



# Passionist International Bulletin

N° 28 - New Series, January-March 2012  
Supplement to L'Eco of Saint Gabriel, January-March 2012  
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**APPROACHING THE 2012 GENERAL CHAPTER**  
***“To foster solidarity...”***

(Const. 127,d)

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## Passionist International Bulletin

N. 28 - New Series - January-March 2012

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“As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian  
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service to carry his cross.” (Mt. 27:32)  
Titian, “Christ carries the cross”, c. 1565,  
Museo del Prado, Madrid.

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helps Jesus carry the Cross”  
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*Il Superiore Generale*

## LETTER OF CONVOCATION OF THE 46<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL CHAPTER

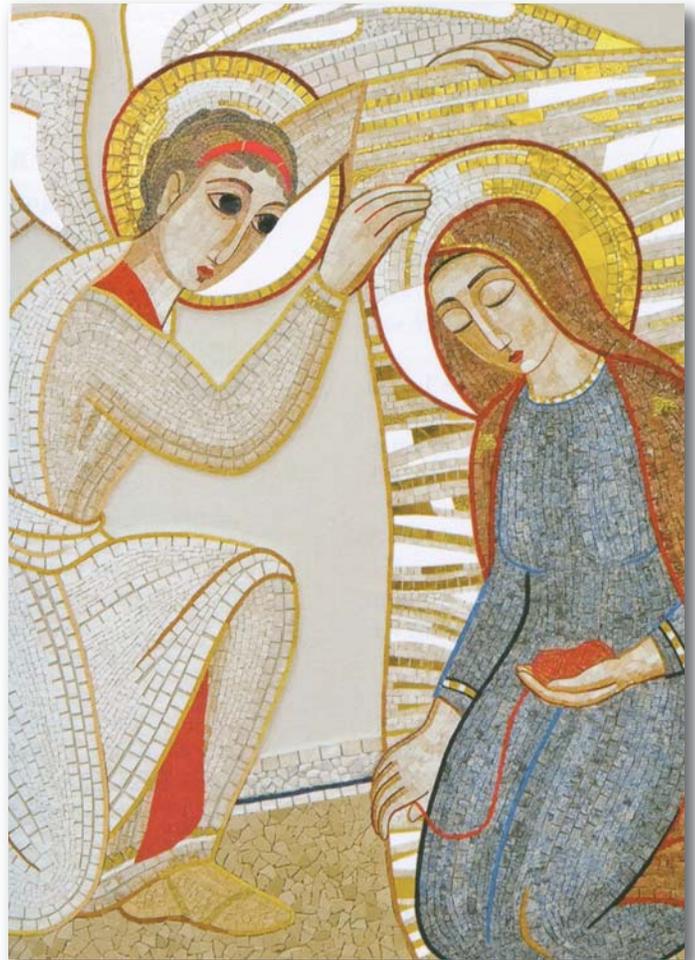
**My dear brothers,**

This New Year of 2012 is now well under way and, gazing at the icon of love, Mary the Mother of God holding the Infant Jesus in her arms, I joyfully greet the Religious of the Congregation, our cloistered Nuns, the various Congregations sharing in the charism of St. Paul of the Cross and all the lay men and women of our Passionist Family.

The choirs of angels singing the glory of God to the shepherds below have not deterred us from sensing the reality of the Mystery that was manifested in Bethlehem through clear and unmistakable signs, a message showing the love God has for us all. The “sign” given the shepherds that they may recognize Him is a Child in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. The newborn king, the Son of David, the longed-awaited Messiah, is born in a place of abject poverty, an animal shelter, accompanied solely by Mary his mother and St. Joseph. The first to hear of his birth are that group of shepherds guarding their flock, people who, as we are told by exegetes and historians, were in those days looked upon as the lowest and most despised of society. The high priest and those who purport to “know” all about God and the political powers are nowhere to be seen.

Jesus is born in all simplicity and, within the context of his time, in Bethlehem. The historical occasion allowing the fulfillment of Micah’s prophecy (Mi. 5:1) was Caesar Augustus’ decree ordering a census, at the time when Palestine, a Roman province, was under the governor of the region, Quirinius.

In order to comply with the order of the census, belonging as he did to the house and family of David, Joseph, who lived in Nazareth, set out for Bethlehem in the company of Mary who was about to give birth. That moment arrived once they reached their destination, and Mary gave birth to her firstborn son (Lk. 2: 6-7). *“And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us (Jn. 1: 14): this is the moment when Jesus is rooted, grafted into the history of his people, “born of a woman, under the law” (Gal 4: 4), sent by the Father with a precise mission: “For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord” (Lk 2: 11) the angel*



**“Like Mary...we Passionists, religious and laity alike, each one according to his/her proper condition, are challenged and called to participate in the mission awaiting the Church.”**

informs the shepherds. His mission is to save humanity and it is for this he has become incarnate, it is for this that he is born, and he’ll fulfill this mission even at the price of shedding his blood and laying down his life.

Mary for her part not only carries him in her womb and feeds the Son of God at her breast, but she also shares in his mission as was prophesied by old



Simeon when Jesus was presented in the temple: *“and you yourself a sword will pierce”* (Lk 2:35). If Jesus is to be a “sign of contradiction,” as will be apparent in the angry questioning, his rejection by the very people he has come to save, then Mary is also to share in her son’s painful mission. Here too Mary appears to us as a mother, but above all as the “believer” who “listens to the Word of God and then puts it into practice,” to whom is reserved a road in darkness, marked by suffering and sorrow.

Whoever believes in and loves God becomes part of his Mission, and if God looks for him, he allows himself to be found and accepts him even though he may not know the details, like Mary.

And we Passionists too, religious and laity alike, each one according to his/her proper condition, are challenged and called to participate in the mission awaiting the Church, which carries on Jesus’ mission in the midst of history and the realities of our world. (Cf Acts 1: 10-11).

In this year 2012 which has only just started, among its various events, our Congregation will be celebrating another General Chapter. This will be for us a special “day” of God’s which won’t simply designate a mere chronological happening but an opportunity offered to us, if we live it with faith, with a special salvific presence of Jesus.

During this time God will manifest in a special way his will, he’ll let his voice be heard, he’ll show us the road we’re to follow and, if we’re capable of undertaking an “exodus” like that of the people of Israel as they fled Egypt, he will fulfill his promise of salvation.

**Therefore in this context of faith and rooted in the realities of the world and the historical moment in which we are living as a Congregation, I hereby, convoke on this 6<sup>th</sup> day of January 2012 with great hope and in accordance with #76 of our General Regulations, the 46<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of our Congregation. This will be celebrated in Rome, at the Retreat of Saints John and Paul, and will start on Sunday September 9<sup>th</sup> and close on Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>.**

**I would remind you of what our Constitutions stipulate:** *“The General Chapter is the supreme authority in the Congregation...”* (#126), and #127 adds: *“The General Chapter meets to carry out the task of making laws and holding elections. It has to promote the faithfulness of the Congregation to the ideals of community and service to the Church. Its primary responsibilities, therefore, are as follows:*

*a) to discern the workings of the Holy Spirit in the events of life, and thus to be a powerful force in the task of continual adaptation and renewal;*

*b) to nourish the growth and development of the authentic Passionist spirit, so that it will be manifestly embodied in every member of the Congregation, no matter where he lives;*

*c) to consider closely the state of the Congregation, and to clarify its common goals of community life and apostolic activity;*



**“The Constitutions speak of promoting our ‘authentic character’ which makes us recognizable as consecrated persons who maintain at the center of our lives and mission the Passion of Jesus...”.**



**“In ‘Porta Fidei’ (The Door of Faith) we are reminded of the need to rediscover the road of faith so as to make ever more evident the joy and enthusiasm to be found in an encounter with Christ.”**

*d) to foster solidarity, and to maintain unity without insisting on uniformity;*

*e) to evaluate how the General Government has operated, and the extent to which the planning of the previous Chapter and of the General Synods has been implemented. It will avoid, however, specifying*



**“Let’s prepare ourselves and await the Chapter in a spirit of trust. Let us put the Congregation and the Passionist Family under the protection of Mary and Joseph, who, as the Holy Family, lived with Jesus in Nazareth.”**

*administrative procedures that depend on the Superior General and his staff;*

*f) to elect the Superior General and his Council.*

The Congregation, through those religious who take part in the Chapter, must carry out the tasks mentioned above in the Constitutions at #127 as “primary responsibilities”: a) *discern the signs of the times and live dynamically the task of continual adaptation and renewal*; then there are those adjectives: “powerful” and “continual”; everything is illuminated as we recognize it as a manifestation of the Spirit, as a request on God’s part which demands we carry out his will through what he has communicated to us through the language of the “signs of the time.”

In the Gospel Jesus reprimands his contemporaries calling them in no uncertain terms “hypocrites,” since they were incapable of or refused to read the signs of the times which clearly revealed the presence of the Kingdom of God in their midst. Recognizing the signs of the times is an act of faith. Jesus accuses them of being blind, and he likewise rebukes all those who live closed-up in their own certitudes and expectations, failing to realize that in the time in which they live something hugely important is happening. Don’t you realize, says Jesus, that it’s now the time to change your life, to make some firm decisions; a time for conversion, changing the way we see the things? You are capable of predicting tomorrow’s weather, so why can’t you understand what is happening this day? (Cf Lk 12: 56).

Another task requested of the Chapter, again in #127 letters b) and c) is that of promoting the “authentic” Passionist spirit so it can be manifest and made evident in one’s personal behavior, in our community life and in mission. The Constitutions speak of promoting our “authentic character” which makes us recognizable as consecrated persons who maintain at the center of our lives and mission the Passion of Jesus and have hearts and eyes which allow us to read, as did St. Paul of the Cross, the name of Jesus written on the foreheads of the poor.

The Paschal Mystery is the fulfillment of the mission of Jesus, his unlimited gift; anyone who is enclosed in his own selfishness has no heart that can feel for the suffering of others, nor eyes to see their poverty, nor ears to hear their lamentations.

Yet another task set for the Chapter is to verify the state of the Congregation and plan common goals and the means to carry out what is necessary to improve community life, and the apostolic activity which will be its fruit.

To attain to this objective and acquire a new vitality and a second youth for our religious Family, we placed at the center of the project for the present life of the Congregation now and during the years to come, what is stipulated in #127 of our Constitutions under d): *to foster solidarity*, and *to maintain unity without insisting on uniformity*.

This point d) of our Constitutions is at the heart of the moment in history we are living today as a Congregation, with the Restructuring Process which began at the 2004 Synod.

This long road of eight years which has seen the involvement of religious both at a personal and a community level, as well as Provincial Councils and the celebration of various events of the Congregation, such as three General Synods (2004, 2008 and 2010) and the 2006 General Chapter, prompt us to look ahead with faith and trust to the coming General Chapter of 2012.

With faith, because we have agreed to carry out a restructuring process as a response to God’s call; with trust because the instrument which, through careful discernment we had decided upon in order to revitalize the Congregation, both in our community lives as well as in our Mission, is none other than “Solidarity” which we must promote not only as a good idea or as a promise, as praiseworthy as it may be, but by effectively carrying it out at a structural level in order to make it possible and concrete, especially in the three areas of Formation, Personnel and financial resources. Without institutional instruments, effectively carrying out solidarity would continue to be a matter of wishful thinking or devout exhortations.

I am certain that putting solidarity into practice will solidify the unity among the various parts of the Congregation within each of the Configurations and within the Congregation as a whole. This decision will allow us to overcome the present excessive fragmentation into Provinces, Vice-Provinces and



**“May St. Paul of the Cross, our Father, bless us all and give us light and courage as we seek the right decisions and orientation in order to improve the efficacy of our mission as religious and laity in the world.”**

Vicariates which is giving rise to significant problems, be it at the level of local government or of community life and ministry, caused by the paucity of religious in the historical areas of the Congregation or by problems connected with growth and a limited capacity for autonomy and formation in the newer zones of the Congregation. Sharing one’s own gifts and differences enhances the vitality and operational capacity of the entire organism.

However, the process even at the level of structural reform that endeavors to make the Configurations into a single entity, in accordance with what is envisioned in #104 of our Constitutions permitting the union and the modification of the Provinces, cannot be carried out in a uniform way, but will be done following a criterion of flexibility, always respecting diverse realities, cultures and languages, something which requires a longer time frame in order to mature or a slower process.

Letter d) of #127 of our Constitutions which was formulated at the 1982 General Chapter more than 25 years ago, states: “to foster solidarity, and to maintain unity without insisting on uniformity” is truly a

crucial and prophetic point for the objectives which the Congregation has set for itself through the Restructuring Process that was started at the Synod of 2004!

Letters e) and f) of #127, apart from requiring the Chapter to evaluate the work of the General Government and to elect a new Superior General and his Council, confirm the tasks mentioned above.

In fact, they require the Chapter to verify the implementation of the programs approved by the preceding General Chapter and previous synods which were centered on the objective of carrying out the Restructuring of the Congregation. And this is a task to which we are called and which we can neither elude nor lay aside for another day.

Therefore, in total harmony with our Constitutions and the tasks that were entrusted to us by the last General Chapter (2006) and the two Synods of 2008 and 2010, our coming General Chapter will have as its core theme the Restructuring of the Congregation.

During the course of the Chapter we shall evaluate the road we have traveled in the various Configurations, the situation in each of them and the objectives we shall aim to attain, so as to be able to make concrete decisions, indicating the modalities and the suitable stages in which they should be carried out.

During our preparations for the General Chapter and throughout its celebration we should be comforted by the happy coincidence with events the Church will be celebrating during this year of 2012, and we should read this not as mere happenstance but as a “sign of the times” and as an “inspiration”.

October 11th 2012 will mark the beginning of the “Year of Faith” established by Benedict XVI in his Apostolic Letter (Motu Proprio) titled “Porta Fidei”; also October 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, the very day our Chapter closes, will be the one on which the Synod of Bishops will start its sessions (October 7<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>), having as its theme “The New Evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith.”

Here we have two themes with which to be inspired, two poles which should be points of reference on our journey as a Congregation, even during the General Chapter; these may be taken as the luminous cloud which went ahead of the people of Israel in the desert as they made their way to the Promised Land. These are two events which accompany us and which assure us we’re not alone on the road but are rather part of the flow of life and grace of the Church. These call us to a greater faith and to live our duty to evangelize with a renewed spirit, and they are an assurance for us that the presence of God in our midst is constant, notwithstanding our poverty and sin.

In “Porta Fidei” (The Door of Faith) we are reminded of the need to rediscover the road of faith so as to make ever more evident the joy and enthusiasm to be found in an encounter with Christ. In this perspective there’s an invitation to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one and only Savior of the world. And a rediscovery of faith



should not be understood in a generic or exclusively personal way but also with a community dimension, leading us to discover it anew in the choices and events we are living through in the Congregation.

Faith which becomes effective through charity (Cf Gal. 5: 6) becomes a new criterion for action which changes a person's life. Looked at this way, the solidarity we are trying to bring about within the Congregation becomes a new way of relating with each other in faith so as to give greater vitality to our mission.

The theme of the coming Synod of Bishops, "New Evangelization," is an occasion for the Church to reflect on itself and it is an invitation to open our hearts and eyes to the present realities in the world of today and to the capacity to animate others in the present mode of evangelizing. And even though this New Evangelization is principally directed toward those who have distanced themselves from the Church in the historically Christian countries, this phenomenon unfortunately also exists to a greater or lesser degree where the Good News was first proclaimed in more recent centuries yet has not so far been heeded to the point of transforming the personal, family and social lives of Christians.

Hence the universal Church is faced with a challenge which involves us all, and in every country where we are present. The historical moment we are living through as a Congregation and the proximity of the General Chapter constitute a fit occasion to inject something "new" into our mission and to our way of relating to each other which can thus become a vehicle and an instrument to achieve new modalities and expressions of our consecrated life. We may well discover a new enthusiasm and new ideas in forming new families and entities, in the conviction that life is a gift to be shared.

This is a challenge, like that faced by the scribe in the Gospel who became a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven, to take out new and old things from the precious treasure of Tradition and the various situations found in the contemporary history of our Congregation, in consecrated life in general, in the Church and in the world itself. This is an invitation to live the time that lies before us as we await the Chapter and prepare for it in spiritual and emotional harmony, in line with the words of a poet: "There's something new under the sun today, as well as something old."

And Jesus is the one "*who is and who was and who is to come*"! (Rev 4: 8)

**Dear brothers and sisters of the Passionist Family, in preparation for the General Chapter of the Congregation I would like to call upon you to offer special prayers for a successful outcome of the same, starting 6 months before it convenes, that is on April 9<sup>th</sup>.** The Liturgical Commission will soon send out the proper prayer to you all.

**On an enclosed sheet, which forms part of this letter,** by way of a memorandum, you will find those numbers in our Constitutions and General

Regulations which refer to the General Chapter and the preparation for the same. Likewise you will find there the norms regarding participation in the Chapter which were approved by our last General Chapter in Rome in 2006.

**The names of the delegates elected in accordance with the new norms and with what I wrote in my letter of September 24<sup>th</sup> last must be sent in to the General Secretariat as soon as possible and certainly not later than March 11<sup>th</sup> next, in order that we may send them all the necessary documentation and information.**

I might also add that apart from the above-mentioned Liturgical Commission, a number of other commissions have been formed which will be able to help us in our work in preparation for the Chapter and others for carrying out the activities of the Chapter itself. These are: The Chapter Preparatory Commission; the Logistics Commission; the Commission for Communications; the Commission to study certain juridical aspects; the Formation Commission, and the Trilateral Commission which will study the issues that may arise between Vicariates and their mother Provinces.

So brothers, let's prepare ourselves and await the Chapter in a spirit of trust. Let us put the Congregation and the Passionist Family under the protection of Mary and Joseph, who, as the Holy Family, lived with Jesus in Nazareth. "*Nothing is impossible to God!*" the archangel Gabriel said to Mary at the Annunciation, and we firmly believe this. And we are also certain that God will be with us on our life's journey and in the course of our preparation for and celebration of the 2012 General Chapter.

My fraternal greetings to all our religious, especially those who are sick, and also those experiencing difficulties or perhaps feel themselves marginalized; a hearty encouragement to our younger men with an invitation to have high aspirations and preserve the ideals of their consecrated lives as a mission, avoiding being impeded by a worldly mentality or by whatever they may experience as contradictory around them. Let them be faithful in their love for their vocation: it really is worthwhile to offer one's life to God and for one's brethren. A special greeting for the Nuns and religious Sisters as well as the lay men and women of our Passionist Family: may the good Lord sustain them and grant them a good future, a blessed life, employment and peace within every family.

May St. Paul of the Cross, our Father, bless us all and give us light and courage as we seek the right decisions and orientation in order to improve the efficacy of our mission as religious and laity in the world.

Rome, January 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2012  
Feast of the Epiphany

**Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio**  
Superior General CP  
Retreat of Saints John and Paul



# ATTACHMENT

## to the Letter of Convocation of the 46<sup>th</sup> General Chapter

This attachment contains what is prescribed for the General Chapter in the Constitutions, in the General Regulations and the Norms for Participation in the General Chapter that were approved at the General Synod that took place in Rome at the end of November, 2004, and confirmed by the General Chapter of 2006. This is offered as a “reminder”; for the complete text please consult the Constitutions, the General Regulations and the Acts of the General Synod of 2004 and those of the General Chapter of 2006.

### From the Constitutions

**No. 129.** *The General Chapter meets every six years.*

*Its ex officio members are: the Superior General, who will also preside at the Chapter; previous Superiors General, the General Consultors, the Procurator General, the Secretary General, the Secretary General of the Missions, the General Econome, Provincial Superiors, and Vice-Provincial Superiors.*

*If a Provincial or Vice-Provincial Superior is prevented from attending the Chapter, his place will be taken by his first Consultor; if he in turn is unable to attend, another shall be chosen by the Provincial Council.*

**130.** *In accordance with the norms of the General Regulations, one or more delegates [are] elected [...] If a delegate cannot be present at the Chapter, his place will be taken by a substitute.*

**N.B.** Regarding the members “per officio” referred to at No. 129 of the Constitutions, the norms approved by the last Synod also allow for the participation “ex officio” of the regional Vicars with at least 25 religious, for which a temporary Rescript was requested of the Holy See in accord with what is permitted at No. 114 of the Constitutions. The requested Rescript has been granted. In reference to the election of the delegates, the norms approved by the last General Synod modify what is prescribed by the Constitutions and General Regulations.

### From the General Regulations

**76.** *The General Chapter is announced by means of a circular letter sent by the Superior General to the entire Congregation nine months before it is to take place.*

*It is the duty of the Superior General with his Council to ensure that the matters proposed to the Capitulars are carefully prepared and sent to them at least six months before the Chapter.*

*The Capitulars must be consulted about the agenda proposed for the Chapter, and they are free to put forward other topics for discussion.*

*Provinces, Vice-Provinces, Regional Vicariates, and local communities, as well as any individual religious, are free to send to the General Chapter their own wishes and suggestions.*

**78.** *The Superior General with the consent of his Council may call experts to attend the Chapter. They take part, however, only in a consultative capacity.*

*The Superior General with the consent of his Council may also invite some religious to take part in the Chapter in a consultative capacity, so as to ensure that all parts of the Congregation are represented.*

**N.B.** I wish to especially remind you of two points of No. 76: The Capitulars must be consulted about the agenda proposed for the Chapter, and they are free to put forward other topics for discussion.

Provinces, Vice-Provinces, Regional Vicariates, and local communities, as well as any individual religious, are free to send to the General Chapter their own wishes and suggestions.

**Suggestions and propositions as per #76 c) and d) must be sent in to the General Secretariat by May 15th next.**

### THE NORMS APPROVED BY THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2006 WHICH ARE VALID FOR THE NEXT GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2012

#### 1) THE NORMS FOR PARTICIPATION AT GENERAL CHAPTERS:

Those Provinces with at least 50 religious shall have one delegate; *Provinces with more than one hundred religious* may elect an additional delegate for every one hundred religious and for every unit greater than one hundred; *Regional Vicars of vicariates with at least 25 religious* are members by right of the General Chapter.

*Those Provinces with less than 50 religious, those Vice-provinces and Vicariates* shall elect one delegate from with the parameters of the regional Conference for every 50 religious and additional delegates, one for every unit greater than 50.

*For the election of delegates to the Chapter, those religious that form part of Regional Vicariates shall not be counted with their respective mother Province, but within the context of the regional Vicariates.*

Those religious of the communities of Latin America that are directly dependent upon Spain, the religious of Mozambique that depend totally upon Brazil, and the religious of Angola who depend directly on Portugal shall be counted within the Regional Conferences (together with the Vicariates), and not within the Mother Province.

Every Conference shall devise *appropriate norms for the election* of its Delegates to the General Chapter.

Every Regional Conference shall have *one Brother as its delegate* to the General Chapter.

#### 2) THE ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF CAPITULARS:

|                                                                                          |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| General Curia: Fr. General, the Council, Major officials,                                |    |
| Ex-General: .....                                                                        | 10 |
| Provincials – Vice-Provincials: .....                                                    | 29 |
| Delegates of the Provinces with at least 50 religious: .....                             | 16 |
| Regional Vicars with at least 25 religious: .....                                        | 6  |
| Delegates of Provinces with less than 50 religious, of Vice-Provinces and of Vicariates: |    |
| COPAL Ex-Conference                                                                      |    |
| → 9 delegates + 1 Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon                                    |    |
| CPA Ex-Conference                                                                        |    |
| → 3 delegates + 1 Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon                                    |    |
| NEC Ex-Conference                                                                        |    |
| → 2 delegates + 1 Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon                                    |    |
| PASPAC Ex-Conference                                                                     |    |
| → 2 delegates + 1 Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon                                    |    |
| CII Ex-Conference                                                                        |    |
| Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon.....                                                 | 1  |
| CIPI Ex-Conference                                                                       |    |
| Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon.....                                                 | 1  |
| IPC Ex-Conference                                                                        |    |
| Brother Delegate / Permanent Deacon.....                                                 | 1  |

**Total members: 84**

**N.B.** For determining the number of delegates those religious were not counted who do not have active and passive voice (GR 68).



# THE STAUROS LIBRARY

Fr. Frans Damen, (GABR)  
Stauros General Secretary

The Stauros Library took had its beginnings in St. Gabriel Province (Belgium) when, in 1938, some young Passionists drew up an idealistic plan to systematically study the topic of the Passion in the Church Fathers. This project, which had a clearly bibliographical emphasis, coincided with an attempt to collect the Bibliography of the Passion. In 1947 this collection, in the form of reference cards, was even shared with the “Passion Commission” which was supposed to begin in Rome, but which never transpired.

In 1947, Fr. Florentius Nackaerts, took the initiative to start a provincial “Passion Library” composed of books on the subject, present in the Belgian Province. This project was approved and reinforced in the decades to come. The “*Bibliotheca Passionis*” was initially housed in the retreats of Kortrijk and Diepenbeek and then later in the 1960’s, in Wezembeek-Oppem. In 1961 its first systematic catalogue, ‘*Bibliotheca Passionis. Passionistarum Provinciae S. Gabrielis – I*’ was published, listing more than 2,322 titles.

At the same time, ongoing bibliographical research would result in the yearly publication of a systematic Bibliography of Passiology: “*Passiologica I-VI*” (from 1953 to 1958), which was sent to the Passionist communities all over the world. Attempts to give this Provincial project an international and congregational outreach did not really materialize.

However, an important step was taken in 1970, when the General Chapter issued a Decree stating: “*As a means of giving fuller expression to the possibilities of the particular vow of our Congregation, the General with his Council, shall establish a research project to make an overall study of the theology of the Passion, the history of the Congregation and its spirituality. Since such a project should be undertaken at the level of the entire Congregation, research membership should draw upon personnel and resources throughout the Congregation*”.

The then General Superior, Fr. Theodore Foley,



The newly organized Stauros Library at Sts. John and Paul, Rome.

welcomed a concrete suggestion made by the Belgian Provincial, Fr. Harry Gielen, which in several aspects implied the further developing, on an congregational and even ecumenical level, of the project of Passion Studies that had been going on in the Belgian Province. Moreover, this turned out to be the only concrete proposal to be presented to the 1972 General Synod: “*The General Synod shall examine the possibility of establishing a foundation ‘STAUROS’ to promote the study of the Gospel of the Passion*”. This proposal was formally approved by the Synod.

This led to the foundation, in October 1973, of “*Stauros International Association*”, whose overall plan included the establishment of a “*Stauros Library*”. The Association’s scientific orientation required large and adequate documentation in the specific area of research. Such a provision was deemed to be indispensable to guarantee an efficient and continuing operation.

Consequently, in 1973, the specialized “*Stauros Library*” on the Passion of Christ and on human suffering was established and organized in the monastery of Wezembeek-Oppem (Brussels). Publications in the major Western languages were systematically acquired, part of these being the “*Bibliotheca Passsionis*” collection amassed by the Belgian Province since 1948. Lists of acquisitions were presented to the biennial General Assemblies of the Association. In 1990 a General Catalogue listing 9423 publications was digitalized and printed. This represented a unique collection of international literature in the field of the suffering of Christ and of humanity. Since then, the collection has been accurately completed and complemented. In 2011, more than 11,000 titles had been included and listed.



The reception/study area of the Library.



Fr. Celestino Butti (CORM) helps to organize the Stauros Library at the Generalate.

Over the years, the Stauros Library catalogue system, based on the scheme of “La Revue d’Histoire Ecclesiastique” (Louvain) was complemented and refined, totaling no less than 150 different entries, and structured according to the following basic scheme:

*I: EVIL AND SUFFERING (Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Health, Care, Religious interpretation, Holocaust)*

*II: DEATH AND DYING (Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Care, Religious interpretation, Bereavement)*

*III: SACRED SCRIPTURE (Suffering, Death, Salvation in the Books of Old and New Testament, Passion of Christ)*

*IV: THEOLOGY (History of Theology, Soteriology, Christology, Atonement, Cross, Liberation, Redemption, Sacrifice, Salvation, the suffering God)*

*V: PASTORAL THEOLOGY (Pastoral Ministry, Preaching on Suffering, Death, Salvation, the Words of the Cross, Lent, Passion narrative, Holy Week preaching; Catechetics)*

*VI: LITURGY (Liturgy of Healing, Funeral, the Divine Office, Eucharist, Lent, Holy Week)*

*VII: SPIRITUALITY (Evil, Suffering, Death, Mysticism, and the Passion in Doctrine, Practice and Devotions)*

*VIII: ARTS (Evil, suffering, Death, the Passion and Mary in Plastic Arts, Literature, Music and Film)*

*IX: HISTORY AND FOLKLORE (Suffering, Death and Passion in history and archaeology; Passionist History, Liturgy and Biography; Folklore)*

*X: WORLD RELIGIONS (Evil, suffering, Death)*

The biannual publication of the current “*Stauros*

*Bibliography, I-XVI” (1973 to 2005), from 1992 onward also became accessible on the Stauros Website: (<http://stauros.webhotel.be>).*

In 2006, the Stauros General Assembly backed the proposal submitted by its General Secretary to investigate the possibility of transferring the Stauros Library from Wezembeek-Oppem to Rome in the hope of improving accessibility and the actual use of this precious collection. The Assembly asked to explore possible ways that this might be accomplished.

In early December 2007, Fr. Battista Ramponi, General Econome, communicated that a space for the Library had been selected in the Generalate in Rome and that work on the project had begun. Following the favorable response of the XVIIIth Stauros General Assembly (2008), the preparatory work for the actual relocation of the Library was begun. On January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009, Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, Superior General made “a formal request that the books and other publications that make up the Stauros Library...become part of the ‘Passion Library’ in Rome”. The XIXth Stauros General Assembly (2010) formally answered favourably to that request.

On June 30th 2011, Fr. General informed us that in Rome everything was ready to receive and integrate the Stauros Library collection into the newly organized “*Bibliotheca Passionis*”. So the logistics were organized for the relocation of the Library.

In this way, on September 20th 2011, the “*Stauros Library*” collection began yet another phase of its history, this time as part and parcel of the newly established “*Bibliotheca Passionis*” in Sts. John and Paul in Rome. ●



# OPENING OF THE CENTENARY OF THE DEATH OF BLESSED BERNARD M. SILVESTRELLI, PASSIONIST MORICONE (ITALY), 9 DECEMBER 2011

Fr. Tito Paolo Zecca, (PIET)

## Eighty years of full and vibrant life

*Blessed Bernard Mary was born in Rome on 7 November 1831 of the noble Silvestrelli family. At the age of 22 he made the decision to renounce the prospect of a brilliant civil career, choosing instead religious life. He developed a strong interior life through assiduous meditation on Jesus Crucified, especially in the Eucharist. Prudent and paternal, he guided the Congregation of the Passion for almost 25 years as Superior General. In order to preserve and foster the growth of the charism of the Institute, he worked incessantly, writing about the history and the spirituality of the Institute. He deservedly deserves the title of "second St. Paul of the Cross." He died in Moricone (Rome) on 9 December 1911, which is celebrated as his feast day. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on 16 October 1988.*

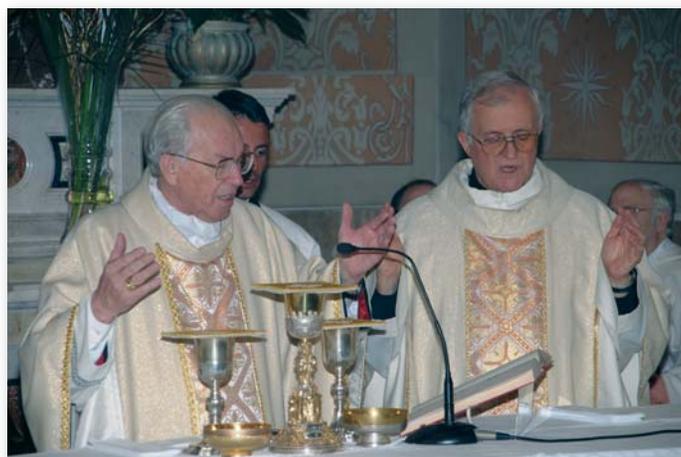
The centenary of the death of Blessed Bernard Mary Silvestrelli was begun with a solemn concelebrated Mass in the shrine of the Italian city of Moricone, near Rome, where his remains are venerated. The local community carefully prepared this event that is important not only on a local level for those devoted to the Blessed, but also for the entire Congregation. In fact, Silvestrelli was Superior General of the Congregation for more than twenty-five consecutive years (from 1878 to 1907). Under his governance the Congregation continued to expand following the first great surge of growth during the mandate of Fr. Antonio Testa. He sent the first Italian Passionists to Belgium and to the British Isles and began the foundation of the Province of St. Paul of the Cross in the United States of America. Hence he justly deserves the title of "the second founder" of the Congregation. In particular, he dedicated himself to rebuilding the PIET Province of Italy after it had been suppressed by the government of the Piedmont region. He also administered the foundations in Spain and Mexico.

Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, the titular of the Italian dioceses of Sabina and Poggio Mirteto was the principal concelebrant at the opening Mass on 9 December 2011. Cardinal Re had been present for Silvestrelli's beatification in October 1988. Also present were the local diocesan bishop, Ernesto Mandara, the PIET Provincial Superior, Piergiorgio Bartoli, local diocesan clergy and various superiors and religious of the neighboring Passionist communities.

In his comments the cardinal recalled Silvestrelli's incisive work for the good of the Congregation. He



The reliquary of Blessed Bernard Silvestrelli in the Passionist monastery-church of Moricone, Italy.



Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re and Fr. Piergiorgio Bartoli, PIET Provincial Superior.

especially noted his holiness of life. During the troubled times in which he lived, his love for Jesus Christ and for the Church and his deep loyalty to the Pope were great sources of inspiration and an example for his religious to follow. At the beginning of the third Christian millennium he remains a bright light.

The year-long program for the centenary consists of various events during which the life and spirituality of the Blessed will be studied. The highlight will be the popular feast on Sunday, 9 July and will conclude on 9 December 2012. Throughout the year there will also be special events for priests and men and women religious in the hope that they will find in Blessed Bernard a source of inspiration for their service to the Church and for their consecration to the Lord.



# ALIVE FOR 150 YEARS

*In 2012 the Shrine will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the death of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, the Patron Saint of Youth.*

Fr. Vincenzo Fabri, (PIET)

“Today, February 27, 1862. This morning at 6:30 A.M. Confrater Gabriele of the Sorrowful Virgin, known in the world as Francesco Possenti, went to his eternal rest. He was born in Assisi on 1 March 1838. He was vested with the habit of the Congregation on 21 September 1856 and was professed on the 22nd of the same month of the following year. His death was due to tuberculosis. The life of this young man was an uninterrupted growth in perfection. From the moment he was consecrated to God in religious life, he applied himself to the practice of the virtues that was never hindered or impeded by any of the things that he experienced, nor by the difficult things that he was asked to do. He was dedicated in the performance of his duties, charitable towards all, humble and patient: in a word, his life could be said to have incorporated all of the virtues, with none of them missing. Before dying he asked with insistence for an image of the Crucified to which he had added a small image of the Sorrowful Mother. He placed these on his chest with great devotion and placing his hands on the image he repeated three times while looking up to heaven: ‘Jesus, Joseph and Mary’, and a few moments later, without agony, he died quietly in the Lord”.

This is the succinct account of the death of Saint Gabriel written by the superior of the community of Isola del Gran Sasso, Ven. Fr. Norberto Cassinelli. This occurred in February 1862, a year after the unification of Italy, exactly 150 years ago. Saint Gabriel left this world through which he had passed like a meteor of holiness.

He was a young man like many others, as his close friend Philip Giovannetti recounts: “pleasant natured and with courteous ways, always in a good mood, cheerful and lighthearted”. In fact, as another close friend Paolo Bonaccia (who later became a priest) attests: “Francis had been gifted with a good disposition, a soul born to do the most beautiful things. But the beauty of his spirit was overshadowed by vanity and tainted with a veil of frivolity that significantly affected him during the most beautiful years of his life. He flaunted expensive clothes; his hair was carefully parted and perfumed. He abhorred and resented the slightest stain on his clothing. He delighted in spending time with his young classmates and losing himself in the midst of various entertainments that were the predominant passion of his youth. He was a devotee of pleasant conversation, an avid fan of

late-night activities and was continually annoyed by his father who made him accompany him in the evenings to visit different family members. So, when Francis asked his father for permission to become a religious, his father smiled at the request and joked: “You’re talking to me about religion, you who up until now have been totally absorbed with all kinds of vanity and parties? You’re talking to me about cassocks and Habits, you who has always been a lover of elegant clothes?” Despite his father’s efforts to the contrary, Francis succeeded in winning him over. Moreover, for him it was clear that his choice is not a whim of the moment, but was a serious matter that was decided between him and Our Lady who had made a very clear point to him on that muggy day, August 22, 1856 in Spoleto: “But you’re not meant for the world. So what are you doing in the world? Quickly, become a religious”. And on 6 September he left Spoleto (PG) for the novitiate of Morrovalle, in the province of Macerata. “As soon as the news of his departure and his decision spread among the students,” recounts Paolo Bonaccia, “we were filled with amazement. This news hit the students like a bolt of lightning. We looked at each other and didn’t know what to say. Some said: “Who has left for the Institute of the Passionists? Francesco Possenti? And to where? To the retreat of Morrovalle and to a more rugged, more austere life? And how did he make this decision so suddenly? Yesterday he was a young man interested in the theatre and fashion, and today he’s living in a cell and in a cloister? Others wondered: “But can he withstand the rigors of the Institute? He’s so gentle, kind mannered?” Sooner or later everyone in Spoleto expected the return of the dancer who dreamed of becoming a monk, amidst the jeers of his classmates who would consider him a real fool. No prediction could have been more wrong. “Instead”, as his spiritual director Fr. Norberto Cassinelli attested, “he entered religious life with the firm intention to give everything to God, and from the beginning it was obvious that he meant what he said about serving God. With ease and a certain naturalness he began to diligently and attentively practice the disciplines of this new life, a life that seemed to be made for him. He was a model novice all throughout this period of testing, so that eventually all the religious of the novitiate deemed that he was worthy to be admitted to religious profession”. What he experienced in those early days of his novitiate was clear in a letter written to his father on October 23, 1856: “The contentment and joy that I feel within these sacred walls is almost unspeakable, in comparison to the worldly pastimes and frivolousness that you find in the world. You can be certain, father, that I wouldn’t trade a quarter of an hour standing before our hope and our comforter, the Blessed Virgin Mary, for a year or however long you might want at shows and other kinds of entertainment in the world.”



**Official logo of the Jubilee Year of St. Gabriel's Death**



**Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio presides at the "Transitus" liturgy recalling St. Gabriel's passing to eternal life.**



**Devotees of St. Gabriel arrive at the Shrine for the feast day liturgies.**

Gabriel was advanced to Final Vows at the end of the year. He continued his studies first at Pievetorina (MC) and then from July 10, 1859 to Isola del Gran Sasso. After a few years he was overcome by tuberculosis and he died in 1862 at just 24 years of age. “The extraordinariness of the life of Confrater Gabriel”, as Fr. Norberto attested, “lies in this: that everything he did was done with extraordinary, interior devotion and he lived the spiritual life in an extraordinary way. It can be said that seemed to be imbued with virtue; he only knew how to live virtuously.”

When he entered the monastery in 1856 Francesco Possenti left behind a country of Italy that was exploding, crisscrossed by tremors of freedom from the Alps to Mount Etna. In Spoleto Gabriel had already witnessed the first stirrings of the Risorgimento movement from one meeting hall to another. In the monastery it was more difficult for him to follow the events that were changing and uniting Italy. Only at Isola del Gran Sasso was he in more direct contact with the Risorgimento uprising since the area in which the monastery was located was swarming with so-called “brigands”, partisans who were unwilling to surrender to the Piedmont forces.

For thirty years following his death, Gabriel rested under the little church of Isola del Gran Sasso. His popularity exploded in 1892, when the first great miracles began to take place at his grave. He quickly became famous, known as “the saint of miracles” (he was officially proclaimed a Saint in 1920) that was confirmed over the years due to an unbroken series of supernatural events, attested by the thousands of votive offerings which reveal an extraordinary story of faith and prodigious signs that began at the end of the 19th century, throughout the 20th century and continues up to the beginning of the third millennium. Saint Gabriel is also invoked worldwide as the Saint of youth. We remind these young people and everyone that for 150 years St. Gabriel has offered us an example of holiness that is accessible to everyone and that God does not need extraordinary things to create saints. In fact, the most important lesson is that “our perfection does not consist in doing big and extraordinary things; but in doing ordinary things well.”

**A Special Jubilee Year to Celebrate 150 Years**

In 2012-2013 the Shrine celebrates the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Gabriel’s death with a series of events. February 26, 2012 will mark the official opening of these events, with the presence of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re. February 27th, the feast day of the Saint and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death, will be solemnly celebrated at the Shrine with the presence of the Superior General of the Passionists, Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio and Bishop of Teramo. On that day the special jubilee year will begin. The Pope has granted an indulgence to whoever visits the shrine from February 27, 2012 to September 22, 2013 (see the guidelines for the Indulgence below).

On 11 March, Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, President of the

Pontifical Council for culture, will be present at the Shrine and will celebrate Mass. He will then inaugurate an exhibition of sacred art. On March 12, twelve thousand high school students will go to the Shrine to pray to their patron saint for his intercession as they take their final school exam within “100 days”. On 25 March the Shrine will be broadcast Mass on Italian cable station Rete 4 at 10 AM. From 27 to 30 April there will be a national meeting of the Lay Passionist movement. On 17 June, Cardinal Ennio Antonelli will preside at a Mass at 11 AM.

During the months of July and August there will be large pilgrimages on foot from various parts of Italy, while on July 29 hundreds of motorcyclists will assemble for a big gathering directed by Bishop Giulio Mencuccini, Passionist missionary Bishop in Indonesia.

In July, the 15th Biannual International Exhibition of Sacred Art will begin. On 21 August the 32<sup>nd</sup> “Tendopli” (tent cities) will take place for young people and will end on 25 August with the participation of Cardinal Angelo Comastri. On 26 August, thousands of pilgrims will arrive for the annual popular feast of the Saint, which will culminate with a solemn procession with the urn containing his relics. On that day there will also be 3<sup>rd</sup> gathering of those named “Gabriel/Gabriella”. In September and October other large gatherings will take place (Unitalsi abruzzese, Unmil, Confraternities, polyphonic Choirs, cyclists).

The events will also continue in 2013. Among these will be the celebration of 100 years of the magazine of the Shrine “L’Eco of St. Gabriel on 1 September. On September 22 the inauguration of the new Shrine is scheduled, to which Pope Benedict XVI has been invited. On 14 November the 5<sup>th</sup> Studies Colloquium on “St. Gabriel and his time” will mark the conclusion of events.

Throughout the 150<sup>th</sup> year there will be additional pilgrimages led by the bishops of Abruzzo/Molise, Terni, Spoleto, Assisi, Camerino, Macerata, Fermo and others. Additionally, the 22 parishes in Italy that are dedicated to the Saint that will also make a pilgrimage to the Shrine.

**Indulgence for the Jubilee Year**

The APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY, in virtue of the faculty granted it in an extraordinary way by the Supreme Pontiff, willingly receives the request presented and extends the Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions to be ritually fulfilled (Sacramental Confession, Eucharistic Communion, prayer for the intention of the Supreme Pontiff). The indulgence may also be applied in the form of suffrage for the souls in Purgatory, by the faithful in a spirit of total detachment from any inclination to sin, if they visit the Shrine of St. Gabriel during a pilgrimage and there devoutly participate in any liturgy or pious exercise in honor of St. Gabriel or at least spend some time in prayer concluding with the Our Father, the Creed and with invocations to the Virgin Mary and St. Gabriel.

The elderly, the sick or the faithful who for other legitimate or important reasons, are unable to leave their homes, may still obtain the Plenary Indulgence if they, with their soul completely removed from attachment to any form of sin and with the intention of observing, as soon as they can the three conditions indicated above, spiritually unite themselves to those who participate in the Jubilee celebration in the Shrine, including praying the prayers mentioned above before an image of St. Gabriel, offering their personal illness and sufferings to God most merciful.

Furthermore, the faithful may obtain a Partial Indulgence every time they at least, with a contrite heart, piously dedicate themselves to works of mercy, be they penitential or evangelical, as proposed by the local Ordinary.

So that the faithful may avail themselves of these heavenly gifts, the Passionists, to whom the Shrine of St. Gabriel is entrusted, should promptly and generously make the sacrament of Reconciliation available.

Valid for the entire Jubilee Year of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin.



# MEETING OF COORDINATORS WITH GENERAL COUNCIL

From 7 – 9 November 2011 the Coordinators of the 6 Configurations of the Congregation met at our General House in Rome together with the General Council, Sr. Christine Anderson, FCJ (Restructuring Consultant) and the Preparatory Commission for the General Chapter (Frs. Giuseppe Martinelli (CORM), Alex Steinmiller (CRUC), Peter Shin (MACOR), and Vital Otshudialokoka, (SALV) Secretary). Also present was Fr. Paul Francis Spencer (PATR) who has been appointed as Secretary of the General Chapter.

During this meeting reports were presented by each Coordinator outlining the current state of each Configuration, especially for the benefit of the Preparatory Commission to help them in their work preparing for the Chapter and involving the Congregation to participate in the General Chapter which is to take place in Rome from 9 September – 7 October 2012. Below is a summary of these reports from the Configurations:

**The Eugene Bossilkov Configuration (CEB)** is working toward the creation of a single Province; the present five Provinces will become “Regions”. Some have asked that this process proceed slowly, in a gradual manner. They intend to begin with an “Executive” Council, to be composed of the five Provincials, who will work in the three areas of solidarity. It has been stated that unification is not a “fusing” of five realities into one with each reality retaining its singular characteristics; rather the goal is to become a “new” Province, characterized by a certain quality of life and community, although the specific objectives are not yet set. Naturally, mission will determine the structure. At this time, there are six Commissions: ongoing formation, initial formation and vocations, apostolate, finance, juridical aspects and liturgy.

**The Sacred Heart Configuration (SCOR)** is also moving toward the creation of a single Province. The formation personnel of the Configuration met in Rome during January-February 2011 and the

Provincial Councils met in Conocoto (Ecuador). The religious were given a questionnaire that asked what type of collaboration each was willing to offer. There was a meeting of the younger religious in Spain during the World Youth Day and a meeting was held in Spain of the Provincial Councils and Treasurers.

**Solidarity in Formation:** The students finish their philosophy studies in their area of origin and the novitiate is either in Daimiel (Spain) or in Chosica (Peru). Those students who make their vows in Chosica will study theology at Cajicà (Colombia), while those who profess their vows at Daimiel will study theology in El Salvador. The formation teams at both Chosica and Cajicà shall be international.

**Solidarity in personnel:** the three entities are planning their collaboration through the establishment of three communities: a vocational community, an evangelization community, and one for the Passionist Family.

**Solidarity in finance:** a study is underway to determine how to centralize the finances for the entire Configuration. Shortly there will be a meeting of the treasurers and an interprovincial Assembly.

**The PASPAC Configuration (Asia-Pacific)** has decided to continue to work together in the three areas of solidarity by establishing three Commissions which will have their first meeting following the meeting in the Philippines. The choice of site is due to the great expanse of territory, together with the diversity of cultures and languages that exist among their nations (India, China, Korea, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, Vietnam, and Papua New Guinea). The Configuration has adopted English as its basic language, even though, for the majority, this is a second or even a third language. The juridical model which is being followed is different from that of the Bossilkov or Sacred Heart Configurations because they are not proposing the creation of a single Province.

**CPA Configuration (Africa):** with regard to models of government, they are on the same track as



**The General Curia, Configuration Coordinators and moderator.**

PASPAC, while with regard to communications there are difficulties due to the absence of technology in some geographic areas. The principal goal is to reinforce each entity and insure stability for their future growth, especially through self-sufficiency and local leadership, which currently are both weaknesses in the Configuration.

**NESP Configuration (Northern Europe):** up until now there have been three meetings, one of which was with the General Curia; each year there is an Assembly, held in different places so that they may get to know each other better and improve the collegial model already present in other Configurations. They are concentrating efforts in the area of formation and the Commission for Formation is organizing a meeting for the younger religious in the summer of 2012. A course for ongoing formation is being planned for 2013. With regard to finances, the situation is positive.

**The Jesus Crucified Configuration (CFIXI):** has been divided into three “poles”: Pole A: (CRUC-PAC-PAUL-REG); Pole B: (CALV-CONC-DOMIN-ISID-LIBER-VICT) and Pole C: (DOL-FAT-PRAES). During its Assembly, which took place prior to the Coordinators’ Meeting in Rome, at the last Assembly, they recognized the need to involve everyone, as far as possible, in the creation of “networks” and in the development of a diffused

leadership. In order to test the capability of the “network”, it will be necessary to establish objectives, targets and projects. (For more information on this Configuration, see article on the Third Circular Letter of Fr. Enzo Del Brocco, Coordinator, in this issue of the BIP).

During the meeting the Coordinators were invited to reflect on three points: Passion – Mission – Potential.

1. What is your passion? What is the passion of your community, entity, Configuration?
2. What is our mission/objective in today’s world?
3. What are the potentialities that you see, or in which we should invest for the future?

The Coordinators named 3 issues for discussion during the General Chapter: 1. The challenges of mission for each Configuration in a globalised world; 2. Judicial questions around Authority in relation to the Configurations; 3. The Interconnection of the Configurations in regard to the three areas of Solidarity (formation, personnel & finance).

Subsequent to this meeting the Preparatory Commission prepared the following questions so that the religious of the Congregation at large might have an opportunity to offer their views on topics pertinent to the upcoming Chapter:

- I. What are the three principal themes which you would like to see discussed during the next General Chapter in order to better respond to the contemporary global context? Is there something else which you would like to say to the General Chapter from a personal or provincial level?
- II. What are the strong points and the weak points, the fears and the hopes of your Configuration?
- III. What kind of formation would you suggest for future Passionists in the light of the needs and challenges that are present in your Configuration?
- IV. What new missions and apostolates are you developing to respond to the new situations? ●



# CHAPTER COMMISSIONS

In order to coordinate the preparation needed for the Chapter as well as the work of the Chapter itself, the Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio and the General Council have established the following commissions.

### Chapter Preparatory Commission:

Frs. Giuseppe Martinelli (CORM), Chairman; Alex Steinmiller (CRUC); Peter Dong-Ho Shin (MACOR) and Vital Otshudialokoka (SALV) Secretary.

This Commission will work closely with the General Council and the Moderators and will take into consideration the work already done in the process of Restructuring and will determine the work schedule for Chapter in order to formulate objectives and decisions to be made. It will study the organization of the agenda and the daily work of the Chapter by means of specific work sessions dedicated to the new Configurations and planning for their mission during the next six years.

### Logistics Commission:

Frs. Battista Ramponi (CORM), Mirosław Lesiecki (ASSUM), Miguel Angel Villanueva (REG), Vito Patera (LAT), Giuseppe Pugliese (CORM), Bros. Marsianus Suparmo (REPAC) and Efraim Diakon Ambon (REPAC).

The work of this Commission is to anticipate and prepare for the reception of all the participants in the General Chapter: coordinate their arrivals and departures and arranging for their transportation from the airport to Sts. John and Paul; prepare the necessary meeting places for the Chapter activities; prepare all necessary facilities for communication and personal life of the capitulars (computer, internet connection, laundry, stationery, information on the House and the city, etc.); arrange for the necessary stationery needs of the participants; and organize community visits\departures during the General Chapter.

**Preparatory Commission for Chapter Communications:** Frs. Marco Pasquali (PIET), Moderator; Ramiro Ruiz Betancourt (Secretary General) and Massimo Granieri (LAT)

**Communications Commission during the Chapter:** Daniele Curci (DOL), Andrés Yamit Carillo (FID) Christopher Akiatan (PASS)

The scope of the work of this commission is to study those instruments (software and hardware) to be used during the General Chapter so as to be able to keep the Congregation at large informed about the work of the chapter delegates. Additionally, thanks to the possibilities offered by modern technology, in particular the internet and social media, they hope to offer the members of the Congregation and other accredited users, a means for accessing some of the more solemn moments of the Chapter and to discuss and communicate their thoughts about some topics.

**Commission to study certain juridical aspects:** Frs. Leonello Leidi (CORM), Moderator; Serafín Sánchez



The Chapter Coordinating Commission: (L-R) Fr. Giuseppe Martinelli (CORM), Fr. Alex Steinmiller (CRUC) and Fr. Peter Dong-Ho Shin (MACOR) – (not pictured) Fr. Vital Otshudialokoka (SALV) Secretary.



Fr. Leonello Leidi (CORM), Moderator, Commission to study certain juridical issues.

Pérez (SANG) and Vital Otshudialokoka (SALV), Secretary.

This study group will evaluate the new legal entities that were created as a means of carrying out the Restructuring process with the new aggregations of Provinces, Vice-provinces, Vicariates and missions. Following our General Synod held in Cuernavaca in Mexico in 2008, the new aggregations have been called "Configurations". These Configurations that were formed and approved by the last General Synod celebrated in Rome in 2010 currently have points in common as well as points of variation:

A) **The points in common** are: a) the Executive Committee is formed by the major superiors of the entities that compose the configuration; b) the Executive Committee has a Chairman/leader who has the task of animating the configuration and is responsible for the implementation of decisions; c) the Executive Board has legal capacity for configuring with respect to decisions made by majority vote, with regard to the implementation of solidarity in the areas of formation, personnel and finances.



**Fr. José Luis Quintero (SANG), Formation Commission.**



**Fr. Vito Patera (LAT), Liturgy Commission.**

resolve the legal issues of configurations; 6) Study proposals/solutions for separation of Vicariates from their mother provinces bearing in mind the various problems associated with the various aspects of community life, apostolate, finances and education.

**Formation Commission:** Frs. Giovanni Cipriani (DOL) and José L. Quintero (SANG). The General Consultor who will serve as liaison is Fr. Luis Alberto Cano.

The work of this group is to offer guidelines and proposals to the General Council to develop religious and Passionist values proper to Formation and which may be shared as a means of solidarity between the various parts of the Congregation. The specific task of this Commission is as follows: 1. Study the formation programs that the configurations are planning and undertaking, with particular reference to newly emerging realities such as in solidarity and inculturation in formation; 2. Suggest which elements of the General Formation Program (1986) of the Congregation, also in light of the Configurations, need to be reviewed and updated according to the new requirements of Passionist religious life; 3. Study the motivations, goals, policies and modalities for possibly establishing a permanent Office for Formation (like, for example, that of the missions and of solidarity). This has already been suggested and would have as its objective the sharing and identification of values for initial and on-going formation in the Congregation and also for the laity.

**Trilateral Commission:** The purpose of the Commission is to study and to become familiar with the realities of the Vicariate and the mother Province and from this perspective, to anticipate future action. Such a study will make it possible to evaluate and offer suggestions of potential solutions which would include the possibility of a Vicariate's separating from its mother Province in order to become a Vice-Province or a Province, merging with other Vicariates or with another Province within the same Configuration, as is made possible in #104 of our Constitutions and in light of the steps that various Vicariates are already considering within their own Configuration.

The Trilateral Commissions will be composed of a religious from the Vicariate, a religious from the Province and a religious chosen by the Superior General.

**Liturgy Commission:**

Frs. Vito Patera (LAT) and Matteo Nonini (CORM) and the Italian seminarians (STIP).

Prior to nominating a Liturgical Commission for the organization and execution of the liturgies of the Chapter it was decided to use a small group which, in harmony with the Preparatory Commission, will study and plan a liturgical program for the Chapter.

The task of this commission will be to design liturgies in harmony with what the Preparatory Commission is proposing for the various days of the Chapter. It will prepare programs that are appropriate for celebrations that will take place in the morning or in the afternoon and for groups according to language, to Configurations or for the entire Assembly of the Chapter. It would be important that the various languages and cultures be treated with equal dignity, especially alternating among the most commonly spoken languages in the Congregation, while not forgetting those less commonly used. ●

B) **The points of variation** concern the mode of unification: 1) two configurations have chosen the unification of the entity with a process that will produce, with different stages of implementation, a configuration as a single entity on a legal level; 2) the other four Configurations are progressing, although with some diversification among them, toward a configuration in which the entities (Provinces, Vice-provinces, Vicariates, missions) are aligned with the common points.

The group's task is to verify the different legal situations that emerge from points A) and B) in order to give adequate answers that are in harmony with the norms of Canon law and the particular law of our Congregation. It will also be useful to prepare texts that can be proposed for discussion and approval during the Chapter for the eventual confirmation of the Configurations and the rules for governing their activities. Concerning the above, it would be good to keep in mind what is written in No. 104 of our Constitutions.

C) Furthermore, the study group will also examine other issues relating to new situations that the Restructuring process is generating: 1) participation in the General Chapter of the Congregation and synods; 2) "Configurations" in General Regulations in place of "regional conferences" (Gen. Reg. No. 94-96); 3) Prepare to insert text/texts that include the lay Passionist Family in the General Regulations; 4) The General Government and the Government and Executive Board of the configurations; 5) Verify and suggest solutions to address and

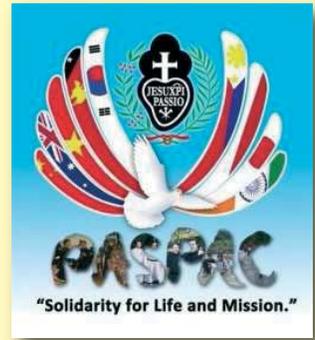


# PASPAC CONFIGURATION MEETINGS

The PASPAC Assembly which takes place every two years was held at the Holy Cross Spiritual Center in Calumpang, Philippines from 14 – 18 November 2011. The theme chosen for this year’s Assembly was: “Solidarity for Mission and Life”. It was decided that the delegates from each entity who would attend this Assembly would be the members of the three Configuration Commissions for Personnel, Formation and Finance. The delegates came from Australia/PNG/NZ, Philippines, Indonesia, Korea, Japan, India, Vietnam and China.

The Personnel Commission consists of the provincial superiors of each entity. This gathering was the first time that the Formation and Finance Commission members met face-to-face. Until now they have met via Skype. Fr. Clemente Barron (General Consultor) facilitated the assembly and Bro. Laurence Finn (CRUC) acted as secretary.

The PASPAC Assembly was followed by a Leaders’ Formation Workshop for Major Superiors and Council members. This took place in Calumpang from 21–25 November 2011. Because of a number of recent new superiors and members of the Council



Official logo of the PASPAC Assembly.

in the Configuration, it was felt that a formation program dealing with issues of leadership, spirituality, canonical and juridical matters, Congregational requirements and pastoral care of members would be of great benefit to the leadership of this Configuration which is the fastest growing in the Congregation.

The Planning Committee chose the following major areas and presenters for the Workshop: “Leadership & Spirituality”, Fr. Denis Travers (General Consultor); “Canon Law issues related to Major Superiors/Councils, Congregation, Dioceses, etc.”; Fr. Eric Eusebio, SJ (a Canon Lawyer from Loyola School of Theology in Manila); and “Human resource/conflict management and dealing with difficult people”, Professor Fulbright Ang. This is the first time that such a formation workshop for Major Superiors and Councils has been organized. ●



Participants in the PASPAC Assembly at the Holy Cross Spiritual Center, Calumpang, Philippines.

# “MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE”: THE ASSEMBLIES OF THE CONFIGURATION THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Fr. Antonio Munduate, (FID)

“Moving toward the future” was the objective that the Synod of 2010 proposed to our Congregation for the final two years (2010-2012) of the process of Restructuring that began in 2004.

Accepting the challenge of the last Synod, our Configuration began moving toward the General Chapter by convoking Assemblies in all of the zones so that the religious could continue to grow in mutual understanding and better appreciate the process in which we are involved. They also offered an opportunity to make proposals. Over 160 religious participated in the Assemblies, including a group of novices and postulants.

There were five Assemblies in all and the provincial and vice-provincial superiors were present at each of them (CORI, FAM, SANG and the FID Vice-province):

1) Corella (Spain, 27-28/12/2011): Religious of Spain.

2) Santiago (Chile, 12-13/01/2012): Religious of Chile, Peru and Bolivia.

3) Cajicá (Colombia, 18-19/01/2012): Religious of Colombia, Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador.

4) El Salvador (San Salvador, 24-26/01/2012): Religious of San Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

5) Cacalomacán (Mexico, 31/01 to 02/02/2012): Religious of Mexico.

All of the Assemblies had the same plan for their work: 1) Reflection on the topic of Restructuring; 2) Information about the process in our Congregation and Configuration; 3) Reflection and proposals about mission; 4) Reflection and proposal about finances; 5) Reflection and proposals about government, authority and leadership; 6) Ideas and hopes for the new reality that we want to construct; and 7) final points.

The Assemblies were an opportunity to reaffirm the decisions that our Configuration has already made. Above all, it was an opportunity to spend time in fraternal communion with each other: the provincials who shared their life with us for a month; the participants in the Assemblies; the communities that hosted the religious; the visits of the women religious (Passionist Sisters, Daughters of the Passion and Passionist cloistered nuns), etc.

A commission is at work editing the combined Acts of the five Assemblies so that afterward, together with the Provincials, we might be able to discern those elements that distinguish our Configuration in its various and diverse characteristics: mission, community, formation and our “being Passionist”, etc. These identifying “marks” of the Configuration will be incorporated into the proposal that will be presented at the General Chapter for the eventual suppression of the Provinces of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (CORI), Holy Family (FAM), Most Precious Blood (SANG) and the Holy Faith (FID) Vice-Province and, concurrently, the erection of the new and unified juridical entity that incorporates all of the other entities, with the exception of the PAC Vicariate of the Caribbean. ●



Participants in the Assembly of the SCOR Zone of the Religious of Colombia, Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador.



# THE XII ASSEMBLY OF THE BLESSED DOMINIC BARBERI VICARIATE (PRAES-DOMIN)

The XII Assembly of the Blessed Dominic Barberi Vicariate took place from 12 to 16 December 2011 at the retreat of “Jesus Crucified” in the city of Ba-Jequié (Brazil). In addition to the religious of the Vicariate, the following religious were present: the PRAES Provincial Superior Fr. Fiorenzo Bordo and Fr. Cloves of the Vicariate “N.D. Victoriae” (VICT).

During the course of the assembly the following members of the new Council of the “Blessed Dominic Barberi Vicariate” (DOMIN - PRAES) were elected: Regional Superior: Fr. Pedro Bacchiocchi; First Consultor: Fr. Adilson Santana do Carmo and Second Consultor: Fr. Uidelfonso Machado de Assis.

The Vicariate of Blessed Dominic Barberi was founded in 1947 by the Italian Province of the Presentation (Rome). In 1946 Cardinal of São Salvador da Bahia, Bishop Augusto Álvaro da Silva, made requests for Passionist missionaries to Fr. Candido, Provincial of the CALV Province of Brazil and to General Chapter of the Congregation. On 23 August 1947, Fr. José Tittoni signed an agreement



(L-R): Fr. Adilson Santana do Carmo (First Consultor), Fr. Pedro Bacchiocchi (Regional Superior) and Fr. Uidelfonso Machado de Assi (Second Consultor).

that entrusted the parish of Nossa Senhora da Boa Viagem to the Passionists.

Currently our religious serve in four parishes communities: “Nossa Senhora da Boa Viagem”, in Salvador; “São Paulo da Cruz” in Itabuna; “Jesus Crucificado” in Jequié and, most recently in “São Gabriel” in João Pessoa.

## EXCERPTS FROM THE THIRD CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE CFIXI CONFIGURATION

Fr. Enzo Del Brocco, (DOL)  
Configuration Coordinator

*(Editor’s note: the full text of this letter, dated 19 December 2011, in Italian, English and Spanish can be found on the web site [passiochristi.org](http://passiochristi.org))*

In these last few years, due to globalization and a reduced number of Passionists, we have felt the need to join forces and endeavors in order to be ever more effectively engaged in the one “mission” of the Church, that of proclaiming the Gospel to the ends of the earth. We



Fr. Enzo Del Brocco (DOL), Coordinator of the Jesus Crucified Configuration.

want to act, according to our charism, as a body; we will create ties and synergies with one another, so that through defined and shared priorities, objectives and actions, we may accomplish our projects.

I realize that it is difficult, but it is ever more necessary that we coordinate our movements, and “overcome our boundaries”, which boundaries may be necessary in order to have a local identity, but which should not become impediments to our working together. When all is said and



done, we are part of the same Congregation and we have one and the same mission...

In the last circular letter, I suggested the formation of three “poles” within the Configuration; at the Assembly work was conducted in the light of these “poles”, highlighting the shared work already done, and that which could be done in the future. The work undertaken up to the present is the following:

- this last year, three provincial chapters were held (CRUC, DOL, PRAES), and two Congresses (DOMIN and VICT);
- in January 2011, the novitiate at Pontagrossa was begun for the southern hemisphere, and in July the novices at Falvaterra made their first profession;
- in August, the theologate began at Dorado (Puerto Rico), students are present from the jurisdictions FAT, DOL and PAC;
- I was able to participate last January 2011 at the Interprovincial Council Meeting (CRUC, PAUL, REG e PAC) in Puerto Rico; it dealt with youth and young adult ministry and vocational recruitment; the topic was presented by the Team Talita Kum from the CONC Province; shortly thereafter, in February, I met with the students in Mexico City, at our house in Escandón;
- in April 2011, there was a meeting of the Provincial Curias from DOL, PRAES and FAT in Falvaterra. This meeting helped us to know one another better, and it was decided to plan a future meeting of the local superiors, as well as a meeting for the treasurers, and one for the young religious;
- in September 2011, Pole B (CALV, CONC, DOMIN, ISID, LIBER, VICT) met at Curitiba together with the Superior General and the Coordinator. In this session, the decision was made to transform Pole B from the six entities named, into two provinces as follows: (CALV, CONC, ISID) and (DOMIN, LIBER and VICT). The stages and procedure for the transformation were established, in order to formally request the next General Chapter’s approval for this decision;
- in this year, I conducted the retreats for the REG Province in Cuernavaca, to the religious of Pole B at Pontagrossa, and in February of next year, I will conduct the retreat to the PAC Vicariate. Still in February of 2011, Fr. Augusto Canali, Provincial of CALV, conducted the retreat for the PAC Vicariate (Puerto Rico), and in the month of September 2011, Fr. Eugenio Mezzomo (CALV) conducted the retreat for the FAT Province.

My hope is that the other entities will undertake similar initiatives to highlight the process of restructuring, and especially the process of conversion and of walking “together” in the path of the Lord...

- At the last Assembly, the three “Poles” decided on the following (as will be reported in their Acts):

**Pole A: (CRUC–PAC–PAUL–REG)**

- Continue the collaboration among the Provinces: USA, MEXICO, and PUERTO RICO/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, principally at the level of the apostolate;

- Continue the project of sending students into the USA provinces for the study of English;
- Mexico will soon celebrate the Provincial Chapter at which other religious of the entity will be present;
- Continue the Interprovincial Council Meetings, at which are present the Curias, the Passionist Sisters and lay Passionists from Pole A.
- Conduct a retreat in Mexico, open to religious of the other Provinces.

**Pole B: (CALV-CONC-DOMIN-ISID-LIBER-VICT)**

- Make two provinces out of Pole B; one North (DOMIN–LIBER-VICT) and one South (CALV–CONC-ISID).
- To begin the process, there will be information given to all of the religious through letters and in their individual Assemblies;
- There will be a General Assembly (March 2012), a Retreat (July 2012) (NORD); Assemblies within each entity; an Assembly/Retreat (SUD).

**Pole C: (DOL–FAT–PRAES)**

- Invest in ongoing formation with workshops to be held at Falvaterra and at Monte Argentario;
- Plan a Passionist spiritual itinerary/pilgrimage with stops at the historical houses of the two Italian entities;
- Plan a gathering of the young religious for a sharing of experiences, and with an eye toward youth and vocational ministries;
- Create a common Secretariat to serve the missions in Angola and Nigeria;
- Continue the meetings of the Curias of Pole C, and plan for a meeting of the local superiors, and another for the local treasurers of the three Provinces;
- Have an Assembly of the two Italian Provinces in order to augment their common effort to establish a foundation for a greater collaboration and communion.

• **The present model of government in our Configuration is:**

- The General Assembly of the Major Superiors, it has decision-making power, and it meets at least once a year;
- the Coordinator is responsible for executing the decisions taken, using the means and the persons specified by the Assembly; he facilitates and promotes the process of restructuring;
- the Secretary looks after the statistics, the database, communication, the exchange of information, translation, and the bulletin;
- the three Commissions for solidarity are responsible for presenting projects to be approved, and the means of evaluating these projects. The President of each Commission is a Major Superior and the three Presidents, together with the Coordinator, make up the Coordination Team;
- the Coordination Team is responsible for helping the Coordinator in the motivation of the Configuration, and in preparing for Assemblies...



# EXCERPTS FROM THE FOURTH CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE CEB CONFIGURATION

Fr. Leone Masnata, (CFIXI)

**A**t the beginning of the New Year 2012 I feel that I need to communicate to the individual religious some information about the status of our Configuration. At this time the Configuration has six Commissions that are working well: four permanent (Community and Spiritual Life and On-going Formation, the Apostolate, Formation and vocation promotion and Finances) and two ad hoc (Juridical Commission for the preparation of a normative policy for the Configuration as a single Province, and the Liturgical Commission (together with the DOL and PRAES Provinces) for the revision of the CP liturgical Propers. In particular I want to inform you about the decisions made on 1 December 2011 by the Provincial Superiors who met in Rome to study the various suggestions of these Commissions...

## DECISIONS MADE BY THE CEB PROVINCIAL SUPERIORS

Now I want to briefly list some of the decisions that the CEB Provincial Superiors made during their meeting in Rome on 1 December 2011. Those present were: Guy Sionneau MICH; Piergiorgio Bartoli PIET, Cosimo Chianura LAT; Giuseppe Adobati CORM; Leone Masnata CFIXI and CEB Coordinator; Fernando Taccone, CEB Secretary CEB. Also present were Fr. General, Ottaviano D'Egidio and Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, General Consultor.

### A. UPCOMING CEB PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES

We feel that it is urgent that we address the resizing of our houses in order to enable better quality of community life. For this purpose each Province should celebrate its own Provincial Assembly by June 2012 to discuss the topic of the revitalization of community life and, if necessary, the resizing of their own houses, indicating those that General Authority may decide to close, even for a brief time period... The following is a summary of the criteria to be used for the resizing:

**1) CRITERIA FOR THE GROWTH OF OUR CHARISM:** Always insure that every presence is truly a community presence; Respect the relationship between the Institute and the historic presence in an ecclesial and civil territory; The possibility of effectively working in the area of the charism and vocations; Possibility and conditions for study and beginning new ministries and forms of presence; Possibility of strengthening the "missionary-apostolic" dimensions; Possibility of involving the laity in prayer and apostolate.

**2) CRITERIA FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF FORMS OF PRESENCE:** Number of houses determined by an equitable balance between active and non-active religious; Before eliminating a presence, evaluate to see if it would be better to reduce the activity of the community; The first intervention concerning the "concentration" of forms of presence in the same geographic area.



Fr. Leone Masnata (CFIXI), Coordinator of the Bl. Eugene Bossilkov Configuration.

**3) CRITERIA DERIVED FROM FINANCIAL CONCERNS:** Priority given to those houses that belong to us; financial self-sufficiency of a house, except for particular cases, ex. houses of formation.

**4) METHODOLOGY:** Divide the houses in categories; Alienation of houses that do not belong to us; Before closing a house, seek creative ways of using the building....

### **Restructuring is necessary but it is no substitute for personal and community conversion**

I believe that the renewal of the Congregation can only come about through the "passion" of its religious for the Crucified One, for the Church and for humanity, and not primarily from the very necessary renewal of structures...

The springtime of consecrated life needs someone, even better, several people, to decide to move from the theoretical to the "concrete" return to the Gospel, to the Founder and to the demands of today's Church. This is a "sine qua non" for the survival of religious life, more important that structural renewal of uniting or dividing provinces, opening or closing houses, although necessary, in order to respond to the various needs of the Congregation today.

Let us not wait for Restructuring to perform the miracle of renewing us, while not making the effort of "renewing ourselves". ●



# FATHER AUSTIN SMITH (IOS)

Fr. Nicolas Postlethwaite, (IOS)

It is consoling, mourning the death of a close Passionist friend and companion to recall his life-long commitment standing beside the Cross of Jesus. Father Austin Smith died on March 24th 2011. The poet William Stafford suggests there is a mysterious “thread” which connects all the events of life and enables us trace the paths we have followed. Keeping hold of that “thread” helps prevent losing our way. I have been privileged to witness how Austin followed his life “thread” of faithful service as a Passionist to ensure he did not lose his way.

Austin was convinced by Charles Peguy’s view that: *Everything begins in mysticism and ends in politics...Politics may laugh at mysticism, but it is mysticism which feeds these same politics.* Austin believed mysticism and politics ultimately converge in mystery at the Cross of Jesus. Contemplation beside the Cross brings a deeper understanding of the inter-connectedness of mysticism and politics.

Born in Liverpool in 1928, Austin’s initial grasp of his “thread” was gifted by his parents. Devoutly Catholic, their faith was combined with sharp social analysis. He writes: *God was never proved to me. I simply “got God”. It was not the certitude of my parents and others that held me up. It was the wonder of the humanity that their certitude created in them. They were quite simply wonderful human beings. This wonder lay in their action as believing beings, and it went deep in me. Their care of, their struggle for, their commitment, to humanity was not some abstract concern. The social, the economic and the political were at the centre of their lives. They did not simply let me see kids in bare feet from a tram down a main street in Liverpool. They pointed out the bare-footed kids to me and expressed profound anger. Their anger was not with the kids - it was with the world and the institutions in which and with which we lived.*<sup>(1)</sup>

Austin recalls his enthusiasm for the Passionist Congregation - something which never dimmed, though tempered later with critique. Going to the Junior Seminary, prompted this reflection on early dreams: *“I was no more than fourteen being asked to relate to a reality far beyond my years. I was being invited to dream about a future when I was hardly able to come to terms with the present. I had come into contact with the Passionist Brother Alphonsus, who lived in this new land, in this dreamland. I wanted to go. I was determined to go to this dreamland. But I was never informed to what extent dreams were merged, even taken over by, an extraordinary, quite stunning and overwhelming institutional world. So many dreams, at every level of human life, can run adrift on the rock of the institutional.”*<sup>(2)</sup>

He was professed a Passionist on 15th December 1946. After ordination in 1954 his Provincial asked him to go to Rome to study theology. Austin was delighted, but asked if instead of theology he might study philosophy. This was agreed but not without some surprise: surely, philosophy is merely the lowly “servant” of theology? As a young priest, Austin recognised the value of first exploring philosophy’s highways and byways, before too prematurely reaching for the handbooks of theology.



Fr. Austin Smith (IOS) 1928-2011.

He always looked back with gratitude for the academic grounding the Angelicum University gave him with opportunity to begin many life-long friendships with brother Passionists while living in their community at Saints John and Paul’s.

With widened university horizons Austin relished the discovery of philosophical thinking beyond too narrow confining perspectives. He developed an innate ability to recognise authentic imagination and analysis, no matter who voiced it. This brought a sense of urgent freshness to his teaching and preaching. He resisted any attempt to imprison creative imagination, either in himself or others, in favour of setting free the wonder of human mystery. Introducing the start of our Province’s Inner City Mission, he does not hesitate to quote the view of the atheist Bertrand Russell: *“Three Passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge and the unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither in a wayward course over a great ocean...”* Austin comments: *“Any human being reaching for nobility of life, any saint claiming to take the gospel seriously and any mystic wishing to witness to the unique union with God, could take these words of Russell without fear and make them his own.”*<sup>(3)</sup>

Returning from Rome Austin experienced the excitement of the 1960s. He rejoiced in renewed Province and Congregation vitality as in the Church as a whole. There is not space to list how his vision developed during this time. I highlight just a few points.

Having seen war at first hand as a boy in Liverpool he was sensitive to post-war struggles to reclaim confidence in the human experience - on the one hand traumatised by Holocaust and Hiroshima horrors - and on the other with a new potential for human flourishing. Where, he asked, do we find the cross of Jesus planted in this complex post-2nd World War human experience?

The French Worker Priest Movement was a big inspiration to him - attempting to break through European urban cultural barriers to the mass of those alienated from society and church. Impressed, but frustratingly puzzled seeing church policy dramatically suppressing something he saw as an authentic gospel project. Schooled by ongoing experience with young people - in the Christian workers and students movements - Austin rejoiced

(1) Austin Smith: *Mersey Vespers*: Published Kevin Mayhew, 2010. p. 94.

(2) *Ibid* p. 27.

(3) Austin Smith: *Passion for the Inner City*: Published by Sheed and Ward, 1983. p. 53.



with his friends at church windows thrown open to their world encouraged by the Vatican Council.

He rejoiced as our Congregation began a process to re-affirm our Founding vision within the context of emerging new political realities. As Province delegate to the Extraordinary General Chapter, Austin participated in all the sessions preparing to revise our Constitutions. He recalls many challenging - sometimes frustrating - conversations during those Chapter sessions, but which would remain a precious memory for the rest of his life. He especially remembers playing his part particularly in discernment leading to a fresh articulation of Passionist spirituality in Paragraph 72 of the new Constitutions. For him, this crucial paragraph is a door which provides access to hearing voices outside our religious life walls.

But despite the positive sense of renewal Austin was uneasy, sensing something more was needed. Something was missing which needed another courageous step forward. He was not content simply to peer down from newly opened windows onto the world below - particularly onto the world of those marginalised within our social systems. Austin was looking for a key in order to open the door to gain direct access to those whose voices insistently coming from outside. It was the French philosopher - Jacques Maritain - who provided him with the necessary key enabling him to open and step through the "door" which is paragraph 72.

Austin writes: "...re-reading Maritain he did not offer me solutions or hard certitudes but assisted me in attempting to formulate issues about the church and our human situation. One of his texts is a formidable symbol in my own life: "There is another, and more fundamental, order than that of social and political action: it is the order of communion in life, desire and suffering. In other words, there must be recognised, as distinct from the category to act for or to act with, the category to exist with and to suffer with which concerns a more profound order of reality. To act for belongs to the realm of mere benevolence. To exist with and to suffer with belongs to the realm of love in unity... To exist with is an ethical category... It means loving someone in the sense of becoming one with him, of bearing his burdens, of living a common moral life with him, of feeling with him and suffering with him. If one loves that human and living thing which is called 'the people', and which, like human and living things, is very difficult to define, but all the more real, then one's first and basic wish will be to exist with the people, to suffer with the people, and to stay in communion with the people." (Jacques Maritain, *The Range of Reason*, Geoffrey Bless, London, 1953, p.121).<sup>(4)</sup>

Austin proposed that St Joseph's Province should commit resources to enable a group of Passionists to step through the door from familiar securities in order "exist with" the lives of those at the margins. The Province treasures its missionary innovation and after lengthy discussions, his proposal was agreed. With the blessing of the Province, Austin and I stepped through the door in Highgate and into a new world and community situated in inner-city Liverpool in a neighbourhood called Toxteth. At an initial Mass on 11th October 1971, we two celebrated with three Passionists friends come to wish us well and pray for the success of this new venture.

Forty years later on 1st April 2011, in a very large local church, there was hardly room to accommodate all who travelled from near and far, to celebrate Austin's Requiem. Members of every Christian denomination - and none - stood beside Jews and Muslims, black and white, rich and poor - united in respect of Austin and his life of Passionist witness. What had occurred between those two Eucharistic celebrations separated by half a life-time? Austin's Passionist witness and its extraordinary impact on so many is a story I hope to tell in a more lengthy publication.

(4) Ibid: p 8

(5) Mersey Vespers, op cit. p.148.



Fr. Austin Smith and Fr. Nicholas Postlethwaite.



**"Liverpool did not offer me a new form of ministry. Rather I was offered a new beginning to understand the radical gospel of Jesus of Nazareth".**

Since Austin's death we have witnessed an extraordinary outpouring of love and affection for him. His gravestone is simple: "Austin Smith CP, - Passionist - Priest - Poet of 'Liverpool 8'". He chose as his final resting place the community cemetery where he lived uninterruptedly for forty years. Unswerving in his commitment till dying with friends around his bed in the local Care Home, Austin's life "thread" was concentrated in only a very few city streets - Google Earth pinpoints it as covering less than a half square mile. But the implications of his journey through a door which paragraph 72 of our Passionist Constitution holds open, continues to have a wide impact. His challenging questions remain as relevant for Passionists today as when he first asked them.

Austin's words sum up what became for him a totally absorbing life-long Passionist mission: "Liverpool did not offer me a new form of ministry. Rather I was offered a new beginning to understand the radical gospel of Jesus of Nazareth."<sup>(5)</sup>

At a recent gathering of friends to remember Austin, one of them spoke quite simply and said: "Austin was entirely faithful to the end in the depth of his faith in the death of Jesus." May his questions continue to inspire all of us today and may a great Passionist rest in peace. ●

## MEETING OF THE PASSIONIST FAMILY IN THE MICH PROVINCE



Religious and laity at the MICH Passionist Family retreat.

A meeting of the Passionist Family (religious and laity) of the MICH Province of France took place in the abbey of Bellefontaine from 10 to 13 November 2011. Two of the seven Cistercian monks that were martyred in Tibhirine, in Algeria in March, 1996, were from this Abbey. Currently they have a large community that welcomes guests for retreats and periods of prayer. All of the guests are invited to join the community for praying the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist.

Fr. Adolfo Lippi (PRAES) led the retreat with a two-part reflection: "Keeping alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus today, in the footsteps of St. Paul of the Cross". The vow of the Passion, which originated in St. Paul of the Cross' powerful inspirational experience of the Passion during his first trip to Rome, continued to develop, becoming the central point of his life and the apostolate of the Congregation, including its importance for today's world. Fr. Adolfo highlighted the significance of the Memory of the Passion as something to be lived and experienced in our lives and the lives of others. This memory is actualized in contemplation, in fraternal charity and in witness. Both the religious and the laity expressed great interest in wanting to better understand the charism and the spiritual personality of St. Paul of the Cross.

During the retreat there were also opportunities for two specific meetings to prepare for the upcoming Provincial Chapter, one for the Passionist religious and the other for the laity of the Passionist Family. ●

## THE INSTITUTE OF THE SECULAR MISSIONARIES OF THE PASSION

From 1 to 5 August 2011 the Institute of the Secular Missionaries of the Passion met at the Retreat House of the Sisters of Divine Providence in Mascalucia (Italy). The out-going president, Professor Melina Ciccia convoked the 6<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of Elections in order to re-establish the board of directors of the Institute and to meet with delegates from the six nations representing the members of the communities and the regions that belong to the Institute.

The first two days, August 1 and 2, were designed as retreat days whose theme was: "Moving with the Spirit in order to become prophets for today". The retreat director was Fr. Valter Lucco-Borlera (CORM), the present General Spiritual Assistant of the Institute.

The third day, 3 August, was dedicated to presenting various reports that described the state of the Institute during the previous six years.



Members of the Institute of the Secular Missionaries of the Passion.

On 4 August the new president, Prof. Lia Zappala, and her council were elected. On 5 August, Mass was celebrated marking the twelfth anniversary of the pontifical approbation of the Institute that occurred on 6 August. The participants also gave thanks to God and to Mary, Mother and Queen of the Institute for the election of the new President.

A festive gathering concluded the meeting. ●



# PASSIONIST NUNS OF LORETO, ITALY ELECTIONS OF THE SUPERIOR AND HER COUNCIL

**W**e have received word that on 7-8 February 2012, the cloistered Passionist Nuns of Loreto, Italy, celebrated their Chapter for the election of the Superior and her Council. On 7 February, Sr. Maria Pia was re-elected Superior and on 8 February her Council and the novice mistress were elected: Sr. Eva, Second Counselor; Sr. Olga, Vicar; Sr. Maria Pia, Superior; Sr. Mariangela, First Counselor and Mistress of Novices and Sr. Immacolata, Third Counselor.

The history of this monastery has its origins in the particular desire of St. Paul of the Cross and various Passionist saints, such as St. Vincent Strambi and St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother, to build a monastery for Passionist nuns in Loreto. This desire became more urgent with the approach of the centenary of the birth of St. Gabriel (1 March 1838) who, prior to entering the Passionist novitiate of Morrovalle in 1856, visited the Shrine of Loreto to totally dedicate himself to Jesus Crucified through the intercession of Our Lady. The religious of the



(L-R) Sr. Eva, Second Counselor; Sr. Olga, Vicar; Sr. Maria Pia, Superior; Sr. Mariangela, First Counselor and Mistress of Novices and Sr. Immacolata, Third Counselor.

PIET province, especially Fr. Alberto Gregori (1837-1943) worked toward the foundation of the monastery of Loreto in that Centenary year as a sign of gratitude to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the sanctity of Gabriel Possenti. Subsequently, the monastery was dedicated on 26 July 1938.

As with all contemplative religious orders, the primary apostolate of the nuns is continual prayer for the salvation of humanity. Every year the nuns at Loreto have noted an increasing number of requests for prayers especially from people in critical moments of their life such as sickness and other trials. During the past twenty years they have noted an increase in people's "thirst" for God and a strong desire to "experience" God. Their lives become for many groups and individuals a point of reference and a place where they can experience strength, peace, hope and consolation.

In 1995 nuns from this monastery made a foundation in the city of Malang, Indonesia on the Island of Giawa.



The Passionist Nuns' Monastery community in the city of Malang, Indonesia on the Island of Giawa, together with the local bishop.



## PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

Five of our religious were ordained to the Priesthood during the period October 2011 to February 2012.

In the PRAES-DOMIN Vicariate of Brazil, Fr. Wellington Santos Pires was ordained to the priesthood on 4 December 2011. On 5 December 2011 in the PASS Province of the Philippines, Fr. Sherwin Jude Fudalan Detuya and Arnil Gijan Carbon were ordained. In the CALV Province of Brazil, Fr. Vitor Hugo Lourenço was ordained to the priesthood on 17 December 2011. And finally, on 25 February 2012, Fr. Jairo Sterling Rivera was ordained a priest in the FID Vice-Province of Colombia.



Lorenzo Pantanetti (PIET)

## DIACONATE ORDINATIONS

During the period October 2011 to February 2012, eleven religious were ordained deacons.

Emilio Hidalgo Jimenez was ordained a deacon in El Salvador, FAM Province on 29 October 2011. In the CORM Province of Italy, Alessandro Cancelli and Andrea Redaelli were ordained to the diaconate on 31 October 2011. On 12 November 2011, six religious were ordained deacons in the CFIXI Province of Italy: Mikael Darmi, Rosario Fontana, Agapitus Milandrino Goleng, Mikael Gregory Moan Tiba, Firmus Firman Rii and Sixtus Sang. In the FAT Province of Portugal, César Miguel da Silva Costa was ordained to the diaconate on 08 December 2011. And finally, in the FAM Province of Spain, Julio César Rivera López was ordained a deacon on 27 November 2011.



Deacons of the CFIXI Province: Mikael Darmi, Rosario Fontana, Agapitus Milandrino Goleng, Mikael Gregory Moan Tiba, Firmus Firman Rii and Sixtus Sang.

## PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS

During the period of October 2011 to



Firmino Oliveira Ferreira and Lucas Piropo Pereira (PRAES-DOMIN, Brazil)



Fr. Pires Wellington (PRAES-DOMIN, Brazil).

February 2012, twenty-one Religious professed First Vows.

On 09 December 2011 in the FID Vice-Province of Colombia, Iván Francisco Lizcano Arenas professed First Vows. On 01 January 2012, the following religious professed First Vows in their respective Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates: Omar Roberto Acevedo Higinio, José Luís Cueva Escalante, Jeiner Hoyos Rafael, Ronal Mego Hurtado, Rodble Reátegui Inga and Dixon Andy Valera Guerra of the CORIRES Vicariate of Peru; Marco Vinicio Cabrera Carpio of the SANG Province of Spain; Leonardo Félix de Oliveira of the SPE-LIBER Vicariate of Brazil; Miguel Maquera Chambi of the SANG Province of Spain; Jonhatan Peña Gaviria and John Gerardo Rivera Sterling of the FID Vice-Province of Colombia and Holger Fernando Tello Olivera of the SANG Province of Spain.

In the CALV Province of Brazil, Hércio



Religious of the SCOR Configuration who professed First Vows: José Luis Cueva Escalante (Perú); John Gerardo Sterling Rivera (Colombia); Miguel Maquera Chambi (Bolivia); Omar Roberto Acevedo Higinio (Perú); Ronal Mego Hurtado (Perú); Marco Vicinio Cabrera Carpio (Ecuador); Dixon Andy Valera Guerra (Perú); Carlos Mego Hurtado (Perú); Rodble Reátegui Inga (Perú); Johnatan Peña Gaviria (Colombia); Hoger Fernando Tello Olivera (Ecuador) and Jeiner Hoyos Rafael (Perú).



**Genelio García Antigua (CORI-PAC).**



**Carlos Javier González Ríos (CORI-PAC).**

Antunes Garcia and Ademir Guedes Azevedo professed First Vows on 08 January 2012 and on the same date, Santiago Rolón Martínez of the CONC Province of Argentina professed First Vows. The following religious professed First Vows on 15 January 2012 in the

DOL-VICT Vicariate of Brazil: Jorge Henrique Abreu Tanus, Eduardo Henrique Bastos Santos and Jackson Maioli Alvarenga. Finally, in the SPIR Province of Australia, Erick Niyiragira professed First Vows on 29 January 2012.



**Deacon Emilio Hidalgo Jimenez (FAM).**

## **PROFESSION OF FINAL VOWS**

Nine religious professed Final Vows during the period October 2011 to February 2012.

In the FAM Province of Spain, Reginaldo Andrade López and Juan Francisco Pereyra Jiménez professed Perpetual Vows on 05 November 2011. In the PIET Province of Italy, Lorenzo Pantanetti professed Final Vows on 19 November 2011. Two religious of the PRAES-DOMIN Province of Brazil professed Final Vows on 20 November 2011: Firmino Ferreira de Oliveira and Lucas Pirôpo Pereira. On 08 December, Bro. James Fitzgerald professed Final Vows in the PAUL Province of the USA. On 15 January 2012, in the DOL-VICT Vicariate of Brazil, Rodrigo Alves Ferreira professed Final Vows. Finally, two religious of the CORI-PAC Vicariate of Puerto Rico-Domin.Rep. professed Final Vows on 21 January 2012: Genelio García Antigua and Carlos Javier González Ríos. ●

# NEW PUBLICATIONS

**AA.VV., NUESTRA SEÑORA DE ARANZAZU,** Novena etc., Comunidad Pasionista (Colombia), 2008.

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**Artola Arbiza, Antonio María, C.P., LA VERBUM DOMINI Y LA INSPIRACIÓN BIBLICA,** Extracto da Revista Teológica Limense (Facultad de Teología Pontificia y Civil de Lima), Vol. XLV - N. 1 - 2011, pp. 5-24, Revista Teologica Limense, 2011.

**Artola Arbiza, Antonio María, C.P., SAN GABRIELE DELL'ADDOLORATA, MISTICO MARIANO,** San Gabriele, 2012.

**Clementi, Antonio, C.P., LA PASSIONE DI GESÙ, Meditazioni sulle opere di Santa Camilla Battista da Varano,** Breve introduzione alla teologia dei mistici per un dialogo tra Oriente e Occidente, Edizioni Simple, 2011.

**García Macho, Pablo, C.P., LOS DOLORES DE MARIA, Meditaciones,** Familia Seglar Pasionista, 2012.

**Lupo, Angela Maria, C. P., I LIBRI SAPIENZIALI DELL'AT, Un cammino di autocomprensione per imparare l'arte del vivere,** Edizioni OCD, 2011.

**Martins de Sá, Porfírio, C.P., SÚMULA HISTÓRICA (1931-2011) - PROVINCIA PASSIONISTA NOSSA SENHORA DE FATIMA (FAT),** Secretaria Provincial (FAT), 2011.

**Pablo de la Cruz, UN PENSAMIENTO PARA CADA DIA,** Pasionistas (Colombia).

**Pereira, José Carlos, C.P., EQUIPES DE CELEBRAÇÃO, Orientação e subsídios,** Editora Vozes, 2012.

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**Pereira, José Carlos, C.P., PASTORAL DE LA ACOGIDA,** Guía de implantación, formación y desempeño de agentes pastorales, Ediciones Dabar, 2010.

**Semeraro, Salvatore, C.P., AL DI LÀ DEL TEMPO E DELLO SPAZIO - Poesie,** Novoli, 2011.

**Sobrado Miguélez, Clemente, C.P., MÉTODOS FÁCILES PARA MEDITAR,** Pasionistas (Colombia), 2010.

**Vanden Bussche, Paulinus, C.P., FINANCIËLE REGISTRATIE IN HET PASSIONISTEN-KLOOSTER TE ERE 1840 – 1849,** Wezembeek-Oppem, 2011.

**Zecca, Tito Paolo, C.P., L'ARRIVO A MORICONE A.D. 16 GIUGNO 1911 - IL BEATO BERNARDO M. SILVESTRELLI NEL PRIMO CENTENARIO DELLA MORTE,** Moricone, 2011.

**Zecca, Tito Paolo, C.P., L'ARRIVO A MORICONE A.D. 16 GIUGNO 1911 - IL BEATO BERNARDO M. SILVESTRELLI NEL PRIMO CENTENARIO DELLA MORTE \*1911-2011\*,** Conferenza commemorativa, Moricone, 2011.



# NOTITIAE OBITUS



## Usque ad diem 1 novembre 2011 – 14 marzo 2012, acceptae

| DIE        | OBDORMIVIT<br>IN DOMINO            | PROVINCIA | NATUS      | VOTA<br>NUNCUPAVERAT |
|------------|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------------|
| 01/11/2011 | Sac. Kiernan (James) Earley        | PAUL      | 21/08/1925 | 15/08/1950           |
| 01/11/2011 | Sac. Sebastiano Cerrone            | DOL       | 16/11/1920 | 04/12/1936           |
| 15/11/2011 | Sac. Angelo Iacovone               | PAUL      | 11/02/1919 | 15/08/1939           |
| 28/11/2011 | Sac. Sebastian Kolinovsky          | PAUL      | 19/01/1919 | 15/08/1945           |
| 09/12/2011 | Sac. Aurelio Cicerone              | PIET      | 13/05/1922 | 22/09/1939           |
| 10/12/2011 | Sac. Giovanni Maria Lanci          | PIET      | 27/02/1920 | 22/09/1938           |
| 11/12/2011 | Sac. Richard Leary                 | PAUL      | 19/08/1918 | 15/08/1939           |
| 27/12/2011 | Sac. Livio Panzeri                 | CORM      | 06/04/1925 | 08/09/1946           |
| 29/12/2011 | Sac. Pedro Ignacio Bustos Martínez | FID       | 24/05/1947 | 08/12/1967           |
| 14/02/2012 | Fra. Denis McLoughlin              | PATR      | 02/01/1926 | 08/12/1948           |
| 26/02/2012 | Sac. Theophane McEwen              | SPIR      | 29/06/1922 | 08/12/1948           |
| 27/02/2012 | Sac. Salvatore Cangialosi          | CFIXI     | 01/11/1949 | 03/09/1978           |
| 06/03/2012 | Sac. Celestino Scur                | CALV      | 30/03/1924 | 28/11/1945           |
| 11/03/2012 | Sac. Casimir Haran                 | PATR      | 25/08/1939 | 11/09/1960           |
| 14/03/2012 | Sac. Roger Elliott                 | PAUL      | 08/03/1930 | 17/07/1951           |

## MONIALES ET SORORES DEFUNCTAE

|            |                                                            |                                                             |            |            |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| 24/11/2011 | Sr. Maria Helena<br>de S. Paulo da Cruz (Paulina) Tanzi    | Inst. Sororum Passionistarum<br>a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)  | 20/03/1921 | 15/02/1940 |
| 27/11/2011 | Sr. Kilian Smith                                           | Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis<br>et Passionis D.N.I.C. (England) | 01/06/1923 | 06/09/1947 |
| 01/12/2011 | Sr. Dolores Walsh                                          | Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis<br>et Passionis D.N.I.C. (England) | 12/04/1924 | 02/09/1946 |
| 05/12/2011 | Sr. Gloria di Gesù Risorto<br>Adamma Nwosu                 | Inst. Sororum Passionistarum<br>a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)  | 23/10/1980 | 06/06/2004 |
| 16/12/2011 | Sr. Mireille della Madre Addolorata<br>Nakahana Etuyenzi   | Inst. Sororum Passionistarum<br>a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)  | 30/12/1984 | 06/08/2009 |
| 01/01/2012 | Sr. Mariana McGroarty                                      | Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis<br>et Passionis D.N.I.C. (England) | 06/07/1920 | 19/03/1943 |
| 17/01/2012 | Sr. Maria Giuseppa dell'Arcangelo<br>S. Raffaele Del Prete | Inst. Sororum Passionistarum<br>a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)  | 04/12/1928 | 28/04/1947 |
| 21/01/2012 | Sr. Siobhan Shelly                                         | Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis<br>et Passionis D.N.I.C. (England) | 10/11/1924 | 08/05/1946 |
| 24/02/2012 | Sr. Leandra della Vergine<br>di Pompei (Maria) D'Errico    | Inst. Sororum Passionistarum<br>a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa)  | 08/10/1934 | 08/12/1957 |



### V STATION

*“Here we see Jesus helping Simon of Cyrene  
to carry the cross,  
leading him by his hand.”*

Fr. Tito Amodei (PRAES)

*ai nebianmai a porwan la croce un cell' uloso*

**“Let us help one another to carry the cross.”**

St. Paul of the Cross  
(Letters, 10 July 1762)

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