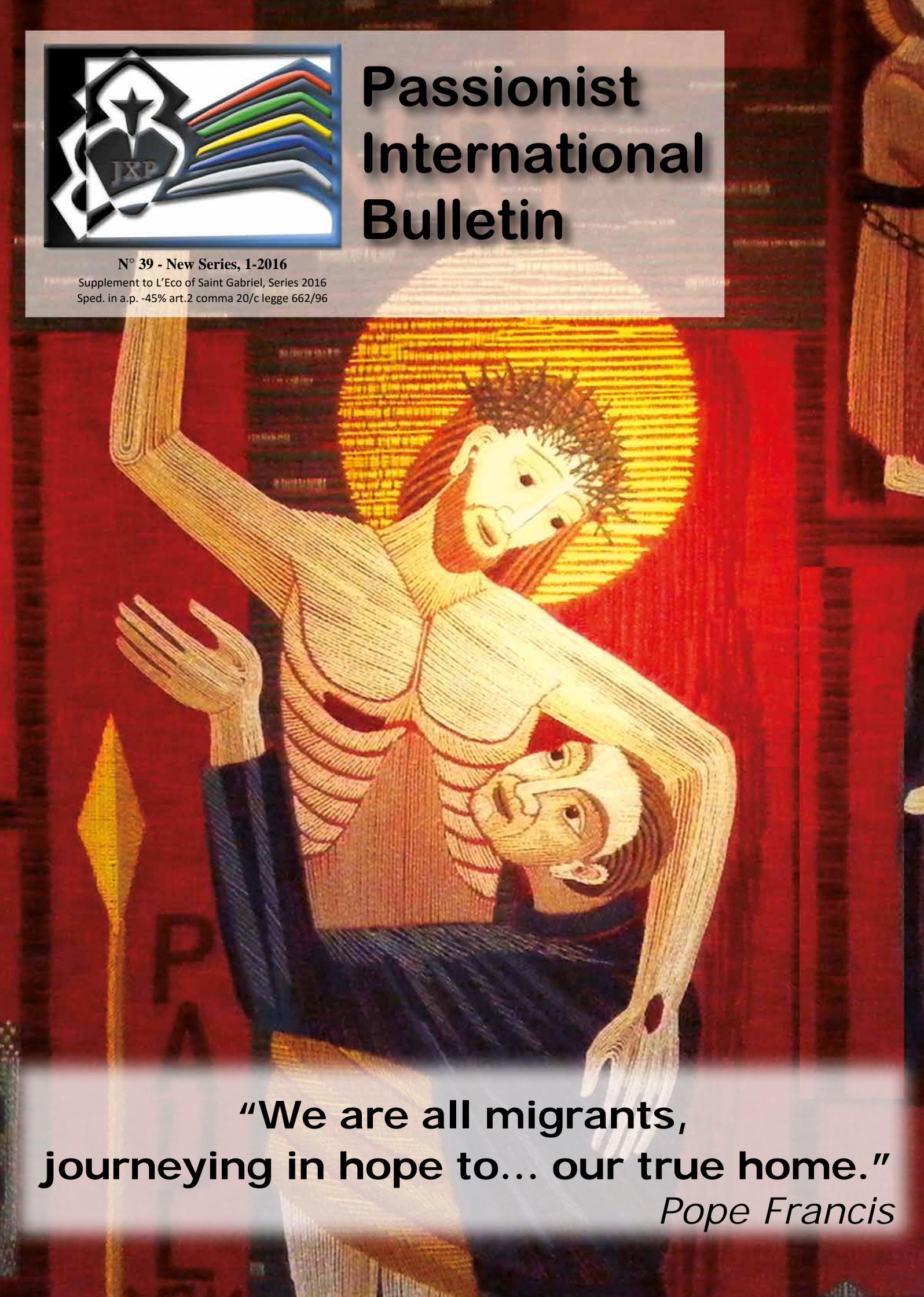


# Passionist International Bulletin

N° 39 - New Series, 1-2016

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**"We are all migrants,  
journeying in hope to... our true home."**  
*Pope Francis*

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## Passionist International Bulletin

N. 39 - New Series -1- 2016

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# MESSAGE OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL TO THE PASSIONIST FAMILY

*Commemorating the Approval of the Rule and  
the First Passionist Professions in 1741*

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends in the Passionist Family,

Two hundred and seventy five years ago, on 11 June 1741, Paul of the Cross, his brother John Baptist and the members of the first community of the Congregation, gathered at the foot of the altar in the small church on Monte Argentario dedicated to the Presentation of Mary in the Temple. For the first time they publicly professed the four “simple” vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and “*of promoting with all their strength and power the devotion to the sorrows of Jesus Christ in the hearts of the believers*”. It was the third Sunday after Pentecost. They had been attending a spiritual retreat of ten days; their hearts were filled with inner joy and gratitude for God’s mercy. After the profession, all the religious unanimously asked Paul to be their leader with the title of “Superior”. It was on that very day, for the first time, that they displayed on the habit the Passionist sign.

I am well aware that these facts can seem a bit too far removed from our lives today. After all, two hundred and seventy five years have passed from those early days! However, I would like to share a short message commemorating our early beginnings, which I believe can offer us some meaning and food for reflection today.

On 15 May 1741, Pope Benedict XIV had approved the Rule with a “rescritto” (rescript) which Paul received from Rome on the 30 May. Together with this document sent from Rome, there was also the permission to reserve the Blessed Sacrament inside the monastery. Paul of the Cross could see in those two “graces” granted by the Holy See, the confirmation of God’s goodness towards him and all his religious family. He saw the insights received in Castellazzo becoming a reality. After so many difficulties and sufferings, the Passionist life was now recognized by the body of the Church as a way of attaining holiness through its community life and ministry.



*The first Sign worn by St. Paul of the Cross.*

The Sign, which the members were now wearing on their habits, was a reminder to every one of God’s great love and mercy shown in and through the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. By their vows, they became “living memorials” of this Love to all the world.

My hope is that we do not just rejoice in commemorating the 275th anniversary of the approval of the Rule; but rather that we also remember that there were people from the beginnings of our beloved Congregation – like you and I - who were deeply committed to following Jesus Crucified and who put into practice the spirit and the message hidden behind those inspired words which they professed.

Far be it for me to remind you that our Congregation’s Rules, Constitutions, documents, ➔



**Pope Benedict XIV**

letters and Chapter decrees are not just “holy texts” to be venerated and read with devotion and a nostalgic sense of pride. Surely, it is not the texts on paper, but the grace of reflecting its spirit and making them come alive in concrete and practical ways, which give us our specific identity and mission in the Church as Passionists. Perhaps this can be a good point for us all to reflect on both personally and communally.

I was inspired to discover that in the official document sent by the Pope for the approval of the Rule (the “*Rescritto*”) was quoted a “special condition” put to the Passionists by the Cardinals who studied and evaluated the Rule on the Pope’s behalf. This “special condition” required the Passionists to commit themselves to preach and serve in those areas and islands where, due to the unhealthy environmental conditions, the people are abandoned and forgotten. From our very beginnings, the Church has named our special vocation to show a preferential option for the suffering, the marginalised, and those who are “the crucified” of their times.

As we remember this, no doubt, joyful moment for Paul of the Cross and his first companions on 11 June 1741, may we – his companions today

- also take the occasion to review and renew our commitment and vocation to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus as the greatest act of God’s love and mercy, and to promote this memory in the lives and hearts of the people today...” *especially those who are poor and neglected; we seek to offer them comfort and to relieve the burden of their sorrow.*” (Const.#3)

Let us keep challenging ourselves as Passionists to ‘look back’ and appreciate with greater depth the SPIRIT of our Holy Founder, so that we may ‘look forward’ to live and practice with fidelity our Passionist vocation in the various contexts of the Church and the world of today.

*“May the Passion of Jesus Christ be always in our hearts.”*

Fraternally,

**Fr. Joachim Rego, C.P.**  
Superior General

Rome, 11 June 2016

*“We are aware  
that the Passion of  
Christ continues in this  
world until He comes  
in glory; therefore,  
we share in the joys  
and sorrows of our  
contemporaries as we  
journey through life  
toward our Father.”*

*(Constitutions, No. 3)*



## “I AM A MIGRANT”

### Conference on Migration at Sts. John and Paul, Rome

In the midst of a global humanitarian crisis of migration and refugees, a conference was held in the General House of the Passionists on 22-24 February 2016. The theme of the conference was “The Religious and Migration in the 21st Century: Perspectives, Response and Challenges”. It was co-organized by four Religious NGO’s accredited to the UN, namely the Passionists International, CSJ, the Augustinians International and the Vincentians. The participants numbering around eighty came from twenty-five Religious Congregations or Organizations.

The Conference organizers explained the rationale for the Conference in these words: *The surge in the numbers of people fleeing the war in Syria has resulted in an unprecedented refugee crisis in Europe and other parts of the world. This has added to an already charged situation describing today’s migration dynamics. The entire world is drawn to this situation with sympathy not just because of the number but more so because of the untenable humanitarian condition of the situation. “Every day provides new outrages: corpses drifting in the Mediterranean; refugees without sufficient food and water crammed together in intolerable sanitary conditions; families with small children forced to cross hundreds of kilometres on foot; police deploying batons and tear gas against defenseless migrants; and everywhere borders and barriers, secured by barbed wire and security forces to repel the refugees with force.” Crisis, ‘Kairos’ indeed it is—a moment of truth that shows us up for what we really are.*

*As Religious men and women our compassion to respond is evoked by our common humanity with these victims and more so by the Gospel to which we bear a special witness. Different groups are responding in different ways already including those with and without prior experience of working with refugees. However, the overwhelming nature of this present situation can be so daunting for even old timers in this experience. Sometimes individually we may feel frustrated that our attempts do not seem enough or efficient. Thus, it is essential that there be an effort toward coordination that collaborates and joins together efforts and avoids parallel and duplicating actions.*



**“My name is Joachim Rego and I am a ‘migrant’”.**

*This workshop is therefore aimed at bringing us together to share our experiences in this common responsibility and to listen to those with deeper knowledge of the situation to enable us to harness our efforts so that our response may be more effective and efficient. As the African proverb says, “When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.”*

*While the major goal of this event is strengthening our response at the ground, it is hoped that the outcome of this workshop would enhance our advocacy at the global policy processes within the UN system.*

Among the various speakers was Honourable Cecile Kyenge, a migrant herself. She is currently a Member of the European Parliament and a former Cabinet minister for Integration in the Italian Government. Fr. Gabriele Bentoglio, CS, the Under-Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples also spoke at the Conference. Several other eminent personalities also made their contribution.

The first major session focused on *the Battle of values between fear and fidelity to Solidarity: Understanding migration dynamics and the urgency of the current situation.* The second session centered on



***“As Religious [we] are called to show the Face of Christ through our respective charisms and to witness in every situation the commandment of Jesus to Love.”***

the *Practical responses to the migrants/refugees* and the final session looked at the strategies for effective response. The third part was entitled, *“Strategies for an effective response.”*

Fr. Joachim Rego, Superior General, welcomed the participants and gave the opening talk that included some reflections concerning his personal experiences as a migrant. Following are some excerpts from his address.

*“My name is Joachim Rego and I am a “migrant”. However, remember that this is a label we put upon certain groups of people and labels are often layered by many connotations, which encourage prejudice and the creation of borders. In truth, however, I (like all migrants) am a member of the human race and a citizen of Planet Earth which, as Pope Francis says in Laudato Si’, is “our common home”.*

*Forty-six years ago, in the second half of the 20th century, my family made a courageous decision to immigrate from an oppressive and brutal military regime in the land of my birth: Burma (Myanmar), to a land of greater opportunities in Australia. At that time, there were several nations, which were opening their borders to receiving skilled migrants who would contribute to the development of their respective countries. However, I want to emphasise that the only reason for my parents to make such a courageous decision to leave our mother country and go to a place we knew nothing about, was security and concern for the future of their children. It was a necessity, and not just an unreflected choice. This was*

*a great sacrifice on their part and undertaken with a firm hope rooted in God.*

*Today, migration continues on an enormous scale globally; however, the situation is different. Millions of people, many with families, are fleeing their mother countries for a range of reasons: war, poverty, human rights abuses, religious intolerance, persecution, oppression, threats to personal security and peace - but always motivated by hope for a better future for their personal good and the good of their children. However, unlike my situation, those seeking asylum today find greater hostility and lesser welcome.*

As people of faith gathered for this Conference, let us recall this short text from the letter which the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the exiles in Babylon: Yahweh declares: Yes, I know what plans I have in mind for you, plans for peace, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. (Jer. 29:11)

*From my experience, I can share that being a migrant is a frightening experience. There is no sense of excitement about the ‘new’, because one is*



***“In the end, it is all about building relationships and fostering the growth of harmonious communities...”***



*gripped by the immediate feelings of insecurity and uncertainty - of having left everything familiar behind (even if not ideal) and of not knowing what lies ahead. There is that sense of being a stranger in a strange land! Consequently, one needs to find his/her identity and belonging in a new context amidst much internal confusion, learning and struggle to integrate.*

*As a young lad (together with my 3 younger siblings), I can never forget that day we landed in Sydney (a gloomy wet Friday early morning: 10th October 1969) and seeing my mother burst into tears, not from the joy of having made it to a new place, but from the fear and worry of not knowing what lies ahead. Knowing no one, having no place to stay, with no job and very little money was an isolating and dispossessing experience forcing us to cling to the anchor of faith” and find hope in God. I am filled with admiration for my father who, having brought his family to a new land, now had to find within himself the confidence, courage and all the resources needed in order to take up his responsibility of searching for work and provide the basic necessities for the family.*

*However, what we needed most was not pity or sympathy, but the sense of welcome and acceptance, without the fear of difference, and it was this response from so many ordinary people that eased our anxiety and gave us hope of a promising future. In the end, it is all about building relationships and fostering the growth of harmonious communities, isn't it? - welcoming, hospitality, making friends, encouraging inclusion, being sensitive to understanding and dialoguing with the other as different, and accepting them whatever their faith, manner of thinking and living - as another ‘citizen’ of our common home. I believe this to be our specific response and challenge as Religious who are called to show the Face of Christ through our respective charisms and to witness in every situation the commandment of Jesus to Love with open minds, open hearts and open hands...*

*In welcoming you to this Conference today, I thank you for your witness of compassion, empathy and generosity towards all those people who are seeking a hope filled future in a new place of our common home. May your dialogue here in the name of Jesus Christ who commissions us to “Do this in memory of me” motivate your desire to find effective strategies which will assist us all in responding to the challenges of the growing phenomenon of migration in the 21st century.”*

*During the course of the Conference, other migrants/refugees also shared their personal experiences, both positive and negative.*

## **A PRAYER OF POPE FRANCIS REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF MIGRATION**

*Merciful God,  
we pray to you for all the men, women and children  
who have died after leaving their homelands in  
search of a better life.*

*Though many of their graves bear no name,  
to you each one is known, loved and cherished.  
May we never forget them, but honour their  
sacrifice with deeds more than words.*

*We entrust to you all those who have made this  
journey,  
enduring fear, uncertainty and humiliation,  
in order to reach a place of safety and hope.  
Just as you never abandoned your Son  
as he was brought to a safe place by Mary and  
Joseph,*

*so now be close to these, your sons and daughters,  
through our tenderness and protection.  
In caring for them may we seek a world  
where none are forced to leave their home  
and where all can live in freedom, dignity and  
peace.*

*Merciful God and Father of all,  
wake us from the slumber of indifference,  
open our eyes to their suffering,  
and free us from the insensitivity  
born of worldly comfort and self-centredness.  
Inspire us, as nations, communities and individuals,  
to see that those who come to our shores are our  
brothers and sisters.*

*May we share with them the blessings we have  
received from your hand,  
and recognize that together, as one human family,  
we are all migrants, journeying in hope to you, our  
true home,  
where every tear will be wiped away,  
where we will be at peace and safe in your embrace.*

**VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO  
LESVOS (GREECE)  
Saturday, 16 April 2016**



## **Message of the Synod to the whole Passionist Family Jesus Suffering in the Refugee and the Migrant**

*[During the course of the XV General Synod of the Congregation that took place in Rome, 12-21 October 2015, the Synod members issued a message that was addressed to the entire Passionist Family. The statement is as follows.]*

**D**uring these days, the members of the 15th General Synod of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ have been conscious of the plight of refugees and migrants in today's world. The scenes on television of large numbers of displaced people arriving in Europe from Syria and Iraq remind us of the reality of the suffering of the millions of people in the Middle East, in Africa and in other regions, who are forced to leave their homes because of war and violence, poverty and hunger, and the absence of the basic requirements for human existence.

The appeals made by Pope Francis invite us to respond, as communities and individuals, to this great crisis of our time. In his message for the 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, the Pope writes: "Biblical revelation urges us to welcome the stranger; it tells us that in so doing, we open our doors to God, and that in the faces of others we see the face of Christ himself. Many institutions, associations, movements and groups, diocesan, national and international organizations are experiencing the wonder and joy of the feast of encounter, sharing and solidarity. They have heard the voice of Jesus Christ: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock' (Rev 3:20)."

The majority of refugees settle in a country near their homeland. A much smaller number make the long and dangerous journey to distant lands where often they are not welcomed. For most people, their greatest desire is to return home when circumstances will permit them to do so. Often when they arrive in a new country, they are blamed for their situation by people they encounter. In the message quoted above, Pope Francis goes on to say: "Yet there continue to be debates about the conditions and limits to be set for the reception of migrants, not only on the level of national policies, but also in some parish communities whose traditional tranquility seems to be threatened. Faced with these issues, how can the Church fail to be inspired by the example and words of Jesus Christ? The answer of the Gospel is mercy."

Conscious of the needs of refugees and migrants, many of our Passionist brothers and sisters and other members of the Passionist family have ministered in the past, and are ministering today, to these victims of violence and poverty, devoting themselves to welcoming Christ who "stands at the door and knocks". The needs



***"Many of our Passionist brothers and sisters and other members of the Passionist family... [devote] themselves to welcoming Christ who 'stands at the door and knocks'."***

of those who arrive in a new country as refugees are many and various. Initially it can be the need for food, clothing and shelter. Learning a new language and adapting to the food and customs of the country can be difficult. Access to healthcare, social services and legal advice are among the needs of refugees and migrants. Integration into a new community is not easy, but the Church is not limited by national or cultural borders; we know that we all belong to the one family of God.

Remembering the words of the Rule of St Paul of the Cross that "the love of God is very ingenious, and is proved not so much by words as by the deeds and examples of the lovers" (Rule, XVI), we encourage all our communities to examine what they can do to support those who arrive in their country or region without the basic necessities of life. Working in harmony with the local Church and the Episcopal Conference, and with humanitarian organizations, each community should seek concrete ways in which to respond to this great need. Our Constitutions tell us: "In a spirit of faith and brotherly love, we seek to discern the signs of the times, following the example of Saint Paul of the Cross, who saw 'the name of Jesus written on the foreheads of the poor'." (Passionist Constitutions, 72) On this feast of St. Paul of the Cross, we pray that the whole Passionist family may respond in love to these challenging words of our Founder. 



# The Meeting of the International Commission for Formation

Fr. Martin Coffey  
Executive Secretary for Formation

The International Commission on Formation met in Sts. John and Paul's on October 8-9, 2015. Present were Frs. Augusto Canali (General Consultor), Amilton Manuel da Silva, Mark-Robin Hoogland, José Luis Quintero, Brian Traynor, and the Executive Secretary for Formation, Fr. Martin Coffey.

In the first part of our meeting, we discussed the report of the secretary and a summary of the responses of the formators to a questionnaire sent to them after our first meeting in 2015.

The formators had seven areas of need or concern. Their biggest need is for help with their own formation, especially in the delicate and challenging work of accompanying young people today.

The other concerns were - the importance of a good formation community; the need to give more attention to the social and family background of candidates; candidates are focused more on priesthood than on their religious consecration; the need for our young people to be in closer contact with the life of poor and suffering people; the translation of the basic documents and resources, the history of the congregation and other writings.

In his report, the secretary pointed out that we often look at formation in isolation from the context in which it takes place. However, the problems and issues affecting society, the Church and the religious community seep into the formation and influence it. These dimension of the wider context cannot

be ignored but rather need to be recognized and integrated in a creative way into the prayer, study, pastoral outreach of our young people.

The Superior General, Fr. Joachim, spoke to the Commission and asked us to consider ways of helping with the formation of the lay people who are attached to the congregation in various ways. The lay people often have a deep appreciation of the charism and sometimes even teach us. We should hear their needs and respond to them in a positive



***"We understand the formation of a Passionist as the "conformation to Christ Crucified and Risen" (Rom 8, 29). Everything in formation derives from this and leads to this."***

way. He also asked if we could think of ways of using the retreat of St. Joseph, Monte Argentario and the Passionist house in Bethany. We are sure St. Joseph's will be an important part of any course we organize for formators, religious and laity in Rome. We were unable to offer any concrete proposal about the use of Bethany since we do not know how suitable the house is. The secretary may visit and see what facilities the house has in terms of sleeping quarters, meeting rooms, access to transport, and other infrastructure.



We also looked at the letter of Fr. Artola to the Superior General about establishing an institute of Passiology in one of the Roman Universities.

The commission discussed all these issues. We identified two dimensions to the challenges facing the formators. There are the immediate issues of day-to-day working with a group of young men in the formation community. Then there is the bigger question of the overall vision of the formation process and its goal and how this can help give encouragement and energy to the formators and young people.

The Commission will respond as fully as possible to the needs of the formators. We will continue our dialogue with them especially through visits of the Executive Secretary to the different Configurations to meet with them. We will help them to find the training and preparation they need to accompany the young people and encourage them with their own personal development.

The commission also sees the need to develop a vision of Passionist formation and offer an overall framework of the process of formation that respects the gradual nature of initiation into Passionist religious life and its essential elements. For us the key to formation for Passionist religious life is the charism of the Passion. We want to make it the very heart of formation. We understand the formation of a Passionist as the “conformation to Christ Crucified and Risen” (Rom 8, 29). Everything in formation derives from this and leads to this. Every dimension of the person – human, spiritual, psychological, social, intellectual and moral – is engaged by this process and is being gradually transformed into Christ crucified and risen (Rom 12, 2). Formation must be real and touch the whole reality of the person. It is a process committed to realizing the full promise of baptism that he be a completely new person, that Christ be formed in him (Gal 4, 19) so

that he becomes an image of Christ crucified (Gal 2, 20).

The principal agent of Passionist formation is the Holy Spirit who works through the ordinary human



***“Formation must be real and touch the whole reality of the person.”***

means of the community, the formators, and other skilled collaborators. The subject of formation, touched by the Spirit, takes responsibility for his own formation by engaging wholeheartedly with the process and cooperating in a spirit of openness and trust with all the other participants. The example and inspiration of St. Paul of the Cross and other Passionist saints is a daily encouragement on this journey.

From the beginning of his formation, the young person is helped to have the mind and heart of Christ (Phil 3, 20-21) and give himself generously to others in the community and in the service of the poor and people in need.

We think the issue of translating material into the local languages is basic but not easy to resolve. We hope a solution to this will be found.

As a way of realizing our service to the Congregation, we sent two proposals to the General Synod for their consideration. During the Synod, Proposal A was accepted, i.e. a course for all of our religious who are novice masters and directors of students in theology (see the Synod document “Approved Proposals”). The course will take place at Sts. John and Paul, Rome, in October of this year. 🙏



# Twenty-five Years of ADECO

## Friendship, Development and Cooperation

Fr. Jesús María Aristín

Secretary General for JPIC and the Missions

In 1991, ADECO (“*Friendship, Development and Cooperation*”) a non-governmental organization (NGO) of the Passionists in Spain and Latin America, was founded to offer specific assistance to Passionist missionaries in their ministry on behalf of human welfare and fundamental development. Over the years, many projects have been planned and a great amount of work has been done in favour of cooperation, development and friendship. During these past twenty-five years, they have raised more than 19 million Euros for 285 projects.

Currently we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of ADECO. During these twenty-five years, they have assumed many projects on behalf of human development. For twenty-five years, they have built schools, highways, bridges, hospitals and medical clinics. They have provided drinking water and have installed electricity in many poor areas.

- Since 1991, they have defended human rights both here [in Europe] as well as in poor countries;
- Since 1991, they have encouraged fair trade in various towns and villages;
- Since 1991, they have developed projects on behalf of women, the education of children and the defense of the elderly;
- They have offered medical assistance to remote populations.
- They have promoted projects for solidarity and human development among the poorest of the poor.
- Behind every project, there are many people, faces and memories, as well as much energy and work.

These have been wonderful years filled with energy and passion: passion for life and the human person; passion for the earth and for the poor. Each project is a love story between people, regardless of their political or religious affiliation.

Currently there are seven ADECO’s in Spain that are based in seven regions; additionally there are ADECO Mexico and ADECO Peru. The work is shared among volunteers, technical staff, Passionists, local partners, institutions and so many people who want to fight for social justice, equity and peace.

ADECO is proof that for us Passionists, there is no true evangelization without human advancement (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 31), because words are not enough and are not credible-- they must be accompanied



**“ADECO is proof that for us Passionists, there is no true evangelization without human advancement (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 31).” Cooking school.**

by signs of life. It is not believable to assert that God is Father, unless we sow seeds of fraternity. Therefore, all programs of evangelization must involve human development. Evangelization has “strong ties” with the human development aspects of progress and liberation--integral dimensions of evangelization. (*Puebla*, 355 and 474-478). Beginning with ADECO-Passionist Missions, we want to continue working toward the total elimination of injustice. We are not resigned to see poverty as something inevitable and unresolvable. We do not want to admit that there is nothing that can be done. We are committed to strive for solidarity and justice and to work to make them a reality. We strive to make an impact on the causes of injustice, raising awareness and denouncing those social, governmental, national and international structures that sustain a political and economic system that generates an unfair distribution of assets and in a world divided between a rich minority and a poor majority.

I want to express my deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to all individuals, associations, volunteers and collaborators that have helped and are still helping us in our efforts to put an end to hunger and poverty. We look forward to continue sharing with you your zeal and your quest for justice. We want to continue working for a more equitable and united world -- a world of “*Friendship, Development and Cooperation*” (ADECO).

I wish to thank every one of these people. May ADECO move forward with even greater enthusiasm, passionately working together to make this world, a better world. Congratulations! 🙏



## **The Congregation of the Passion and its First Holy Year (1725)**

*Fr. Alessandro Ciciliani (MAPRAES)  
President of the Historical Commission*

**M**erely five years after the Congregation's birth, which occurred with the beginning of the forty-day retreat of St. Paul of the Cross on 22 November 1720, and while not yet recognized officially by the Church, it experienced its first Jubilee Year in 1725, the seventeenth in the history of the Church.

The author of that Jubilee Year was Pope Benedict XIII, Vincenzo Maria Orsini, a 65-year-old Dominican friar. Aloof and wary of the environment of the Curia, he was an austere, severe and zealous Pope, deeply averse to worldliness, contrary to the luxury of the Cardinals, honest in his judgements and reluctant to adhere to papal ceremonial pomposity. When he was elected Pope on 29 May 1724, he did not change his ascetic life style or his pastoral concern. His pontificate was characterized more for its religious emphasis, rather than political. In fact, he was never at ease in international politics or the government of the Papal States. He possessed a strong pastoral nature that included visiting the sick and prisoners.

The Jubilee was launched a month after the election of Benedict XIII to the papacy with the publication of the Bull "Redemptor et Dominus noster", 29 June 1724. It was a Jubilee with a strong religious character, simple and sober at the same time. It was in sharp contrast to the glitz of the courts and the enlightenment movement that was spreading across Europe. The celebrations, without pomp, began with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve, 1724 that was followed by the opening of the other Holy doors of other Roman basilicas. Even in that Jubilee Year, the number of pilgrims continued to decline, compared with the previous Jubilee of 1700.

Two initiatives during that Holy Year are worth noting-- the Council of the Roman Province and the presence of freed slaves from Tunisia.

To promote ecclesiastical discipline, Benedict XIII held a Council of the Roman province in 1725, which began its work at the Basilica of St. John Lateran on 15 April 1725, in the presence of thirty-three Cardinals and eighty prelates. It concluded on 29 May. Several directives emerged from that Council calling for the Roman clergy to implement what the Council of Trent set forth, especially the decrees on reforming religious and ecclesiastical life. In particular, following the guidelines for pastoral ministry, it gave new impetus

to the parish, reaffirming the pastor as primarily responsible for the catechesis of the people. Bishops and priests were entrusted with the primary task of preaching and the care of souls, as well as the obligation of residence, of their cultural education and detachment from worldly society.

Another event that took place during that Jubilee was the arrival in Rome of 370 slaves from Tunisia. They were freed due to the initiative of the Order of Mercy (Mercedarians) that paid more than 90,000 scudoes for their ransom. The Confraternity of the Most Holy Trinity founded by St. Philip Neri in 1548 hosted them. Two days after their arrival in Rome, they were even received in audience in the Vatican Palace, by Pope Benedict XIII.



**Pope Benedict XIII**

Benedict XIII personally supervised the preparations of the Jubilee, both spiritual and material. During the Jubilee year, he moved his headquarters from the Quirinale Palace to the Vatican to more easily access St. Peter's. He visited the Roman basilicas and participated in liturgies granting indulgences, travelling always in small carriages and accompanied by a few close friends who recited prayers all along



the route. For the occasion, he also invited many famous preachers to Rome to encourage the faithful to participate in the various ceremonies. The most important event that took place during the Jubilee of 1725 was certainly the Founder's meeting with Pope Benedict XIII.

St. Paul of the Cross spent the first months of the Jubilee in the city of Troia (FG) with Bishop Emilio Giacomo Cavalieri (1663-1726). He stayed there about six months (August 1724 – March 1725). During this sojourn, Paul's mystical intuitions were directed toward their practical implementation both on institutional as well as ecclesial levels. The Bishop examined the Rule, wrote a few points for its improvement and gave practical advice that guided Paul along the right path. He also noted that it would be necessary to obtain from the Holy See, through a benevolent bishop, recognition of the new foundation as a community with simple vows and possessing the possibility of ordaining priests under the "title of poverty" [*titulum paupertatis*]. For Bishop Cavalieri, the main aim of the Congregation could be attained only if there were also priests, despite the fact that the religious would have simple and not solemn vows.

St. Paul of the Cross departed from Troia on 5 March of 1725 and arrived in Rome on 16 November with this dream in his heart-- obtain from the Holy See permission to gather companions to form communities, and through a benevolent bishop, ordain priests under the "title of poverty or common board."

St. Paul of the Cross met Monsignor Marcello Crescenzi (1694-1768) in St. Peter's Basilica where he was Canon. He promised St. Paul that he would arrange a meeting between him and Cardinal Pier Marcellino Corradini (1658-1743), who at that time was prefect of the Congregation of the Council [the office in the Roman Curia which had been set up to implement the decrees of the Council of Trent]. The two Danei brothers also impressed the Cardinal and so he did his best to find an opportunity for them to have a brief meeting with the Pope. In the period between the meeting with Corradini and with the Pope, St. Paul of the Cross and his brother, John Baptist, accepted the invitation of the Cardinal to spend a brief period of time serving at the Hospital of San Gallicano in the Trastevere section of Rome, caring for those afflicted with leprosy, scabies and ringworm.

The occasion for the great meeting was the visit of Benedict XIII to the Church of Santa Maria in Domnica or "the Navicella" ("Little Ship") on the Caelian Hill in Rome to inspect the status of its restoration. The meeting probably took place on 21 May 1725. The Pope listened paternally and gave oral approval for the project that St. Paul of the Cross bore in his heart, that is, to be able gather companions in order to take a concrete step toward the foundation of the Congregation. Although the approval had no legal



***The Church of Santa Maria in Domnica, "La Navicella" on the Celio hilltop in Rome.***

weight, it gave the Founder great joy and enthusiasm and was for him like a father's voice, the voice of the Church, which authorized the foundation of this poor and lowly Congregation. It was thus that the two brothers departed Rome in late June and returned to the city of Gaeta, to the Hermitage of the "Madonna della Catena", in order to implement their project.

However, within a few months St. Paul of the Cross realized that the hermitage wouldn't be the right place for two reasons: on the one hand, it was owned by a lay patron who wanted to have control of the locale, independent of the Bishop, and certainly not according to the inspiration of St. Paul of the Cross. Other difficulties also arose because of hermits that were already present in that place and who could hardly be asked to enter into a divine plan, to which they were not called.

Consequently, St. Paul of the Cross spent the rest of the Holy Year in the hermitage from which he departed sometime in late April and the beginning of May 1726, in order to return to Rome. 🙏



# Meeting of the Executive Board of Passionists International

*Fr. Giuseppe Adobati  
(General Consultor)*

“It is good for us to be here!” is the title of a book that was published at the end of 2015 by various men and women Religious who had worked as NGO representatives (non-governmental organizations) of their institutes at the UN. Among these testimonies is also that of Passionists International (PI) that was one of the first to be founded and recognized by the UN approximately fifteen years ago. The title of the book suggests an answer to a question, always timely, regarding why Religious should have a presence within the complex diplomatic system of the UN. The “it is good” is based on the capacity of the NGO’s of religious institutes to be an independent voice that denounces and promotes the development of the weakest or disadvantaged peoples. They offer the principal global institutions the concrete and real missionary experience of their fellow religious who, in various parts of the world, proclaim the Gospel of Christ, promoting life and the dignity of every person. Different from governments, groups or circles of power and many other associations who have their own particular goals, the NGO’s of religious institutes can be present at the UN with aspects of their charism and the strength of their freedom.



**Participants in the meeting of Passionists International.**

These goals and inspirations, have guided this ministry of Passionists International to draw the attention of the powerful of the earth to the urgent needs of humanity. From the beginning, Passionists International has promoted the defense of vulnerable populations (particularly indigenous ones, often subject to exploitation), the development of policies to protect those social groups more susceptible to

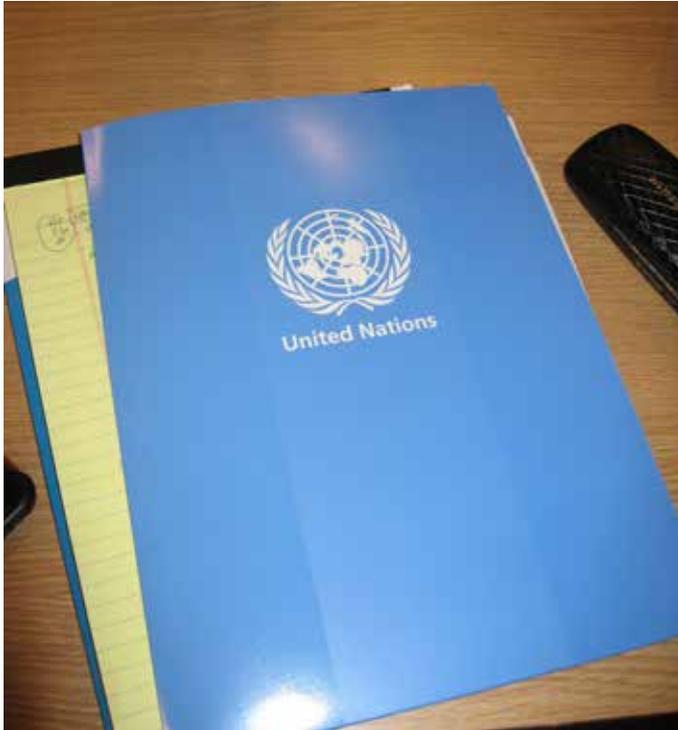
poverty, as well as women’s rights, especially those of girls. They have recently added the topic of emergency migration that has developed in different parts of the world, with people fleeing from war-torn or uninhabitable countries, who are subject to exploitation and violence.

These issues and others were addressed during the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of Passionists International, held at the Passionist community of Jamaica in New York City on 3 and 4 May 2016. Fr. Miroslaw Lesiecki (ASSUM), Executive Director of PI, moderated the meeting. Present were various members of the Board-- Fr. Giuseppe Adobati Carrara (General Consultor and representative of the Superior General of the Passionists); Fr. Alex Steinmiller (CRUC) (member of the Board of PI); Sr. Maria Virginia Alfaro (Representative of the Superior General of the Daughters of the Passion); Sr. Claudia Cecilia Echeverría, of the Daughters of the Passion (member of the Board of PI); Sr. Joanne Fahey (representative of the Superior General of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion); Sr. Anne Cunningham of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion (member of the



Board of PI); Annemarie O'Connor (PI collaborator) and Dorothy Brandreth (Secretary of the Board of PI).

The meeting of the Board was divided into two stages, with time for listening and dialogue about the activities promoted by PI and a meeting with reports on events concerning the promotion of justice and peace.



***“NGO’s offer the principal global institutions the concrete and real missionary experience of their fellow religious who, in various parts of the world, proclaim the Gospel of Christ by promoting life and the dignity of every person.”***

Concerning the activities of Passionists International, Fr. Miroslaw first reported about some events and meetings of the Committees of the UN, in which he participated or which were of interest to us:

- the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for social development (CSocD54) with the theme, “Rethink and strengthen social development in today’s world” (3-4 February 2016);
- the Civil Society Forum led by the NGO Committee for social development (<https://ngosocdev.org>), with the theme, “Inequality and the UN Agenda for sustainable development in view of 2030” (1-2 February 2016);
- the sixtieth session of the Commission on the status of women (CSW) with the final document “Women’s empowerment and the association with sustainable development” (14-24 March 2016);
- the 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD49) with the theme “Strengthening the information base for the

demographic development agenda post 2015” (11-15 December 2016).

To these he added two events organized directly by our NGOs, along with other Congregations (Augustinians International, Congregation of St. Joseph, and the Vincentians) and with the sponsorship of the Holy See. The first event was held in Rome and the second at the UN, but both had as their central theme the immigration emergency.

From 22 to 24 February a seminar took place on the topic of “Religious and migration in the 21st century: perspectives, challenges and responses”. It was hosted by our Generalate of Sts. John and Paul. (See the article in this issue of the BIP.)

The second event, organized with the collaboration of Passionists International and the patronage of the Holy See, was a Conference entitled “Migration, people and the UN Agenda for 2030”, held on 12 April 2016 in New York at the UN. It took place in conjunction with the 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development, proposing serious study about how to evaluate migrations in relation to the development and progress of peoples. The decisions of the UN Agenda for global sustainable development (to be achieved by 2030) had as its theme the dream of a future without “leaving anyone behind.” This means that there is no real progress if it is not for all people and for every individual person.

Fr. Miroslaw then introduced another issue, closely associated with the emergence of migrants, i.e. the very serious problem of human trafficking, which even Pope Francis has on several occasions called the “modern slavery”. Fr. Miroslaw pointed out that trafficking of human beings, according to the latest statistics of the Government of the United States, is the largest criminal enterprise with regard to profits, second only to traffic in drugs and arms. It involves more than two million people each year, most of whom are migrants. Recently (8 April 2016) Pope Francis sent a message to Bishop Bernardito Auza (the Holy See’s permanent observer to the United Nations) expressing encouragement “for the member states and the various non-governmental organizations, civil and religious that are committed to fighting this crime against humanity.”

Annemarie O’Connor, who works at the UN on behalf of Passionists International, as well as several work groups dedicated to the defense of women and girls, recalled that the majority of people sold and trafficked are women and girls. Even in the recent session of the Commission on the status of women, the complaint emerged that women and children, immigrants and undocumented, are among the intended victims of traffickers. Last year, both in Europe and the USA, several thousand children ➡



disappeared from refugee camps. Migrant women remain among those most vulnerable to violence and abuse by people who see them as foreigners and defenseless, and many girls are often sold for arranged marriages.

The second part of the Passionists International board meeting consisted of two meetings and first hand testimonies. The first meeting was with Sr. Veronica Brand, a religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. After spending several years in the missions, she was called to assume a leadership role in the NGOs at the UN. Currently she is Secretary of the NGO Committee dedicated to the promotion of the financing of the development of peoples. Since its inception, this Committee of NGOs has dedicated itself to finding ways to support the development of all nations, with a view to the eradication of all poverty, planned for the year 2030. From 2002 to the present, three international conferences have taken place on this issue, calling the UN member countries to assume significant financial commitments to support development that does not exclude anyone. Sister Veronica pointed out that the development of poor nations does not require more money or more resources than those that already exist in the world. Rather, it requires better and fairer redistribution of these assets, which today consists of more than 80% that are owned by a number of people less than 8% of the world population.

The second meeting was with our religious, Fr. Rey Ondap (PASS), head of the Passionist JPIC Commission of his province and the PASPAC Configuration. Fr. Rey was ordained a priest in 2009 and began his pastoral ministry in a mission among the indigenous people in the southern Philippines. The proximity with the poor made him see the injustices to which they are often subject, prompting him to seek ways to defend the rights of the most vulnerable. Since 2013, Fr. Rey was called by his Provincial to found a pastoral Centre for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation and in 2015 was appointed head of this area for the entire PASPAC configuration. In the JPIC Centre, Fr. Rey, with the help of other religious, offers information and training programmes on these issues. He promotes initiatives and campaigns to defend vulnerable populations, by preparing political and legal projects to support justice among the various parties. This includes collecting documents and experiences that

can be used for possible projects. It is Fr. Rey's hope that this awareness of finding ways of promoting peace and justice, could be gradually assumed by our religious so as to become more zealous witnesses and defenders of the dignity of every person.

Because of his commitment to justice and peace, Fr. Rey has become well known in his country and has earned him great respect from the people, as well as the support of the bishops and of some local authorities. However, he has also been repeatedly threatened and consequently, he lives in conditions that are often stressful. In his own words, Fr. Rey says this about his ministry: "Living the Gospel has always been a challenge. As a Passionist, I try just to live the charism: not only preach the Crucified



***"As a Passionist, I try just to live the charism: not only to preach Christ Crucified, but also to live with the crucified."***

Christ, but also live with the crucified. I try to be with the crucified and fight those who crucify them. For me, this is the best expression of our JPIC Passionist charism."

The testimony of Sister Veronica and Fr. Rey were opportunities to grasp the vastness and complexity of the needs of the world, and at the same time to understand the challenge for each of us to find ways to do our part, as Christian men and women, laity, religious and priests.

We conclude by offering, as food for thought concerning the scope of Passionists International, the Declaration of the 45th General Chapter of 2006: *"Closely related, and in harmony with the purposes of the Passionist Mission our presence at the UN with Passionists International which is our NGO recognized by the United nations, wants to be the voice of the voiceless."*



## Assembly of the PASPAC Configuration

Bro. Laurence M. Finn (CRUC)

PASPAC President



*Members of the PASPAC Formation Commission.*

The biannual meeting of the Configuration of the Passionists' Asia Pacific region was held in the Indonesian city of Malang, located on the island of Java, 11-15 January 2016. Representatives of each of the entities in Asia Pacific were present as members of the four commissions that make up the normal Assembly. In addition, General Consultor Fr. Sabinus Lohin and Executive Formation Secretary, Fr. Martin Coffey (PATR) were also in attendance.

Most of the work in the Assembly was taken up in Commission meetings covering the areas of finance, formation, personnel and Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation. This was an inaugural meeting of the JPIC commission for PASPAC, and thus required much time to organize itself and come up with a methodology of working together on common projects, that is, the reporting on the work being done in each entity represented, and the future ways that the commission could collaborate across international borders. With the meeting of the JPIC commission, the decisions of the 2012 General Chapter and the 2015 General Synod have been implemented – thus paving the way into the future.

A further highlight of the Assembly was the presentation of Jesuit Father Heru Pracosa, who shared with us his experience in Islamic and Christian dialogue in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. This

topic directly affects the daily lives of our brothers in Indonesia, India and the Philippines, where large populations of Moslem believers influence their local cultures and religions. The call for dialogue is not an easy path, but the fact that many moderate Moslems yearn to have their faith and traditions understood in a positive light gives dialogue some hope of accomplishing something positive for all involved in it.

Furthermore, the presence of the Islamic communities in other entities of PASPAC, while small, does not negate the need for inter-religious dialogue even in countries such as Australia, Korea, Japan and the other nations where Passionists live and work. Frank discussion about such elements in Islam such as ISIS and the Taliban are a means of standing in solidarity with those Moslems who reject political extremism and the extreme violence that these two currents represent in this ancient religious tradition.

At the close of the Assembly, Bro. Laurence Finn (CRUC) was re-elected President of the PASPAC Configuration, while Fr. Gwen Barde (PASS) of the Philippines was Vice President. Fr. Christopher Akiatan (PASS) was confirmed as Executive Secretary.

The next Assembly of PASPAC will be held in Australia in late 2017. 🙏



# Centenary of Passionist Presence in Sicily (Italy) 1916 – 2016

*Fr. Rosario Fontana (MAPRAES)*

**T**his year our Congregation is celebrating a special anniversary: one hundred years of Passionist presence on the island of Sicily (Italy).

One hundred years have passed since that memorable day of 6 January 1916 when the first Passionist religious arrived in Sicily. They opened the first retreat in the town of Borgetto in the province of Palermo, in a former Benedictine monastery. Below are some of the details of the event from the platea of the community of Borgetto:

## **ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST INHABITANTS OF THE NEW RETREAT OF THE MOST HOLY CRUCIFIX – 6 JANUARY 1916**

With the gentle blessing of the Lord and the transfer of ownership of the small abbey of St. Benedict to the Passionist Congregation, all was ready for the arrival of the religious who would inhabit it. At the end of 1915, Fr. Generoso of the Most Holy Crucifix and Fr. Carlo of the Sacred Heart of Jesus arrived from Rome and four days later, i.e. on January 4, 1916, they were joined by Fr. Salvatore of the Virgin Mary, First General Consultor, with Bro. Gerardo of St. Paul of the Cross. They decided that it was not a good idea to make a solemn entry in light of the horrifying European war that was taking place in this part of Italy; however, some kind of solemnity was warranted. Therefore, a solemn Mass was celebrated on the feast of the Epiphany, after which the celebrant, Fr. Salvatore, the General Consultor, delivered a speech to the local officials and the people of Borgetto. In his address, he said he was very pleased with the reception that the religious received from the local people.

Then he spoke about the mandate that the humble Congregation founded by St. Paul of the Cross had from the Church and the people, referring to the life and works of the Founder. He concluded: *“Today in Borgetto a good deed was done: today in Borgetto, God was offered gold, frankincense and myrrh, as did the holy Magi to the Infant of Bethlehem. The gold*



*The monastery of Borgetto as it appeared in 1916.*

*of Christian charity, offering Christian hospitality to those newly arrived; the incense of prayer, so that the prayers of the faithful would ascend to Heaven and that the missionaries, sent from God, would arrive, whose preaching would direct those who had erred to the straight path and encourage the faithful to persevere in Christian perfection; and myrrh that your faith and your devout love for Jesus led you to prefer those who meditate and preach the most bitter Passion of God, our Savior.”*

*“Oh, I am sure that these good things will not only be enjoyed, but the good fortune of Borgetto will*



*also be the envy of everyone when from this bee hive, from which those humble souls who live out of love for Jesus crucified, go forth to small or large cities of this enchanting Island. They will draw souls to God through the preaching of the holy Gospel and especially when they effectively remind them of the infinite charity of our most loving crucified Redeemer. Futhermore, when you pass by this holy church, as you go to till your land with the sweat of your brow, remember that here there are those who are praying for you, that the Lord will grant you copious fruits from your labors. You will then be moved to show us charity if, as poor as we are, we open our hands to you to ask for what is necessary for us to live.” The people listened attentively.*

The celebration of the centenary of the Passionists in Sicily began on January 6, 2016, here in Borgetto. At 5:00 PM the religious of the community and other confreres from other Passionist communities, gathered at the mother church of Borgetto, the Parish of St. Mary Magdalene, to walk in solemn procession in memory of the arrival of the Passionists in Borgetto. Present were the Provincial Superior, Fr. Luigi Vaninetti and the regional superior, Fr. Mario Madonna. After walking the road that separates the mother church from the Retreat of the most Holy Crucifix, accompanied by the band of Borgetto, the religious were greeted by the applause of the many faithful who filled the church. Soon after, at 6:00 PM the opening of the Jubilee year was celebrated with a solemn Mass at which his Excellency Bishop Michele Pennisi, Archbishop of Monreale, presided. During the celebration, an Apostolic Decree of the Vatican Penitentiary was read, granting the Papal blessing at the end of the solemn Pontifical Mass opening the Jubilee year and also granting the faithful, during the Jubilee year (January 6, 2016 to January 6, 2017) the

opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence in each of our Passionist Retreats of Sicily.

In his homily, the Archbishop thanked the Passionists for the work of evangelization that they have accomplished during the past one hundred years in Sicily and in particular in the Archdiocese of Monreale, and he urged them to zealously continue



**Anniversary celebration in the church of Borgetto.**

our specific mission in the Church.

At the end of the celebration, the Provincial Superior spoke about the newly unified entity of the MAPRAES Passionist Province, which includes Sicily, and about the opportunities that are present here for continuing to live our specific Passionist charism in a unified spirit of collaboration and charity that is ever more evident among the numerous religious who comprise the Province.

After the Papal blessing all the religious, together with the Archbishop, gathered at the altar of St. Paul of the Cross, and before the statue of the Founder, they intoned the “Salve Sancte Pater”.

May our Lord be with the Passionists of Sicily during this centennial-jubilee year, and may they be a fruitful presence in the service of the people of God and in the proclamation of the Merciful Love of Jesus Crucified. 🙏



## REG (Mexico) Provincial Chapter



**(L-R) Fr. Augusto Canali (General Consultor), Fr. Héctor Rangel Galván, First Consultor, Fr. Francisco Valadez (Provincial Superior), Fr. Victor Hugo Álvarez, (Second Consultor) and Fr. Joachim Rego (Superior General).**

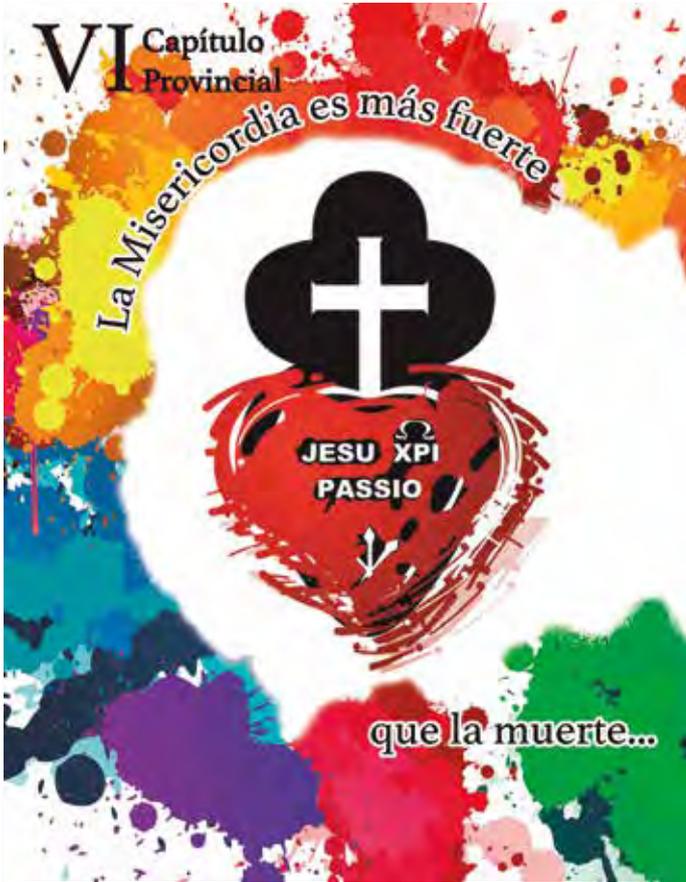
**T**he sixth Provincial Chapter of the Province of Christ the King (REG), Mexico, took place in the province retreat house in the city of Cuernavaca, Mor., Mexico, 6 - 10 June 2016.

In addition to the religious of the province from the local communities of Escandón and San Ángel (Mexico City), Cuernavaca, Querétaro (2) and Guadalajara, the Superior General, Fr. Joachim Rego and Fr. Augusto Canali, General Consultor, were present for the Chapter. Also present were Fr. Rafael Vivanco, REG Provincial Superior and his Consultors. Additionally, Passionist religious from the Configuration of Jesus Crucified also participated: Fr. Joseph Moons, CRUC Provincial Superior; Fr. Aurelio Miranda (EXALT), and Fr. Leudes De Paula (CALV), representing the two Provinces in Brazil; Fr. Carlos Saracini (CONC) of Argentina, and Fr. Francisco Murray (CONC) who is the president of the CJC Configuration.

The REG Province has fifty professed members with six professed students. The Province was

founded by the former Italian CORM Province in 1947 and became a Province in 1994. Today the Province has seven ministry locations including parishes, a shrine, schools and a retreat center. Some of these ministries directly serve the very poor and indigenous people of Mexico. The theme of the Chapter was, “Mercy is stronger than death.”

In his opening address, the Superior General spoke about the Canonical Visitation done by Fr. Augusto Canali. He highlighted several points from the visitation report: *“Your Province is relatively young (average age of 51), and even the ‘older’ men among you have a “young spirit”, vitality, energy and missionary outlook. There is a strong desire to face the challenges posed from the society and to which you must continually respond in your community life and mission... What light does the Passionist charism cast upon these challenges to which we must respond, and which, in turn, enriches our vocation as Passionists?... I encourage every community to engage in discerning and finding clear objectives and purpose with regard to the*



**Chapter Logo: “Mercy is stronger than death.”**

*mission and apostolates from that local community. It must be clear what the Passionists are there for: what is the specificity of our contribution?... It is*

*equally important to put effort into our community life so that we give witness by our genuine fraternal life to who we are. Often this witness can be lauded by people on the outside, but is experienced as being superficial, troubled and even false, by those on the inside and by those who know us well... It is better that we build open and trusting relationships with one another, than put up walls which isolate us from one another... The fact that your Province continues to attract new vocations to our life and mission is a blessing. However, this blessing comes with great responsibility in justice as to what kind of formation and preparation is offered to these candidates... Of utmost urgency, which I urge you to put into your plan of action from this Chapter, is to identify religious and give them the opportunity to be prepared as formators. This is crucial and must be a shared venture within the Configuration.”*

At the conclusion of the Chapter, the following religious were elected to positions of Provincial leadership: Provincial Superior, Fr. Francisco Valadez, Fr. Héctor Rangel Galván, First Consultor and Fr. Victor Hugo Álvarez, Second Consultor. 🙏



**Visit of the Superior General to the Passionist Nuns in Queretaro, Mexico.**



# The VULN Vice-Provincial Congress in Munich, Germany

*Fr. Denis Travers  
(General Consultor)*

Two weeks after Easter, 11 to 14 April 2016, sixteen of our religious of the VULN Vice-Province of Austria and Germany, met at the local Passionist community in Pasing, Munich, for their Vice-Provincial Congress. In addition to the religious of the Vice-Province, also present were the Superior General, Fr. Joachim Rego, Fr. Denis Travers, General Consultor and Fr. Laurentino Novoa Pascual (SCOR) who served as moderator of the Congress. Fr. Anthony O’Leary (PATR) served as translator.

apostolates in Germany and Austria concentrate on traditional ministries like the preaching of retreats and missions, spiritual direction of laity and in Eichstatt, the guidance of clergy, formation work both for the Congregation and a diocesan seminary at Heiligenkreuz, Austria, confessional work, pastoral care in hospitals, supplies in parishes and attending to people who come to our monastery churches. In Munich, Pasing we do care for a small chapel that



*Participants in the VULN Vice-Province Congress, (center, L-R) Fr. Lukas Temme (First Consultor), Fr. Gregor Lenzen, (Vice-Provincial Superior), Fr. Joachim Rego (Superior General), Fr. Anton Lässer (Second Consultor) and Fr. Denis Travers (General Consultor).*

The Canonical Visitation prior to the Congress of the Vice-Province was done by Fr. Denis Travers. Fr. Denis, who was accompanied in the visitation time by Fr. Anthony, was able to meet with all the religious of the Vice-Province. Following this visitation, and in his opening address Fr. Joachim noted that overall there is a good unity amongst the men in terms of their commitment to the Vice

Province, to its mission and to a commonly accepted vision for its work and presence in the three canonical communities and an openness to the new presence in Eichstatt. In addition, a very impressive aspect of the life of the Vice Province is to see the younger generation of men - they are a sign of new life and are most zealous in their approach to study and to the apostolate especially for young people. Additionally, they have started new evangelizing initiatives in the field of youth ministry by engaging in world youth days, prayer festivals and youth vespers.

In each community, the men are very faithful to the observance, are present for community activities and maintain a good balance between active apostolates and our contemplative tradition. This is one of the characteristics of the vice province. Our

is a quasi parish. The Vice-Province is composed of eighteen professed religious whose median age is less than 50.

The Congress studied and approved an extension of the commitment to the new community in Eichstatt and affirmed greater efforts at community renewal and conversion of life.

During the Congress, the following religious were elected for the ministry of leadership and service in the Vice-Province: Fr. Gregor Lenzen, Vice-Provincial Superior, and Consultors, Frs. Lukas Temme (First Consultor) and Anton Lässer (Second Consultor).

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VULN VICE-PROVINCE OF AUSTRIA-GERMANY

Fr. Silvio Di Vezza (1886-1927) was elected Superior General at the General Chapter of 1914.



During the first six years of his mandate, he had to deal with the situation of the Congregation during the First World War. During the War nearly all the Italian, French and some Belgian religious were drafted into military service. It was only at the end of the War that the General was able to begin his canonical visits to all the communities of the Congregation and re-established some of the European provinces as well as expand the Congregation within and beyond the European continent.

During his term of office, five new provinces were erected: SPIR in Australia (1922), SANG in Spain (1923), SPE in Holland (1924), CALV in Brazil (1925), and the reconstituted LAT Province in Italy (1925). He also wanted to make a foundation in Germany. The task would be formidable: in the wake of World War I, Germany reeled from the burden of war reparations and political turmoil. To initiate this project, he went to the Province of St. Paul of the Cross (PAUL) in America, requesting religious and financial support. He chose two religious of German heritage: Fr. Viktor Koch (1873-1955), and Fr. Valentine Lehnerd (1868-1941). The reality of the situation must have been very clear to both of them from the very beginning: first, given the crippled state of the German economy, they would have to support their new province entirely by American funding. Second, their chances of success hinged upon gaining admission into a Bavarian diocese: a new Catholic religious Order could not hope for support in the Protestant regions of the North. Third, their mission was virtually destined to fail. At the end of WWI, religious orders exiled from Germany during the *Kulturkampf* were returning to Germany and concentrating in Bavaria in such numbers that members of new religious orders were not permitted entry.

A conflict of interests developed between Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, (1869-1952) who would only allow the Passionists into his Bavarian diocese if they would assume responsibility for a parish, and the Passionist Superior General who would only permit the foundation to be made as a monastery. Fr. Viktor resolved this conflict by making it clear that the Passionists would oversee the building of a parish church, but would have no obligation to operate the parish itself once the construction was complete. However, the PAUL Provincial and his Council were wary of this agreement and concluded that the foundation in Germany was a complete failure. In a letter to the Provincial, Fr. Viktor responded: *"I am absolutely convinced that God is blessing this foundation, and therefore it will succeed*

*eventually... The work must and will succeed."* The first community was established in 1923 at Pasing, in a suburb of Munich, Germany.

In 1925, Cardinal Friedrich Gustav Piffl (1864-1932) of Vienna offered them the opportunity to assume ownership of Maria Schutz, a shrine founded in 1728, nestled amidst the Austrian Alps. This became the site of the novitiate. Additional Passionists from Holy Cross Province (CRUC) left America to help the new province train its novices.



**Second Vice-Provincial Congress, 1949 (Standing) Fr. Paul Böminghaus, Fr. Victor Koch, Fr. Friedrich Matthews; (Seated) Fr. Malcolm La Velle (General Consultor), and Fr. Walter Mickel (Vice-Provincial).**

In 1933, Adolf Hitler (1899-1945) came to power and within months, he issued decrees prohibiting Germans from crossing the border into Austria without paying a tax. Each year the Passionists in Munich sent twenty to thirty students from the preparatory school in Pasing to the Maria Schutz novitiate in Austria. Consequently, in 1935, Fr. Viktor purchased the Miesbergkirche, a pilgrimage church constructed in 1721, on a grassy hilltop of Miesberg in the village of Schwarzenfeld, located in the northeastern quarter of Bavaria. In this setting, the Passionists would make their third foundation, the Miesbergkloster monastery. The combined three sites in Austria/Germany region was approved as the Vice-Province of the Holy Wounds (VULN) in 1935.

Fr. Viktor and the Vice-Province successfully weathered the Second World War (1939-1945). A fourth community was established in the university city of Regensburg in 1965. For further information about the founding of the Vice-Province, see the English language web site: [www.viktorkoch.com](http://www.viktorkoch.com)



## The SPE Province Chapter in Molenhoek, Netherlands

*Fr. Denis Travers  
(General Consultor)*

From April 25th till 28th our religious of the Province of our Lady Mother of Hope gathered for Chapter in the small village-town of Molenhoek (province of Limburg). The religious met in a seminar centre with its own accommodation and near to our former church in the town that was also used for the liturgies of the Provincial Chapter.

The Canonical Visitation prior to the Chapter of the Province was done by Fr. Denis Travers who visited the two communities of Haastrecht and Marienberg (Germany), and the men who are associated with, and live nearby to, the Shrine of Saint Charles at Munstergeleen. The principal works of the Province are founded upon the two communities with their associated parish administration or assistance in nearby parishes, regular supply ministry, preaching and care of the shrine of St Charles. There are also several religious working in other apostolates, chaplaincy and teaching. The Province has men working in St Joseph's Province, UK and in the Queen of Peace Province of Indonesia.

In his opening address to the Chapter, Fr Joachim noted that the Communities of the Province share a good balance of life. There is a lovely atmosphere present and the mood of life of the religious is one of fraternity. The horarium is very well thought out and kept with real commitment. The men are very attentive to each other and there are structures each day to ensure that the men have company and meet regularly for meals and coffee and recreation. There is a great devotion to prayer, Eucharist and to life in common. Several of the community are working in outlying areas and keep in contact with the community on a regular basis (amongst these is Passionist Fr Vito Lupo (MAPRAES) who assists in chaplaincy to Italian immigrants throughout Germany).

Fr. Joachim also noted the new initiative of the Province in the re-location of the community in Germany. This community of five persons is a newly established community (having moved from an 11<sup>th</sup> Century Abbey in Marienmunster) to its new location in Marienberg (only 30 minutes by car from the Shrine of St Charles in Munstergeleen, Netherlands). The house is well appointed, comfortable and very



***(L-R) Fr. Denis Travers (General Consultor), Rev. Josef Ohagen (Second Consultor), Fr. Mark Robin Hoogland (Provincial Superior), Fr. Joachim Rego (Superior General) and Fr. Tiny Thomassen (First Consultor).***

suitable for our religious life.

Among its decisions, the Chapter studied and approved an initiative to further promote the Shrine of St Charles and to continue to build collaboration between the new community in Marienberg and the Shrine. The Province will be studying and working to create a greater concentration of its identity and future around the Shrine.

During the Congress, the following religious were elected for the ministry of leadership and service in the Province: Fr. Mark-Robin Hoogland, Provincial Superior, and Consultors, Frs. Tiny Thomassen (First Consultor) and Deacon Josef O'Hagen (Second Consultor).



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SPE PROVINCE OF HOLLAND

*Editing and translation by  
Fr. Mark-Robin Hoogland  
SPE Provincial Superior*

In 1905 the Belgian – French Province was subdivided into two entities: one Belgian and one French. The GABR Province of Belgium decided to establish a house in the Netherlands, for two reasons: there were many vocations in the Netherlands and residence in the Netherlands was the only way to obtain exemption from military service for the young religious.

The Bishop of Roermond (Limburg, in the Southeast region of the Netherlands), Mgr. Drehmans, designated Mook as the place where the Passionists could begin. On the 15 December 1906, five religious (two priests and three professed students) took up residence in a private house of the city. Their first task was to prepare a monastery. On 31 October 1907, they moved into the first monastery in Mook named “Mater Dolorosa” (this area was subsequently called Molenhoek). In the period 1914-1916, this house was also used as a seminary because although Belgium suffered the effects of World War I, the Netherlands remained neutral. The house was enlarged twice, the second time, in 1934, with the addition of a church. In 1958 it became an independent entity and in 1981 a parish. In 1963, all students of the Province lived in this house. They studied with the Dominicans and Jesuits in Nijmegen. This monastery was vacated in 1972 and sold in 1973.

With the help of Fr. Waterreus, the parish priest of Haastrecht (Zuid-Holland, the Western part of the Netherlands), and with permission of the Bishop of Haarlem the construction of a second monastery, St. Gabriël’s, was begun in 1921 at Haastrecht. It was completed in 1922. In 1928, it was enlarged and a church was built for those who lived in the surrounding area. In 1973, the Bishop gave this pastoral area all the rights of a parish.

In 1958, when the seminarians were moved from Haastrecht to Mook (see below), Haastrecht became a student residence (Philosophy) until 1963, when it was transferred to Mook. In 1967 newly professed students who studied at the University of Utrecht and the Utrecht Music School also lived here.

In 1924, the Dutch Passionists became a province and a third monastery “Holy Family” was founded in Routschouck/Russe, Bulgaria. Subsequently, the SPE Province was entrusted with the mission in Bulgaria. In 1948, the communists assumed power and they expelled all foreigners from the country. Fifty Passionists of the SPE Province have ministered in Bulgaria, among whom twenty-two were Bulgarian.

In 1925, a monastery was built for novices and philosophy students near the village Echt (Limburg): Maria Hoop. The village that developed around this monastery is named after it. In 1958, the philosophy students were moved to Haastrecht (until 1963). With the decline in vocations, the monastery became underpopulated. In 1979, the last religious moved to another monastery and in 1987, it was sold.

Due to an abundance of seminarians in 1948, a second monastery-seminary was purchased in Mook, “St. Paul of the Cross”. It housed the youngest groups



**The first monastery and church of the SPE Province in the city of Mook.**

of seminarians. In 1952, it was decided that a new seminary should be built. In 1958, construction was completed and was named Gabriëlkollege (not to be confused with Klooster St. Gabriël, at Haastrecht). It was short-lived. In order to be recognized as a college and receive the necessary finances from the State, the doors were opened to external students in 1961. In 1976, the Gabriëlkollege closed and was moved to Nijmegen. The monastery part remained until 1986, at which time the school building and the monastery were sold and the religious found a new home in a recently purchased nearby monastery at Grave, called De Wingerd i.e. “The Grapevine”. The Passionist religious lived here



until 2003 and then moved to homes for the elderly administered by religious.

In 1941, because of the large number of religious, an additional house was rented in Nijmegen (Gelderland, Eastern part of the Netherlands)-- Huize Trifolium, renamed H. Gemma (St. Gemma). It was designated as the residence for students who studied at the University of Nijmegen. From 1952 until 1961, it was also the formation house for the Brothers of the Province.

Yet another house was rented, in 1944 in the Archdiocese Utrecht, at the village of Wehl: het Jagershuis, which was renamed the Monastery St. Joseph. However, after World War II had ended the Passionists did not receive permission to stay and so they moved out in 1946.

**Indonesia:** In June 1940 a letter was received from the Propaganda Fidei saying that Ketapang (Kalimantan Barat i.e. West Borneo) was assigned to the Dutch Passionists as a mission. Due to the War, the first missionaries could only depart for Indonesia in 1946. New, indigenous vocations from Indonesia began only in the early 1980's. In August 1987 it became a General Vicariate, in 2002 a Vice-Province and in 2006 a Province. Over the years, twenty-nine Dutch Passionists have worked in Indonesia. Currently, two are still working there.

**Germany:** In 1954, the Passionists started to live and work in Germany, first in Nutterden. In 1958, the first monastery became a reality-- H. Geist (Holy Spirit), at Dinslaken-Hiesfeld. The parish that was attached to the monastery was returned to the diocese in 1995 and the last religious left for other monasteries in 1996.

In 1962, a new community was established in Frankfurt Preungesheim. The Passionists stayed there and worked in the adjacent parish church until 1983. In 1965, the Province accepted the responsibility of the boarding school Dettanium, at Münster, in the hope of new vocations. It was also the residence for the German Passionist students who studied in the city with the Franciscans and at the university. Due to the declining number of religious, the Province withdrew in 1970.

In 1966, the Archbishop of Paderborn invited the Passionists to work in his diocese. There were two options: a former Benedictine abbey in the country and a shrine near the city. Because of the need for solitude, the choice was made for the former—"Marienmünster". It was intended to be the novitiate, but the monastery functioned mainly as a residence from which pastoral activities developed. A community lived there until September 2014, when all five moved to Übach-Palenberg, in the diocese of Aachen- "Kloster Marienberg", which is close to the Dutch border and near the shrine of St. Charles of Mount Argus at Munstergeleen (Limburg), where he was born. Since



**Bishop Estanislau Van Melis**

his canonization in 2007 this Shrine, has become more central in the policy of the Province. Throughout the history of the SPE Province, fifty-eight religious have ministered in Germany.

**South-America:** Although religious from the PATR Province were sent to Argentina, in 1956, two religious of the SPE Province were sent to Brazil; others would follow. Fr. Estanislau van Melis, who was appointed superior of the mission, wished to have a determined geographical area for the pastoral work of the Dutch Passionists. Thus, the region around São Luís de Montes Belos, which was as large as the Netherlands, was allocated to them. In 1962, it became a Prelature and in the same year, he was created the bishop of this new diocese.

In 1984, the Passionist mission became a Provincial Vicariate named "Cristo Libertador" (LIBER). As of May 2014, the former vicariate became part of the newly established Province of the Exaltation of the Cross (EXALT). In total, twenty-nine Passionists with the Dutch nationality have worked in Brazil. Currently there are no Dutch Passionists living or working in Brazil.

**Some statistics:** numerically, the Province was at its high point in 1965, with 225 professed members. At the time of its 29<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter in 2016, the SPE Province consists of twenty-seven members:

-20 Dutch, 4 Germans, 2 Indonesians (originally Dutch), 1 Italian;

-17 in the Netherlands, 7 in Germany, 2 in Indonesia, 1 in England. 🙏



## Assembly of the Configuration of Jesus Crucified (CJC)

**D**uring 24-27 January 2016, the major superiors, provincials and vice-provincial of the Configuration of Jesus Crucified held their annual assembly in the EXALT Provincialate in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. The Configuration is composed of Holy Cross Province (CRUC), St. Paul of the Cross Province (PAUL), Our Lady of Peace Vice-Province (PAC), Cristo Rey Province (REG), Calvary Province (CALV), Exaltation of the Cross Province (EXALT) and Immaculate Conception Province (CONC).

The Assembly began with a discussion of the General Synod that took place in Rome in October 2015.

The participants felt that it was a very positive Synod lived in true fraternity and in dialogical atmosphere. During the Synod the presidents of each Configuration spoke about their lived reality and how they minister; nevertheless there was a sense that what was lacking was a broader exchange on the difficulties faced by each configuration. The process that is underway in the Congregation is one of revitalization; therefore, more attention needs to be given to our life and mission and not to particular structures and legislation.

Formation issues occupied most of the discussion during the Assembly because the Configuration has combined/shared its formation efforts at every level leading to ordination. The situation of the various houses of formation were discussed. The first meeting of professed Passionists in formation "ENFORPRO I" (2015) that took place in the Dominican Republic was evaluated.

There was a meeting with a representative of the students in order to listen to their concerns. The major superiors approved two novitiates in the Configuration (Brazil and Mexico). An ENFORPO meeting and a meeting of religious who have completed their initial formation in the last ten years will be organized for 2017.

A finance report was presented. Should financial assistance be needed, a decision was made to grant a loan to REG (México) for the purchase of a house of formation. There was also discussion about the fund for Solidarity in Formation since there are also plans underway to host configuration-wide meetings for those who are in their first years of ordained life,



*Participants in the CJC Assembly, Belo Horizonte, Brazil.*

and for those who are in initial formation, leading to ordination.

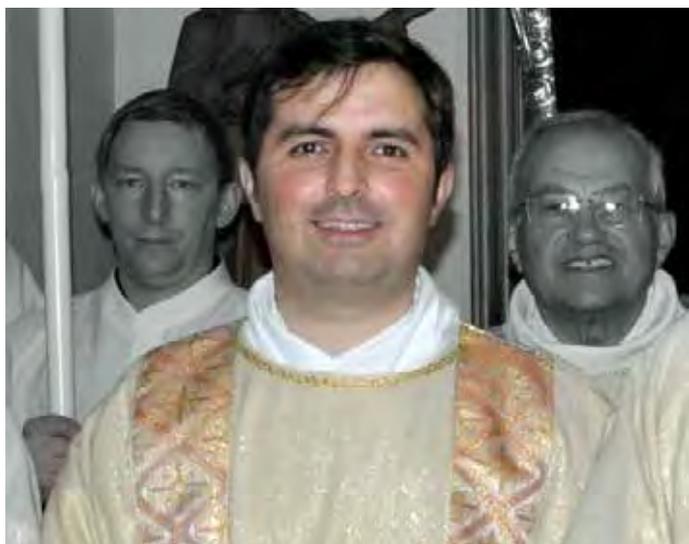
Additionally a meeting with laity of the EXALT Province took place during the Assembly. A meeting of this kind took place during the Assembly of 2015, and based on that experience the decision was made to continue the practice this year. There was also agreement that it would be interesting to have similar meetings between the laity of the various entities.

In the area of solidarity in personnel, there have already been some exchange of religious between entities and there was consensus about continuing this practice, according to the needs and possibilities of the entities. The members were also open to studying the possibility of a joint mission of the entities of the Configuration, following an evaluation of the reality of the pastoral needs of an entity and according to available personnel and finances.

Consideration was also given to criteria for discernment of the Passionist presence in an area based on responses to a questionnaire that was presented to the major Superiors in 2015.

During the Assembly, Fr. Francisco Murray (CONC) was elected the new President of the Configuration. In addition to the President, elections were also held for various chairpersons for a three-year term: Fr. Joseph Moons (CRUC), chairman of the Finance Commission; Fr. Amilton Manoel Da Silva (CALV), chairman of the Formation Commission; and Fr. Carlos Saracini (CONC) chairman of the Personnel Commission.

The next annual meeting will take place in Calvary Province (CALV) in Brazil in 2017.



**Federico Di Saverio (MAPRAES)**



**Fr. Helí Ramírez Lizana (SCOR)**

### **PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS**

During the period of January - May 2016, thirteen Religious professed First Vows. On 10 January 2016, three Religious of the CALV Province of Brazil professed First Vows: José Paulo Pinto, Antunes Mário Taibo and José Ronaldo Venâncio dos Santos. In the SPIR Province of Australia-Papua N.G.-Vietnam, eight novices professed Temporary Vows on 8 May 2016: Vincent Aroiki, Vincent Truong Luong Dang, Francis Xavier Ngoc Tuan Ho, Emanuel Minh Thanh Nguyen, Paul Ba Kien Nguyen, Michael Huy Tuyen Nguyen, Joseph Dominic Ngoc Tan Nguyen, and William Willie Ngangile Tavaka. On the same day, Paul Cunliang Li and Joseph Wei Zhou of the MACOR Province of South Korea also professed First Vows.

### **PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS**

During the period of January - May 2016, seven of our religious were ordained to the priesthood. On 9 January 2016, Fr. Ademir Guedes Azevedo of the CALV Province of Brazil was ordained to the priesthood. Fr. Santiago Alberto Valerio was ordained a priest on 18 January in the PAC Vice-Province of Puerto Rico-the Dominican Republic. In the REG Province of Mexico, Fr. Carlos Aguilar Quiroz was ordained on 6 February 2016. On 27 February, Fr. Carlos Andrés Sánchez Sarmiento, of the SCOR Province of Spain and Latin America was ordained to the priesthood, and in the same Province, Fr. Iván Francisco Lizcano Arenas was ordained on 12 March 2016 and Fr. Helí Ramírez Lizana on 3 April 2016. Finally, on 9 April 2016, Fr. Jesús Ceja Quiroz of the REG Province of Mexico received Holy Orders.



**(L-R) Carlos Leonardo García Hernández and Javier Antonio Solís Basilio (REG)**



*(L-R) Michael Tuyen, Willie Tavaka, Joseph Dominic Tan, Vincent Luong, Emmanuel Thanh, Paul Li, Paul Kien, Francis Xavier Tuan, Vincent Aroiki, and Zhou Wei Joseph*

### **DIACONATE ORDINATIONS**

During the period of March - May 2016, five Religious were ordained deacons. On 19 March 2016, Eduar Carranza Altamirano of the SCOR Province was ordained a deacon. In the MAPRAES Province of Italy-France-Portugal, Federico Di Saverio was ordained to the diaconate on 16 April 2016. Two Religious of the REG Province of Mexico were ordained deacons on 8 May 2016: Carlos Leonardo García Hernández and Javier Antonio Solís Basilio. Finally, on 12 May, Jesús Marín Pérez of the SCOR Province was ordained to the diaconate.



*Fr. Jesús Ceja Quiroz (REG)*



*Jesús Marín Pérez (SCOR)*



*Fr. Carlos Andrés Sanchez Sarmiento (SCOR)*

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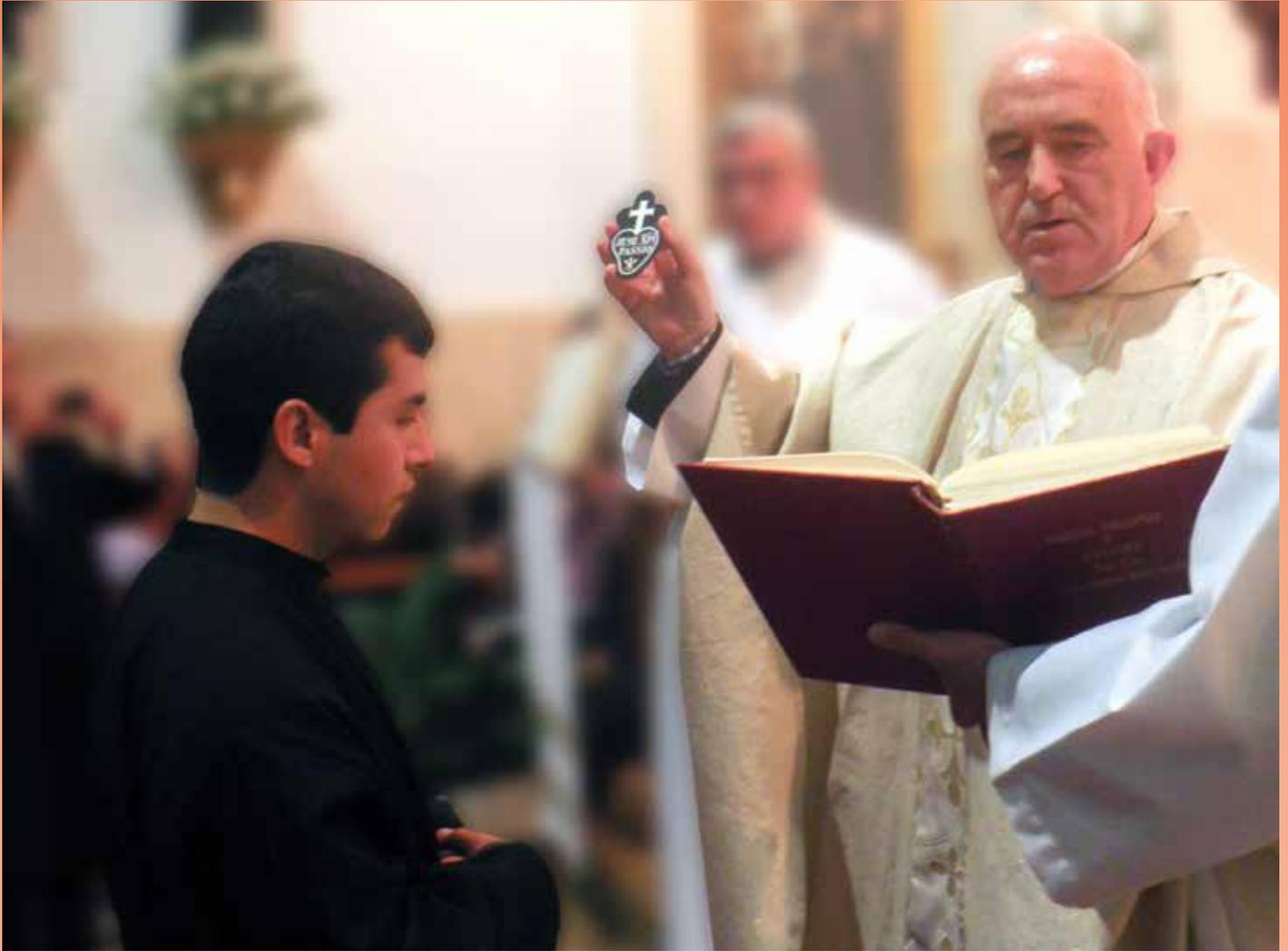
# NOTITIAE OBITUS

Usque ad diem 11 Ianuarius 2016 - 13 Iunius 2016

DIE	OBDORMIVIT IN DOMINO	PROVINCIA	NATUS	VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT
1/11/2016	Sac. Joseph Guzinski	PAUL	11/27/1922	8/15/1944
2/21/2016	Fra. William Drotar	PAUL	2/11/1929	9/15/1954
3/1/2016	Fra. Luigi Petrosillo	MAPRAES	6/7/1924	3/25/1950
3/7/2016	Fra. Gary Clarke	SPIR	3/19/1954	1/25/1975
3/9/2016	Fra. Battista Perola	MAPRAES	6/27/1923	9/25/1952
4/12/2016	Sac. Carmine Flaminio	MAPRAES	1/10/1929	11/10/1946
4/17/2016	Sac. Christoph Van Vliet	SPE	6/2/1930	9/8/1951
5/1/2016	Sac. Salvador Fraguas González	SCOR	1/20/1919	8/15/1936
5/14/2016	Sac. Henry Free	PAUL	12/28/1929	7/31/1951
5/22/2016	Sac. Manuel Alves Pereira	MAPRAES	7/13/1938	12/8/1958
5/30/2016	Sac. Luciano Gabilondo Alberdi	SCOR	2/14/1936	9/5/1954
6/1/2016	Sac. Francis Cusack	CRUC	2/3/1930	7/9/1951
6/13/2016	Sac. Emilio Monedero Pérez	SCOR	12/10/1928	10/18/1945

## Moniales et Sorores Defunctae

DIE	OBDORMIVIT IN DOMINO	MONASTERO	NATUS	VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT
1/16/2016	Sr. Maria Faustina di San Giuseppe (Felicità) Cardinetti	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa) - Prov. Sacro Cuore di Gesù	04/01/1924	9/15/1948
2/17/2016	Sr. Angela dell'Addolorata Galeandro	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa) - Prov. Sacro Cuore di Gesù	04/12/1955	9/14/1982
2/24/2016	Sr. Noemia da Purificação Monteiro	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa) - Prov. Cuore Imm. di Maria, Brasile	14/07/1938	2/3/1962
3/23/2016	Sr. Mary Andrea van het Kruis (Jacqueline Marie) Van Geyte	Monasterio Passionistarum de Tielt (België)	12/12/1925	5/5/1951
2/24/2016	Sr. Brid McCaughan	Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis et Passionis D.N.I.C. (England)	01/01/1939	1/1/1960
5/8/2016	Sr. Maria Antonia do Coração de Jesus (Amélia) Papa	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa) - Prov. Cuore Imm. di Maria, Brasile	04/12/1914	8/12/1935
5/8/2016	Sr. Eulália do Espírito Santo (Rita Julieta) Boff	Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa) - Prov. San Gabriele della Verg. Addolorata	03/18/1928	2/27/1946



*The Sign, which the members were now wearing on their habits, was a reminder to every one of God's great love and mercy shown in and through the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. By their vows, they became "living memorials" of this Love to all the world.*

*Let us keep challenging ourselves as Passionists to 'look back' and appreciate with greater depth the SPIRIT of our Holy Founder, so that we may 'look forward' to live and practice with fidelity our Passionist vocation in the various contexts of the Church and the world of today.*

*Fr. Joachim Rego  
Superior General*

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