best recent scholars note, in Tauler one can observe the subjective dimension of Western mysticism (that will also influence the general culture of the modern Western world). *"In St. Paul of the Cross"*, wrote Wojtyla, *"meditation on the Passion did not consist of expounding on the object, but in the subjective participation in it...It was not merely passion for the divine Patient: rather the soul of our Saint* ➔

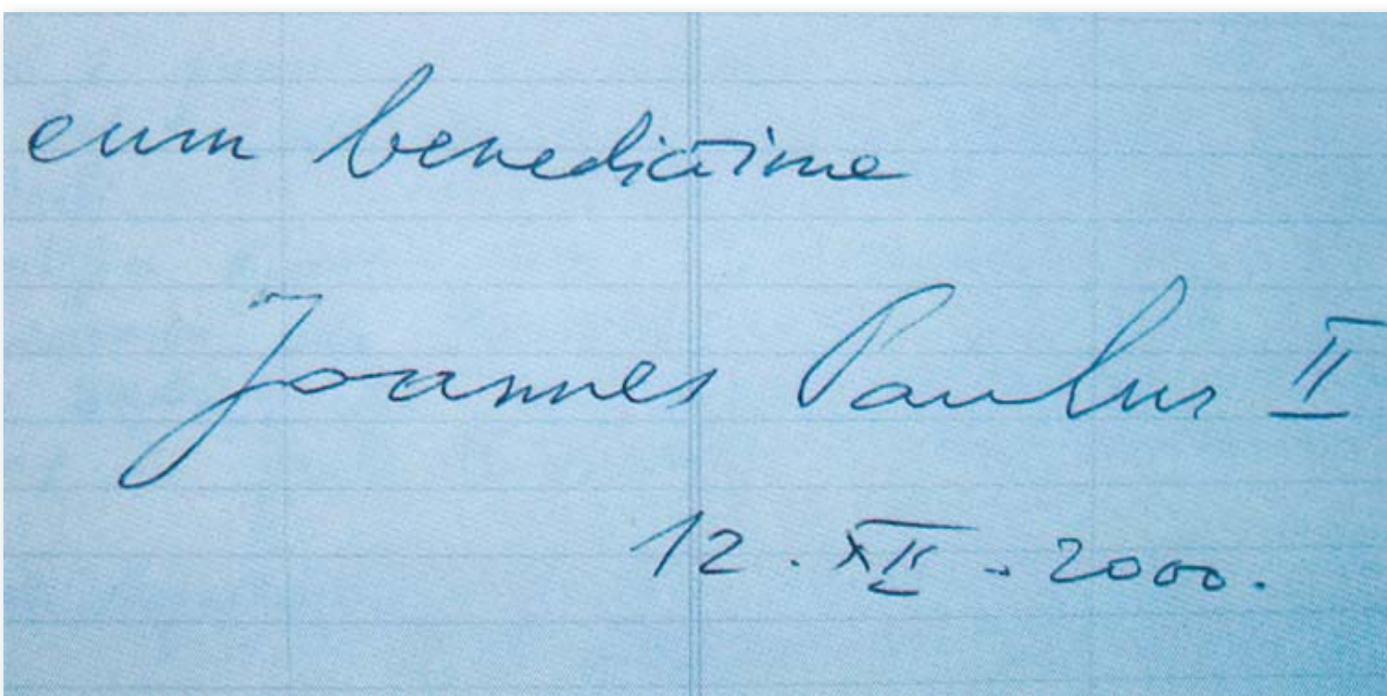


Paul John Paul II with Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio.

was opened by a mysterious power – ‘*potentia oboedientialis*’ – to the divine action and received in itself a particular likeness to God, to which he lovingly ‘gave himself.’ Giving oneself, this is the most important dimension of the spirituality of St. Paul of the Cross, in his meditation and in his preaching.” (pp. 239-40)

In the last part of the article Wojtyla cites several passages from *Gaudium et spes*, the Conciliar document to which he personally contributed and which echo throughout his encyclicals. He concludes by stating the timeliness of the Passionist spirituality during the period of Vatican II, “*which so significantly revealed the paschal mystery to people.*”

Perhaps his direct connection with the Passionist charism was due to his life and his witness. I remember that at times, during that period of his life when John Paul II was young and strong, athletic and even a sportsman, he was strongly criticized especially in ecclesiastical circles. The assassination attempt that he endured with great patience and the pardoning of his assassin served to greatly endear him to people. The prolonged illness that he suffered during the final years of his life and the personal cost of his remaining faithful to the papal ministry won everybody’s admiration especially, in a strange way, the young. One example of this was the massive, solemn and worldwide participation in his funeral. Another example would be his beatification on earth and the participation by thousands of people at the ceremony on May 1st of this year. Truly he too could say: lifted up from the earth – lifted up on the cross – I will draw all people to me – or more precisely, I will draw all to Jesus and Mary, the great passions of his heart. ●



Signature of John Paul II in the visitors' registry at the Retreat of the Presentation, Monte Argentario.



PASSIONISTS INTERNATIONAL MEETING

Fr. KEVIN DANCE, (SPIR)

(Passionists International NGO representative at the UN)

The recent meeting of the Board of Passionists International that took place from 9-10 May 2011 at our retreat of the Immaculate Conception in Jamaica, New York, saw some new faces. Three Passionist Congregations now sponsor our ministry of justice at the United Nations. Sr. Elissa Rinere represents the Sisters of the Cross and Passion; Sr. Maria Virginia Alfaro represents Las Hijas de la Pasión; Fr. Jesús María Aristín, Secretary General for JPIC and the Missions, represents our own Community. Also present were Fr. Vital Otshudialokoka (SALV), assistant to the Secretary General for JPIC, and Fr. Jefferies Foale (SPIR).

We bid farewell to Sr. Bernadette Hughes who has

made a wonderful contribution since the establishment of Passionists International and welcomed Sr. Anne Cunningham to the Board of Trustees. She is the promoter of JPIC for the Sisters of the Cross & Passion as Fr. Jesús is for us. Sr. Joanne Fahey led us with a beautiful prayer: "Praying the Easter Stories".

Fr. Kevin and Sr. Mary Ann reported on their work since October 2010. Kevin named some of the "signs of the times" that affect what we say and how we say it within the House of the Nations. We work to promote God's reign of justice and peace in a turbulent environment: Recall the terrible destruction of the combined earthquake, tsunami and the collapse of nuclear reactors in Japan; these extreme weather



(L-R) Mr. Edmond Thomas; Fr. Jefferies Foale (SPIR); Sr. Elissa Rinere, C.P.; Sr. Anne Cunningham, C.P.; Sr. Bernadette Hughes, C.P.; Sr. Mary Ann Strain, C.P.; Fr. Kevin Dance (SPIR); Sr. Maria Virginia Alfaro; Fr. Jesús María Aristín; Sr. Joanne Fahey, C.P.; and Fr. Vital Otshudialokoka (SALV).



events followed on the heels of two earthquakes in New Zealand, massive floods in Australia and Pakistan and the hottest summer temperatures ever recorded in Russia.

A recent World Bank/IMF study on world food shortages and prices, suggests the social and political upheaval sweeping from Tunisia and Egypt to Iran, Sudan and Syria is partly fuelled by spiralling food costs. The “Arab Spring” is likely to dawn in other countries as well. World Bank President Robert Zoellick said that the global food situation was “one shock away from a full-blown crisis.”

In the last 10 months 44 million people have been forced below the poverty line of less than \$1.25 a day. Food they could afford a short time ago is now beyond their reach. They are not statistics, but real people - mothers, fathers and children - who thought they'd struggled out of hopeless poverty, but are now sliding back into desperate hunger.

In all our work at the UN on behalf of the Passionist Family we ask “*how will this promote development to enhance the dignity and human rights of the most vulnerable people?*” Paul of the Cross saw the name of Jesus written on the foreheads of the poor. So our work on behalf of **development** is work that is faithful to the vision of Paul and the Passionists.

Passionists International has been active on a number of fronts over the past months: We helped write the NGO (Non-governmental Organization) Declaration for the Commission for Social Development with the theme “Eradicating Poverty”. This encouraged governments to cooperate in finding concrete ways to address poverty. We have also started a world-wide campaign to lobby our national governments to support a social protection floor so that minimum levels of health, education and work are available to all.

We follow closely the growing speculation in food commodities which pushes up the price of basic foods people need to live on. Banks and financial institutions formerly speculated in money and stocks. Now they are driving this speculation in the necessities of life. We need to do more to make this known to our members. We work with developing countries to promote a Financial Transaction Tax on every transaction made on the stock market or financial institutions. This is to be used for development. We support the creation of a Panel of Experts to advise UN Member states on financial risks to prevent another global financial crisis. Fr. Kevin called for

stronger regulation of banks and financial institutions at a recent meeting of the UN ECOSOC, the World Bank, WTO and the IMF.

We helped organize a Briefing by the UN Department of Public Information on mining and the damage done to local communities and to the environment. Foreign mining companies, in particular US, Canadian and Australian, must be called to account. Several hundred people attended. Kevin shared Talking Points on Extractive Industries and their impact on indigenous communities.

Sr. Mary Ann shared what has been happening with the Working Group on Girls. Mary Ann serves a co-chair of this committee. She gave some background on the commission and its purpose; namely, that the UN, in addressing women's issues, must ensure that girls are always included.

Board members discussed how we can link the resources available through our presence at the UN with the practical action of Passionists round the world – whether that is a Home for homeless girls in Mexico, or standing up to foreign mining companies in Philippines etc. As we work locally, it is vital that we develop skills to think globally in a globalized world. We have much to do to educate our members in global thinking. We can bring Passionists to New York for a short experience to expose them to global issues and to learn how our work at the UN can enhance their ministry and help them to be change-agents; or we can offer regional workshops to help our members “own” the work done in their name at the UN. The Board felt that going out to various locations with workshops is a more effective and cost efficient method.

Kevin is to give a workshop on the vision and practice of our ministry of justice, peace and the integrity of creation at the UN to our General Council and also to that of the Passionist Sisters. The visible support by our Leaders is vital to the work of Passionists International; if our leadership does not support this ministry of global justice informed by our Passionist charism, membership will not pick it up. We have laid strong foundations at the UN. With all the crises the world now faces, this is a critical time for our presence. As Kevin prepares to hand the task of representing the Passionist Family to another, I pray we will all become more aware of and involved in this mission of love.

The Board also considered a draft policy for admission of future new member congregations to Passionists International. ●



PASSIOCHRISTI.ORG: THE NEW COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IS ONLINE!

Fr. MARCO PASQUALI, C.P. (PIET)



Fr.
Marco
Pasquali
(PIET)

After many months of anticipation, on 10 May 2011, the new Web Site of the Congregation saw the light of day! It was the fruit of a long period of preparation that involved many people who, in various ways, offered their talents for this project. First of all we want to acknowledge Fr. Clemente Barrón, the General Consultor who oversees the area of digital communications and, together with him, also the Superior General his Council. The idea for a new web site originated with them and it was subsequently entrusted to a Commission for Digital Communications composed of Frs. Marco Pasquali (PIET), Ramiro Ruíz (FID) and Massimo Granieri (LAT) who then brought the project to fruition. We would like to take this occasion to officially thank Fr. Miguel Angel Villanueva - the former Administrator of our Web Site - for the good work that he has done till now.

The task that was completed is not merely a re-styling of what we previously used; rather its goal is to go much beyond that, to create a **system for the Digital Communications of the Passionists** that will help all our religious to be in communication with each other in ways that are quicker, more secure and more efficient. During various canonical visitations of our communities throughout different parts of the world, the General Council listened to requests from many religious that a plan be available that would allow Passionists to come together in a context that would be both secure and personalized, where they could “gather” together – even if only on virtual level – and thus be able to exchange ideas, resources, visions and plans. The need for communication became very evident not only in order to be able to discuss matters of “grave importance”, but also to share “lighter” moments of leisure. They can now share topics such as their doctoral dissertation on “The relationship between Neo-Platonism and the mysticism of Tauler” as well as sharing fotos of the cook’s horrible new hairstyle. All of this, however, in an environment that can guarantee privacy

and intimacy in order to be able to freely share with each other.

Among the various functions that the site offers there are those that we already know and use from the preceding version of the Site: the publication of the News items of the Congregation as well as official documents. However, even in this area there are significant changes not only because of a new graphic design (look and feel), but also because of a new modality for the distribution of information (feed RSS, integration with Face book and Twitter) as well as the availability of new multimedia items (Media gallery). In order to address the previously mentioned needs, “Passiochristi.org” is offering some new services. First of all, a “**personal, protected environment**” is available (assessable via username and password that will be requested by the administrator of the system by clicking on the tab “*Contacts*” at the bottom of the page.) Access to this space will not only be available to Passionist religious, but also to laity who are affiliated with our groups, and also those who are close to us, while always maintaining **privacy**. In this way one can choose whether or not to share the material by making it visible to everyone (*shared mode*) or visible only to a limited number of categories (*Reserved mode*). Above all, in order to provide a common space in which one can communicate in a reserved mode, a **Social Network** (in FB style) is available; however it will only be visible to registered users. Today, one of the most important means of communication is the **Blog** (an on-line diary) in which one can write and publish material, including multi-media, in which the “pages” are visible to everyone on the Web or, if desired, only to those who are registered on the site. Additionally, in order to provide a means for exchanging opinions and ideas about different topics and in different languages, a **Forum** space is available within which one can engage in interactive discussions in a reserved mode (only with registered users), as well as in a public mode, thus allowing for access to those outside the system (obviously this will depend on the topic).

However, there are also other **new features!** There are still some projects and services that are in the planning stages that will gradually be available, for example, the series “Studies in Passionist History and Spirituality” in digital format; a personalized address for your own blog (third level); the possibility of hosting a web page in our space (hosting); the possibility of configuring a personal blog with different topics, etc.

The new “Passiochristi.org” site, precisely because it originated as a Communications System, requires everyone’s cooperation in order to grow and attain the scope for which it was created, i.e. to help us to be more of a family. Now we are asking each member of the Passionist Family to participate and collaborate not only by use this service, but also to propose initiatives, new services and ways of interacting and sharing, i.e. any ideas that may improve the quality of our common life. “Passiochristi.org” is now available for everyone – **online!** ●



ASSEMBLY OF THE THOM VICARIATE (INDIA)

The recent Vicariate Assembly of THOM was held in Bangalore, May 9-11, 2011. There were twenty-five religious of the Vicariate present, including Fr. Antony Xavier Tharayil, Regional Vicar, Fr. James Thoman (CRUC), moderator for the Assembly and Fr. Donald Webber, CRUC Provincial Superior.

During this Assembly the first draft documentation of each committee was presented. The Vocation and Formation Committee presented the vision of

toward becoming a Vice-Province and it willingly and joyfully embraces the next phases in this process.

The 2008 Congress of the Vicariate proposed that: *recognizing our growth over last 27 years as a Vicariate, we seriously begin thinking about moving from the status of being a Regional Vicariate to being a Vice-Province; and that a committee be formed to study the issue keeping in mind the time frame.* In accordance with this proposal the Assembly of the Vicariate in 2010, established four committees, namely the formation and Vocation Committee, Mission and Ministry Committee, Finance Committee and Administration Committee. The Vicariate hopes to be elevated to a Vice-Province within the time period of the next General Chapter of 2012.



Participants in the Assembly of the THOM Vicariate (India).

Vocation Promotion for next ten years and the demands of Formation involved with that reality. The Mission and Ministry committee presented an evaluation of present ministries of the Vicariate and suggested ways for remaining rooted in our Charism. It also suggested way of engaging in new missions and ministries. The Finance Committee presented steps to be taken to become financially self-sufficient and suggested effective ways of using material and personnel resources. The Administrative Committee received the input to prepare a governing structure for the Vice-Province.

The young Vicariate is currently composed of 32 finally professed and 12 temporarily professed members. Reflecting on the growth over last thirty years, the Vicariate realizes that it now needs to move

The foundation of the Passionist Congregation in India began in 1981 at Cochin. The first Community was composed of four members hailing from three Continents. They were Frs. Walter Kaelin (CRUC Province, USA), Philip Smith (SPIR Province, Australia), Carlos Elizalde (FAM Province, Spain) and Lombardo Lonocci (LAT Province, Italy). A year later the community was joined by Fr. Christopher Gibson (CRUC Province, USA). Between 1981 and 1991, many Passionists from around the world served in India either on a short term or long term basis from different Provinces. In 1989 this General Foundation was elevated to the status of Vicariate (THOM) and Fr. Walter Kaelin became the first Regional Vicar. In 1991 Holy Cross Province (CRUC) generously assumed responsibility for the Vicariate. ●

VANIMO MISSION CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF PASSIONIST PRESENCE

The religious of the SPIR Province of Australia recently celebrated 50 years of Passionist presence and mission in Vanimo, Papua New Guinea. On 4 March, 1961, four Passionists, Frs. Gregory Kirby, Anselm Turner, Jeff Foale and Bro. Anthony Lawler arrived by boat from Lae to begin the Passionist mission in Vanimo. Many Passionists followed from Australia, New Zealand, America, England, the Philippines and Indonesia. They were joined by many other religious and also by many lay missionaries.

On Saturday, 5th March 2011, they celebrated the Golden Jubilee together with other religious and lay sisters and brothers. Fr. Clemente Barron, General Consultor, Fr. Joachim Rego, SPIR Provincial Superior (who worked for 10 years in Vanimo), Fr. Paul Mercieca (17 years in Vanimo), Fr. John Auram, Fr. Jacob Kuman, Bro. Benjamin Telu (PNG religious) and Fr. Tom McDonough joined the present community in Vanimo: Fr. Valensius Son (REPAC, Indonesia), Fr. Patrick McIndoe and Bro. Martin Lusk for the celebrations. The special Jubilee Mass was celebrated at the parish church of Dasi Settlement, the largest church building in Vanimo. Mass was

celebrated by the present bishop, the Most Rev. Cesare Bonivento assisted by Bishop Alphonse (formerly of the Diocese of Kimbe), plus most of the coastal clergy, all the seminary clergy and seminarians, the religious and, most importantly, hundreds of parishioners from the villages and stations in which the Passionists, Sisters and lay missionaries had worked. Fr

Joachim preached, in part telling the story of the first religious and then the successive missionaries who came. He finished by reminding the congregation that they were now the Church in Vanimo responsible for the proclamation of the Good News in this place.



Fr. Joachim Rego, Provincial Superior and some of the parishioners who first welcomed our missionaries to Vanimo fifty years ago.

At the end of mass the Bishop spoke stirringly of the gratitude of the people and present religious of the Diocese for the work of the Passionists in establishing the Church and the Diocese. Bishop Cesare stated: “the Passionists are part of the heartbeat of the Diocese.” He ended by begging Fr. Clemente to ask Fr. General for more Passionists to come to Vanimo, at which he turned to the people who roared their approval. Our work, our spirit and our charism is alive and still growing among the people of Sandaun Province who now embody it themselves. ●



SACRED HEART OF JESUS CONFIGURATION: TAKING SMALL, BUT FIRM AND DECISIVE STEPS

The Configuration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus accepted the invitation that was given to the entire Congregation during the last General Synod for this time period until the 46th General Chapter in 2012: **“moving together into the future.”** This response took the form of three important meetings that were scheduled during the recent months of March and April:

The Meeting in Conocoto (Ecuador), 29-31 March. The objective of this meeting was to share information about the work of the XIV General Synod, request assistance and seek reactions from the Latin American zone of the Configuration. Twenty six Religious participated, the majority native Latin Americans from Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Chile, Venezuela, Panama and Ecuador. The Religious from these different countries ratified their support for the process of Restructuring and for the Sacred Heart Configuration.

Meeting of Local Superiors and the Councils of the communities of Spain in Las Presas (Spain), 26-28 April. Twenty four religious from the CORI, FAM and SANG Provinces participated. The objective of this meeting was on-going study of the process of Restructuring, incorporation of the recommendations and decisions of the XIV General Synod, and sharing the work of the Religious of Latin America during their meeting in Conocoto.

Pre-Congress of the FID Vice-Province (Colombia) in Cajicá, 26-28 April. During the Pre-Congress, at which Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, General Consultor, presided, thirty one religious participated. By means of the presentation of reports of the local communities, the work of the Pre-Congress centered on the process of Restructuring and membership of the FID Vice-Province in the Sacred Heart Configuration. The Pre-Congress concluded with a

straw-ballot vote in order to ascertain the opinion of the Vice-Province. By a two-thirds majority the Religious of the Vice-Province that were present reaffirmed their support for the process of Restructuring and the desire of the Vice-Province to remain a member of the Sacred Heart Configuration.

Approximately eighty Religious of the Configuration participated in these meetings which were important because the majority of the Religious were able to express their desire to continue moving into the future guided by the established processes. They are aware of the difficulties ahead, but they are willing to mutually support one another to overcome these difficulties and achieve the desired objectives.

They are convinced that this is an historic moment, which will entail adjustments and challenges for everyone, such as the disappearance of the current juridical entities (the CORI, FAM and SANG Provinces, the FID Vice-province and the RES Vicariate) in order to create new entities. In order to better understand the details of the work



Religious attending the meeting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Configuration.

that has been done, the acts of each of the meetings is being reported.

Next September there will be a meeting of the respective Councils to evaluate the implementation of the various decisions that were made during past meetings in reference to the three areas of solidarity (formation, personnel and finances.) At this meeting an outline will be prepared of the work to be done during the various assemblies and meetings that will be held in the different zones and countries during the final months of 2011 and the beginning of 2012. By means of the work that is done during these meetings and the decisions that will be made they will further discern what they will be able to plan about the life and mission of the new Province so that it can be presented at the next General Chapter. ●



FIFTY YEARS OF PASSIONIST PRESENCE IN THE PARISH OF ST. GEMMA, MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA

In early 1951, the Archbishop of Medellín, Joaquín García Benítez, authorized Fr. Mateo Argintxona, the rector of the Passionist community of Bogotá to establish a Passionist foundation in Medellín. He initially proposed the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows, located in the La Loma Barrio, Las Estancias; however, after inspecting the premises he opted for a Chapel and residence in the Barrio Loreto. The first community that arrived consisted of Frs. Cirilo Lejarreta and Julio Egurrola, and Bro. Prudencio Latxaga, who was later replaced by Bro. Juan José Elkorobarrutia.

Subsequently they began to search for land in the city for the construction of a house for the community of religious. In July 1954, while the community was still located in Barrio Loreto, they built a small chapel in the Barrio La Castellana.

A chapel was built through the generosity of people living nearby and through fundraising efforts such as bazaars, raffles and other donations. Little by little other Passionist religious began to arrive to establish the new community: Frs. Manuel Elejalde (1954), Máximo Dañobeitia (1955) and Remigio Barrena, Benigno Zenaruzabeitia, Zenón Uriguen and Blas Azkarate (1956). Finally Bro. Francisco Ruiz de Sabando (1957) and Fr. Juan José Mesa

(1958), the first Colombian Passionist religious was added to the community.

In 1957 the new chapel was dedicated and additional religious were added to the foundation: Frs. Atanasio Amundarain and Restituto Aldamiz (1958) Fr. Moisés Errasti and Bro. Anselmo Larrabe, the following year. After the Great Mission in Colombia of 1961, the Parish of St. Gemma was founded. Since the existing chapel was too small to accommodate the growing population, they decided to

enlist the services of the architect Nel Rodríguez and the new church was inaugurated on 14 November 1970.

Today the Parish of St. Gemma is a reference point for the city of Medellín. It is a place where the faithful can encounter



Church of St. Gemma, Medellín, Colombia (FID).

the Risen Lord through liturgical celebrations that enliven and renew faith by means of prophetic witness. Here too, many families, who form part of the Passionist Family throughout the world, meet to share the charism of St. Paul of the Cross. There are many forms of pastoral outreach that include sacramental ministry, family ministry, renewal groups for spouses that are separated, youth ministry (Youth Group Meetings), Bible study and prayer groups, liturgical ministries, Passionist spirituality group, social and missionary activities, etc. ●



LAT PROVINCIAL CHAPTER, ITALY

The 28th Provincial Chapter of the LAT Province of Italy (Puglia, Calabria and Basilicata) took place at the Passionist retreat house of Fuscaldo (Cosenza) during 3-6 May. The theme of the Chapter was: *“In the footsteps of Christ: walking in hope.”* In addition to Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, Superior General, and the Religious of the Province who were delegates, the following were also present: Fr. Luis Alberto Cano, General Consultor; Fr. Tito Ape, Regional Vicar of the LAT-ISID Vicariate of southern Brazil; Fr. Leone Masnata, CFXI Provincial, Coordinator of the CEB Configuration and Moderator of the Chapter; and observers from various Provinces: Frs. Danilo Mazzoni (CORM), Vincenzo Leone (PIET), and Leonardo Di Girolamo (CFIXI).

In his opening address to the Chapter, Fr. Ottaviano referred to the Canonical Visitation that was done by Fr. Luis Alberto, General Consultor, last November and December. In the visitation report Fr. Luis Alberto noted that the Religious felt a need for greater communication in the Province and greater participation in decisions that are made. He reported that some communities see a need for a wider vision of the local and provincial realities so that new horizons and new groupings can be formed that better reflect the number of Religious and intercultural dimension of the regions that comprise the CEB Configuration. Although the Province possesses a certain spiritual and human vitality, as well as ministerial and missionary energy, there is still a need to examine those elements that cause tension and misunderstanding in the Province.

The introduction to the final document that was discussed and approved by the Chapter delegates states: “The Congregation, with its new Configurations; the Church, with its challenging plan for evangelization; and the world, with its need for credible witnesses, ask us – as the Provincial Superior stated in his address – ‘to establish a plan that includes respect for the past traditions that are currently present in the Province, and a view toward new possibilities, the youth, new forms of poverty and the new challenges that the world offers us.’” These points chal-



(L-R) Fr. Piero Greco; Fr. Giulio Zagaro (First Consultor); Fr. Pino Schiniello; Fr. Cosimo Chianura, Provincial Superior and Fr. Carlo Scarongella.

lenge the Province to be creative in evangelical ministry and to share in the projects of the CEB Configuration. Following are some of the specific decisions of the Chapter, giving particular attention to a unified vocation program for new vocations: 1) Conscious of the principal objective of Restructuring, i.e. “promoting a quality of life that is evangelical and a mission that evangelizes” by means of solidarity in the areas of formation, personnel and finances, the Chapter affirms the gradual movement toward the union of the five provinces of the Configuration (CFXI, CORM, LAT, PIET, MICH), resulting in a single Province with one Provincial authority. 2) There is a need to contextualize and update the present Formation Plan of the Italian Provinces according to the times and the new choices of the Congregation, with particular attention to a common and gradual vision in all phases of formation, giving particular attention to the following aspects: a) Give precedence to human maturity especially in the initial phases of discernment; b) Following the period of initial formation, provide for gradual insertion of the religious into the communities of the Configuration; c) adequately prepare formation personnel for the future. 3) Establish a house in the province for postulants with common and shared programs within the Configuration. 4) Establish a location and a formation team for the novitiate and student center, possibly Rome, which would remain stable for a suitable period of time. Finally, the Chapter agreed to modify its provincial legislation at No. 122, and therefore

decreed that the Provincial Chapter be open to all the religious of the Province in perpetual vows and who request to participate. This point will be further studied and approved at the next Provincial Assembly.

On 5 May, Fr. Cosimo Chianura was elected as Provincial Superior. Four consultors were also elected to assist him in his provincial ministry: Fr. Piero Greco, Consultor for Pastoral Ministries; Fr. Giulio Zagaro (First Consultor), Consultor for Finance; Fr. Pino Schiniello, Consultor for Community Life; and Fr. Carlo Scarongella, Consultor for Vocations, Formation and Studies. Finally, Fr. Massimo Granieri was elected as delegate to the General Chapter and Fr. Tito Francesco Ape as substitute delegate. ●



Religious participating in the LAT Provincial Chapter (Italy).

CFIXI PROVINCIAL CHAPTER, ITALY

From 28 to 31 March the Religious of the CFIXI Province of Sicily celebrated their 12th Provincial Chapter in the retreat house of Mascalucia. Present for the Chapter were Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General, Fr. Luis Alberto Cano, General Consultor, Fr. Antonio Curto (LAT), the moderator for the Chapter, and the following observers from other Provinces: Fr. Andrea Brollo (CORM), Fr. Mario Lifrieri (LAT) and Fr. Natale Panetta (PIET). Of the 39 religious of the Province, approximately 25 were present for the Chapter.

The theme of the Chapter, *"From the Passion of Jesus: new dynamism for our Life and Mission"*, emphasized that every future development of the Province depends on faith in the strength and richness of the Passion of the Lord Jesus. The solution for problems has already been gratuitously offered to us: everything originates in the Passion of Jesus: our search for God (theology), future development and the on-going formation of our Religious (humanity), as well as the content and methodology of our service to the Church and to the world (apostolate).

The Chapter members were asked to consider focusing more on hope than on pessimism and to be a more united family so as to be able to respond to current problems and crises. They were also asked to work at overcoming apathy which results in turning inward on ourselves; instead "they should remain hopeful, sustained by the beauty of our charism and our mission." Regarding the future of the Province, in the context of the process of Restructuring currently taking place in the Congregation, the Chapter chose to move toward union with the Provinces that currently comprise the current CEB Configuration so that there will eventually be one Province. They hope that this will not merely be about changing structures, but will involve a review of our entire consecrated life in the light of our charism: not only moving toward a "new Province", but toward a "renewed Province"- one that is truly new.

The following points were made concerning the Province Project for the next four years: A) The project concerns our community life and will try to assure that our communities are capable of living communal life as described in our fundamental documents, trying to avoid making structures or activities impediments. In this light two decisions were made: one concerning the possible closure of



Fr. Leone Masnata, Provincial Superior, (Confirmed) [center]; Fr. Gianni Trumello, (Confirmed), 1st. Consultor [left]; Fr. Francesco di Mariano, 2nd Consultor [right].

the community of Alessandria della Rocca (AG) and the other regarding the union of the communities of Romitello and the Borgetto monastery into one single community. B) The urgent need for on-going formation for the Religious, primarily in the individual communities, and then by the Provincial Council with the organization of formation meetings for all the religious, with particular attention to the preparation of the young Religious in areas of specialization and foreign language courses. C) The revitalization of the apostolate beginning with the traditional ministries of shrines and parishes; however we also need to care for the ministries of itinerant preaching. In all of the ministries we need to be especially attentive to the Passionist dimension. We need to particularly help the young religious to enter into our traditional apostolates as well as youth and vocation ministry. Finally, D) There was a renewed, urgent request for all of the communities to dedicate themselves to formation and vocation ministry, as well as to reassume and reaffirm the importance of designating a Religious in the Province for the ministry of vocation promotion, assisted by a corresponding commission.

During the Chapter these religious were elected to positions of Provincial and Council: Fr. Leone Masnata, Provincial Superior, (Confirmed), Fr. Gianni Trumello, (Confirmed), 1st. Consultor; Fr. Francesco di Mariano, 2nd Consultor. ●



PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF THE DOL PROVINCE (ITALY)

The seventy sixth Provincial Chapter of the DOL Province of Italy (Lower-Lazio and Campania) took place in the Salesian retreat house in Vico Equenza, from 14 to 19 March 2011. Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General, opened the Chapter by welcoming the religious from the Province as well as those of the VICT Vicariate of Brazil: Fr. Luiz Carlos Meneghetti, VICT Regional Vicar and a delegate from the Vicariate, Fr. Vanderlan Gomez Da Paz. Present with Fr. General was Fr. Luis Alberto Cano, General Consultor who also did the General Visitation. A Redemptorist, Fr. Serafino Fiore was the spiritual director for the Chapter and Dr. Fabrizio Sprenga was the moderator. Additionally, Fr. Fiorenzo Bordo, PRAES Provincial Superior was present as an observer.

In his opening address Fr. General referred to several points of the report following the Canonical Visitation: 1) In some communities there is a certain weariness and frustration, sometimes resulting in individualism. In addition to studying ways of improving communication, the report suggested that some of the ministerial commitments need to be reduced. This could be done within the context of the Configuration. In this context Fr. Ottaviano referred to the importance of the role of the local superior and the need to be attentive to his paternal and pastoral role more than that of administrator. 2) Particular attention needs to be given to the assignment of the young religious in appropriate communities and ministries. 3) An additional project for the upcoming term is adequate care for the sick and elderly religious. Finally, 4) the report noted the outstanding pastoral ministry that the religious are doing. It also highlighted the very active lay associations in the province, including the organization of ex-alumni of the Province.

The following are some of the final objectives that were decided during the Chapter: 1) Make the Badia and the parish of Santa Maria a Fiume in Ceccano a single pastoral entity; 2) Withdraw from the Shrine of the Madonna della Civita and also the



(L-R) Frs. Raffaele Pragliola; Mario Caccavale; Enzo Del Brocco, Provincial Superior; Pierluigi Mirra; and Gianluca Zanni, 1st Consultor.

Passionist retreat of Casamicciola on the island of Ischia (maintaining a ministerial relationship in the latter); 3) Return the Community of Falvaterra to its original identity as a retreat house and transfer the novitiate of the Configuration to the community of Paliano; 4) Designate the community of Naples as the site for the care of the sick and elderly; 5) Each community will ideally be composed of six or more religious, but no less than four; 6) Provide on-going formation for all the religious, in particular for the superiors and those involved in special apostolates; 7) The student-seminarians will continue to reside at Sts. John and Paul, Rome. This will afford them the opportunity to live in an international setting and to attend the various pontifical universities of the city; and finally, 8) Exert greater effort, creativity and human and financial resources in vocation ministry. The Provincial and his Council will appoint a small team to organize and facilitate various activities for this purpose.

During the Chapter the following religious were chosen as Provincial and Council: Frs. Enzo Del Brocco, Provincial Superior (confirmed); Gianluca Zanni, 1st Consultor and Formation; Pierluigi Mirra, Community Life; Raffaele Pragliola, Apostolate; and Mario Caccavale, Finances (Provincial Econome, confirmed). The Chapter also elected Fr. Augusto Matrullo, delegate to the 2012 General Chapter and Fr. Anthony Masciantonio, substitute delegate. ●



PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF THE PRAES PROVINCE OF ITALY

The Religious of the province gathered on Monte Argentario at the retreat of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary from 16 to 20 May, 2011. Also present were Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, Superior General, Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, General Consultor and Moderator of the Chapter, Fr. Enzo Del Brocco, DOL Provincial Superior and Coordinator of the JCFX Configuration, and Fr. Pedro Bacchiocchi, Regional Vicar for the PRAES-DOMIN Vicariate of Brazil.

The theme chosen for the Chapter was: "Proclaiming Christ Crucified to the world through our life and apostolate." "This theme challenges us to examine our present reality in order to verify the responses to it in our personal and community life and in our ministries and to plan for the future by its light."

In his opening address, Fr. Ottaviano referred to the Canonical Visitation and the subsequent report prepared by Fr. Luigi Vaninetti during the months of January through March. After his meeting with the various communities and religious, he made the following observations: A) **Restructuring:** In general the Religious are in favor of Restructuring and also membership in the Configuration of Jesus Crucified because of the new possibilities that it can offer beyond national borders, with the hope of a new international and missionary spirit. B) **Provincial Government:** Although the Council, composed of the Provincial and two Consultors, is generally efficient, there is a need for additional members for the purpose of consultation. There is a need to help the young Religious and priests during the initial years of their entry into ministry and community life. C) **Community.** There are numerous communities in the Province (11 communities, plus a chaplaincy for the Monastery of the Passionist Nuns of Lucca). Some of these are staffed by a small number of religious. There is a need to improve spiritual and cultural life in order improve the quality of community life and relationships. The community of the Scala Santa, in particular, is particularly challenging because of the diversity of age, culture, formation and visions of ministerial, consecrated and ascetic life. The ministry of the community is especially challenging because of the particular needs of pilgrims who visit the Shrines staffed by the Province. D) **General Considerations.** In this province, indicative of the Religious Life at large, there is a certain acceptance and dulling of our life (lack of radical poverty, a self-satisfied attitude and a lack of contact with the lives of ordinary people). There is a subtle secularization (lack of the spirit of transcendence and priority of the interior life, desire for freedom that is detached



(L-R) Frs. Marcio Santos de Souza; Giovanni Battista Scarinci; Fiorenzo Bordo, Provincial Superior; P. Vittorio Bruni; and Adolfo Lippi.

from truth...), in short the radical living out of our charism is in crisis.

The process of Restructuring points out the seriousness and the complexity of a change that is in process, and not merely some local renovations or a few minor adjustments. E) **Formation.** The work that the community of Sant'Angelo of Vetralla is doing in the area of vocation discernment and preparation for the novitiate is laudable. It makes us realize the importance of the quality of community life and the need for on-going formation for all the religious of the province. The collaboration with the DOL Province in the area of postulancy for the year 2009-2010 and additionally the collaboration with the entire JCFX Configuration for the novitiate, seem to be positive experiences that should be furthered and evaluated in order to improve their effectiveness. G) **Shrines and Pastoral Activity.** The Province's pastoral activity includes several shrines that have historical importance for the universal Church (the Scala Santa in Rome and the Shrine of St. Maria Goretti in Nettuno) and, in particular, for the Congregation (Presentation Retreat on Monte Argentario and Sant'Angelo Retreat in Vetralla). The people of God continue to frequent these shrines, in particular on an international level in Rome. The Lord will continue to bless these ministries if we dedicate ourselves to serving the people with even greater attention and through specific, concrete community projects that insure daily personnel coverage for religious services. H) **The Mission in Nigeria.** The opening of the Mission in Nigeria, in collaboration with the African Configuration was an act of great faith and courage. With perseverance and using the experience that the Congregation has had in other countries of Africa, this foundation will also bear much fruit.

At the conclusion of the Chapter, the following religious were elected to positions of Provincial leadership: Fr. Fiorenzo Bordo, Provincial Superior (Confirmed); Frs. Marcio Santos de Souza (from the Vicariate of Bahia, Brazil) Consultor for Formation; Giovanni Battista Scarinci, Consultor for Solidarity and Economy; Vittorio Bruni, 1st Consultor and Apostolic Activity; Adolfo Lippi, Consultor for Community Life and Spirituality. ●



SYNOD OF THE SALV VICE PROVINCE OF THE D.R. CONGO

The Synod of the Vice Province of Christ Saviour (SALV) was held at the Student Centre of St. Vincenzo Maria Strambi in Kinshasa, D.R. Congo from May 16-18, 2011. Attending the meeting were the Vice Provincial and Council members, the leaders of each local community, various ex officio members and several representatives of various other groups in the Vice Province. Fr. Denis Travers represented Fr. Ottaviano at this meeting.

The previous Congress of the Vice Province (2009) had decreed that this Synod study the method of selection of delegates for the next Congress and then send their request for a new method for the selection of delegates to the General Council for final decision. This was a major concern of the Synod. The Synod also heard reports from each of the committees established before the Synod to review area of life in the Vice Province (communities and ministries, spirituality and finances etc). Each of these reports was received and studied further by the Synod

members. The Synod met in a prayerful atmosphere and was further helped by the presence of an external facilitator who led the process and also offered some inspiring input at various stages of the meeting.

At the conclusion of the Synod the focus shifted to a three day seminar on Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation which was conducted by Fr. Jesús María Aristin and Fr. Vital Osthudialokoka this seminar was open to the entire Passionist Family and was attended by Passionist Sisters and laity as well as our own members. The seminar was a very successful gathering and was much appreciated by the members.

A wonderful event concluded the week together. The ordinations of Fr. Faustin Maphasi and Deacon René Dikhi were wonderful celebrations to end a week of reunion and fraternal gathering. The ordinations of our two brothers occurred within the context of the ordinations of twelve priests and three deacons and because the ceremony involved some eight religious orders there were around one hundred and sixty concelebrants present. The liturgy was a wonderful

exciting event with great participation by the people, the choir and some amazing young dancers. As customary the members of the Vice Province, the newly ordained and many members of the wider Passionist Family then adjourned to our own community for an afternoon meal to celebrate with the newly ordained this great day in their lives. ●



Fr. Denis Travers (General Consultor for Africa) and religious of the SALV Vice-Province (Congo) who attended the Synod.



SIXTH ON-GOING FORMATION MEETING OF THE PASSIONIST NUNS OF ITALY



Passionist Nuns who participated in their annual workshop at the monastery of Vignanello.

Vignanello (near the Italian city of Viterbo), in the vicinity of the first retreats founded by St. Paul of the Cross during the newly founded Congregation's first phase of expansion after Monte Argentario, i.e. Sant'Angelo di Vetralla and St. Eutizio. Today this monastery is composed of approximately thirty nuns, many from Indonesia.

Numerous nuns from the various monasteries of Italy participated in this event, including Costigliole d'Asti, Ovada, Quarto-Genova, Campagnano, Naples, Loreto and obviously, a large group from the monastery of Vignanello.

The course was directed by Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, C.P. (General Consultor) and Sr. Maria Bottura of the Little Sisters of the Holy Family. They addressed the following topics: Fr. Luigi Vaninetti: "Monastic and typical aspects of the Passionist Retreat: solitude, poverty, penance and prayer— History, spirituality and the present reality"; Sister Maria Bottura: "The gift of self and the Evangelical Counsels: psychological aspects". ●

NEW PASSIONIST LEADERSHIP TEAM OF THE AMERICAN PROVINCE OF THE SISTERS OF THE CROSS AND PASSION

The Sisters of the Cross & Passion of Our Lady of Dolors province in North America met recently in Farmington, CT (USA) for the 17th Provincial Chapter which is held once every five years. Twenty-eight sisters and five associates gathered for this important meeting. Sister



*(L-R)
Sr. Mary Jane Holden,
Sr. Joanne Fahy
and Sr. Ann Rodgers.*

Maria Angelica Algorta, CP, the congregational leader, presided over the chapter and Father Kevin Dance (SPIR) served as the chaplain. Sister Constance Phelps, SCL facilitated the discussions.

After several days of deliberations the community committed itself to three main areas: 1) Being open to welcome new membership; 2) Deepening its commitment to the associate way of life; and 3) Focusing energy and resources toward the continuation of the corporate mission at Our Lady of Calvary Retreat.

The community also entered into a discernment process for the selection of new leadership. The new team members, who will take on the leadership of the province for the coming five years, are Joanne Fahey, CP, Mary Jane Holden, CP and Ann Rodgers, CP. ●



PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

Nine of our religious were ordained to the Priesthood during the period April to June 2011.

In the PASS Province of the Philippines, Frs. Jeffty Madura Mendez and Ramil Sumatra Poquita were ordained to the priesthood on 12 April 2011. On 06 May 2011 in the ASSUM Province of Poland, five religious were ordained to the priesthood: Frs. Lukasz Andrzejewski, Wojciech Kowalczyk, Robert Orłowski, Pawel Sokal and Jacek Wróblewski. On 14 May 2011, Fr. Fernando Alfredo Ruiz Saldarriaga was ordained a priest in the FID Vice-Province of Colombia. Finally, in the SALV Province of the D.R. of Congo, Faustin Maphasi was ordained on 22 May 2011.



(L-R) [PASS] Fr. Jeffty Mendez, Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez, Fr. Ramel Poquita.



(ASSUM) Frs. Lukasz Andrzejewski, Wojciech Kowalczyk, Robert Orłowski, Pawel Sokal and Jacek Wróblewski.

DIACONATE ORDINATIONS

During the months of April and May, 2011, four religious were ordained deacons. Homero Gomes Rebouças Filho, of the PRAES DOMIN Vicariate of Brazil and Kennedy Antonio Okeafor of the PRAES Province of Italy were ordained at the Scala Santa Shrine in Rome on 09 April 2011. Finally, Vitor Hugo Lourenço of the CALV Province of Brazil and René Dikhi of the SALV Province of the D.R. of Congo were ordained on 22 May 2011.



(FID) Fr. Fernando Alfredo Ruiz Saldarriaga.



PROFESSION OF FINAL VOWS



(L-R) [SALV] Fr. Emery Kibal (Provincial), Deacon René Dikhi and Fr. Faustin Maphasi.

Three religious professed Final Vows during the month of March 2011. In the CORI-RES Vicariate of Peru, Rolly Werner Bardález Saavedra professed Final Vows on 19 March and Alcides Guerrero Segura on 26 March 2011. On 25 March, Anton Lässer of the VULN Province of Germany and Austria professed Perpetual Vows.



(L-R) [PRAES] Homero Gomes Rebouças Filho and Kennedy Antonio Okeafor.



(L-R) [CORI-RES] Rolly Werner Bardález Saavedra and Alcides Guerrero Segura.



Mass celebrating the Profession of Final Vows of Anton Lässer of the VULN Province of Germany and Austria.

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NOTITIAE OBITUS

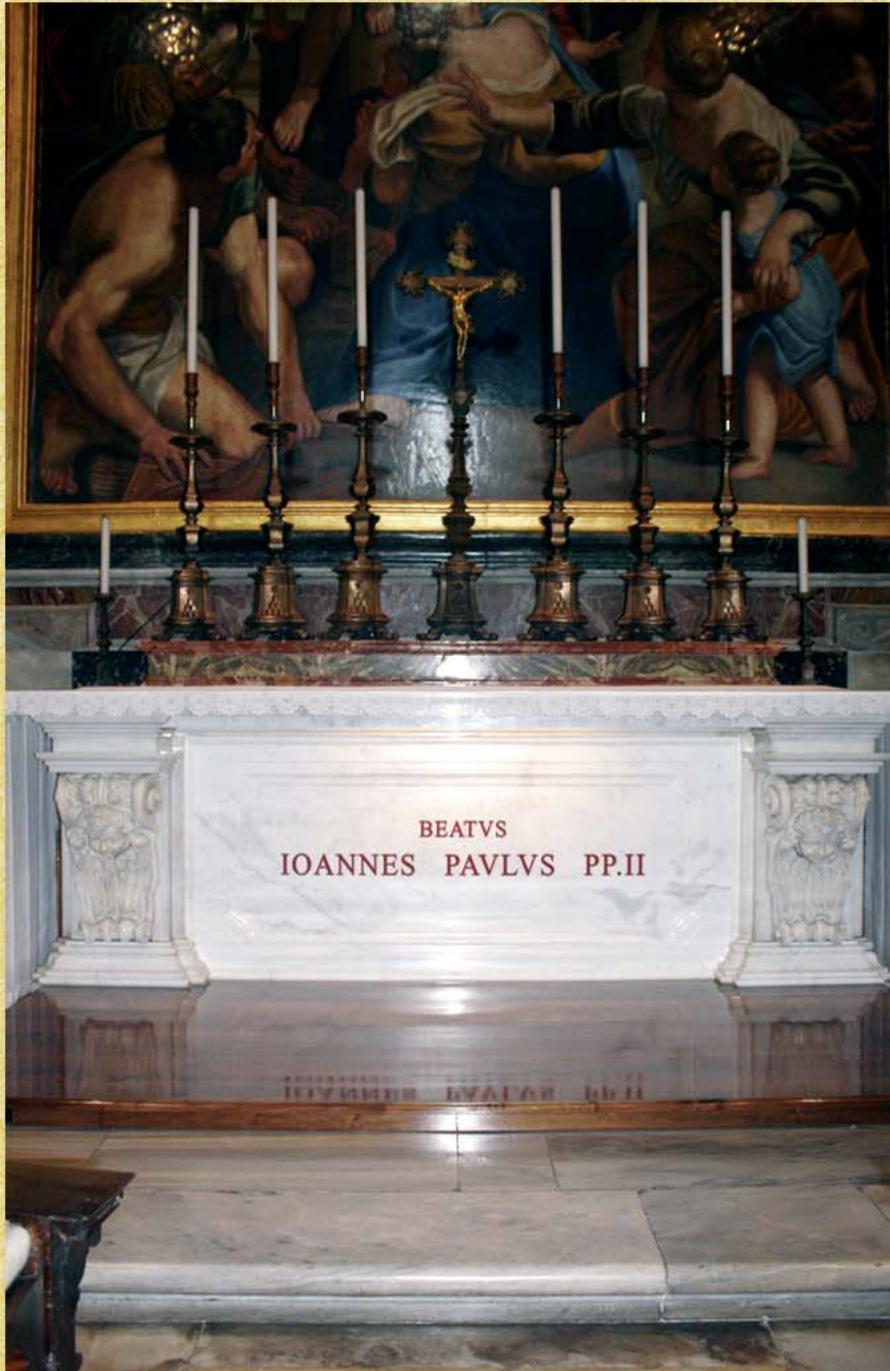


Usque ad diem 15 febbraio 2009 – 12 giugno 2009, acceptae

DIE	OBDORMIVIT IN DOMINO	PROVINCIA	NATUS	VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT
15/03/2011	Fra. Kenneth Pughe	PAUL	02/04/1929	02/04/1951
20/03/2011	Sac. Germán Gabriel Romero Gil	FAM	24/03/1935	07/10/1952
24/03/2011	Sac. Austin Smith	IOS	31/07/1928	15/12/1946
31/03/2011	Sac. Owen Sharkey	PAUL	25/03/1917	15/08/1938
13/04/2011	Sac. Paul Mary Madden	PATR	08/10/1920	18/09/1939
21/04/2011	Sac. Leonardo Carpeneto Arancibia	SANG	01/09/1933	06/06/1954
22/04/2011	Fra. Andrés Mendizabal Arrieta	CORI	04/01/1915	23/12/1931
23/04/2011	Sac. Kenneth Walsh	PAUL	09/12/1922	15/08/1943
01/05/2011	Sac. Pancrazio Scanzano	DOL	02/03/1925	08/11/1942
02/05/2011	Sac. Marino Zamboni	CORM	08/02/1922	09/09/1942
02/05/2011	Sac. Daniele Del Bove	DOL	07/04/1924	16/10/1941
03/05/2011	Sac. Anton Vermeij	SPE	27/12/1935	07/09/1955
13/05/2011	Sac. Ladislao García Platero	CORI	27/07/1936	05/08/1956
17/05/2011	Sac. Leonardo Fiore	DOL	11/07/1920	06/09/1937
19/05/2011	Fra. Kevin O'Malley	CRUC	16/04/1940	18/01/1959
23/05/2011	Sac. James Wood	SPIR	16/02/1919	22/02/1943
29/05/2011	Sac. Tommaso Torres	PRAES	02/10/1920	28/09/1939
29/05/2011	Sac. Luigi Bruno	CFIXI	14/07/1917	12/12/1933

MONIALES ET SORORES DEFUNCTAE

12/12/2010	Sr. Sofia da Eucaristia (Magdalena)	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	14/11/1914	07/01/1942
16/12/2010	Sr. Edita di Cristo Crocifisso Villafuerte	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	16/09/1985	21/11/2009
18/12/2010	Sr. Pia Maria dell'Addolorata Campana	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	12/01/1924	01/11/1946
06/01/2011	Sr. Tarcisia della Santissima Eucaristia (Giovannina) Scipioni	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	30/10/1922	20/06/1940
09/01/2011	Sr. Maria Rosaria di S. Luigi (Antonietta Lilla) Corrado	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	06/02/1925	09/05/1949
21/02/2011	Sr. Vittoria dell'Addolorata Battaglia	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	15/07/1926	03/11/1951
07/03/2011	Sr. Candida di San Paolo della Croce Masia	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	29/10/1922	17/10/1948
10/03/2011	Sr. Mary Theresa Burns	Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis et Passionis D.N.I.C. (England)	04/09/1928	11/04/1950
17/03/2011	Sr. Silvana di San Gabriele (Emilia) Marinelli	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	09/10/1927	03/11/1952
08/04/2011	Sr. María Asunción a Iesu Crucifixo Calderón Mollá	Monasterio Passionistarum de Bilbao (España)	11/08/1915	08/01/1961
10/04/2011	Sr. Maria das Graças de Nossa Senhora das Dores de Lima	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	26/05/1959	07/07/2001
29/04/2011	Sr. Clementina a Maria Virgine (Alicia) Rivero Sánchez	Inst. Filiarum Passionis D.N.I.C. et Dolorum B.V.M. (México)	03/10/1920	31/05/1951
08/05/2011	Sr. Glória Dileta de Nossa Senhora das Dores Dalcin	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)	18/09/1933	16/08/1981



“For him [John Paul II] holiness was the very foundation and the life-breath of every man and every woman’s dignity... His missionary journeys were pilgrimages toward people...People — the poor as well as the powerful — were at the heart of his speeches and reflections. His was a zealous defender of the human person and his dignity. He resonated with young people who saw him as someone who was personally rooted in truth, someone who was authentic. At least 368 times in his homilies and talks he repeated: ‘Do not be afraid! –and he added: ‘Open wide the doors to Christ!’ ...It is an invitation to immerse ourselves...in the one and only Spirit of the Passion of Jesus that dwells in each of us.”

**Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, CP
Superior General**

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