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**PASSIONIST
INTERNATIONAL
BULLETIN**

**FROM THEOLOGY
TO PASTORAL PRACTICE**



**THE FIRST CHURCH IN THE
MIDDLE EAST DEDICATED TO
SAINT MARIA GORETTI**



Content

PASSIONIST INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN
N. 57 - NEW SERIES - I - 2023.

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GIUSEPPE COMPARELLI, CP

THE CLOSING OF HISTORIC RETREATS. THE TRAUMA AND THE PROCEDURES. THE CASE OF SAN SOSIO IN FALVATERRA.

We agree with Qoheleth that there is a time to begin and a time to end (cf., Eccl 3:1-8). Our Founder opened houses and settled members in them as an investment in the future. Today, we seem destined to loose members and houses, putting aside the strategy of the past. This is not about the closing of the retreats, nor is it about the dearth of vocations. These reflections have to do only with the procedures employed in this melancholy withdrawal, and with the local consequences, civil and ecclesiastical, which should not be overlooked. This

present study covers the stages in an experience which has shown that its operative standards have not always respected the human elements or valued the preservation of historic and cultural properties. The language used reflects some regret and restraint, but the purpose is not to condemn a decision which has caught us insufficiently prepared. The intention is rather to avoid future instances of the same problems. The closing of our houses cannot be conducted under a single modality. It is one thing to close a place which has served as lodging for

a few residents for a few decades; it is altogether another thing to close a Retreat which dates back to our Founder and which holds an honored place in the history of the Congregation on account of its personages and the significant events which took place there. Our historic retreats have, consequently, seen the original charismatic intuition develop and leave its mark on the plateaus, archives, libraries, and in the patrimonial art and liturgical furnishings. These are the witnesses to the history of the Passionist identity, even though the religious them-





selves might not have been aware of it. Obviously, we are not talking here of the substance of our spiritual heritage, which lives on independently of “things;” but it also depends on structures and sensory realities in order to be recognized and to be communicated to others.

Today we are seeing a desertification of the landscape of Religious presence. Let us not forget, however, past suppressions of Religious life: the Jesuits under the papacy of Clement XIV at the instigation of the Bourbon courts in 1773; the suppression in France of all Religious Institutes in 1798 and again in 1810; and the suppression following the unification of Italy in 1866. Once the religious houses were restored to the Religious Institutes, not all of the houses were re-opened. In 1652, Pope Innocent X decreed in the *Instaurandae disciplinae* the reduction of religious houses that had grown to be too numerous while having fewer than six members. In Italy, 1,513 of these houses were suppressed out of a total of 6,238. The result was a type of “deforestation” of the spiritual environment which had negative effects especially for the countryside, where the practice of the Christian Life was impoverished. Remember that in the 1700’s, Pope Benedict XIV sought out St. Paul of the Cross and St. Alphonsus Liguori in order to encourage their establishing new foundations. In 1745, the same Pope responded to the concern over this matter expressed by the King

of Naples, Charles III, and his counselors, among whom was Cardinal Spinelli, by issuing a Letter, *“Gravissimum supremi apostolatus”* to the Italian Bishops, encouraging preached missions.

We Passionists, too, have closed houses from our beginnings. The most troublesome closing was that of the Terracina retreat which was opened in 1752, and which St. Paul of the Cross called “the most beautiful retreat of the Congregation”. Our religious left it in 1816, which caused discontent and gave rise to protests. Two Superiors General, Fr. Tomasso Albesano and Fr. Paolo Luigi Pighi, stood up against the pressure and the promises of support from the three bishops who succeeded one another in those years and from the two popes of that time: Pius VII and Leo XII. Today that “parcel of earthly paradise”, another description given it by our Founder, lies in the perimeter of the municipal cemetery. Yet, had the conditions we stipulated been accepted and the Fathers of the Precious Blood, who had been called in to supply for the Passionists, been dismissed, the matter would have been resolved. In 1828, Pope Leo XII expressed his bitter disappointment over such a long “obstinacy”, twelve years, to Father General, Antonio Colombo. Another retreat, Monte Cavo



at Rocca di Papa, had been opened by our Founder in 1758, and in 1866 was listed under the laws suppressing religious foundations. It was able to remain active until 1889 thanks to the Jesuit Fr. Angelo Secchi, an internationally renowned scientist, who asked for the help of the Passionists in maintaining a meteorological laboratory on the property.

This Retreat, and others, were not under our care long enough to generate a particularly Passionist cultural environment as occurred in Passionist Retreats of the post-Napoleonic restoration. Elements of this environment were missions, foundations, publications, and the presence of historical figures that earned us a distinctive reputation. The closing today of a Retreat that has 267 years of active Passionist life does not happen without some trauma, and should not happen without appropriate preparations. Our oldest Retreats have generated a neighborhood around them which has been shaped by the dynamics of the Retreat, whose presence is also part of the civil environment. In Ceccano, in Paliano, and in San Sosio, the patron is Saint Paul of the Cross; their religious traditions stretch back to their forebears, who would have known the Saint. Appropriately, one can reference here the 20 votive plaques depicting graces received through the intercession of Saint Paul of the Cross which date from the second half of the

19th century. These are destined for the museum which is under construction and are a charming testimony to the piety which expressed itself in popular art. These votive plaques came from the retreats of San Sosio and Pontecorvo, now closed. An informed observer quickly senses that these people, depicted on their knees, wearing traditional garb, naively devout, remind their descendants of a time which is passing.

Now, let us take up the topic of the current practice in closing a retreat. Let us follow what we have learned from the San Sosio closing.

Once instructed to leave the Retreat and make it available for the buyer (the Red Cross, which guaranteed that it would not be passed on to anyone else), the limited time unleashed a period of frenetic activity: choosing what to keep, what to store, what to dispose of, what to assign to other Retreats; the removal of all kinds of household articles (beds, desks, furniture, chairs, dishes, refrigerators, etc.) mimicked the opposite of furnishing a new house. Not yet mentioned is what to do with the liturgical, historical and cultural resources. It looked like a kind of chaotic commotion without instructions from above, without a manager. The author of this narrative, fearful that the most valuable objects might be lost or damaged, separated the core of the most valuable possessions, some even

dating back to the time of the foundation, in 1751. Among these valuable objects were the first Community registers and ledgers, some with our Founder's signature and recommendations; the first manuscripts of sermons and other writings of the period, which numbered more than 600 and included texts by non-Passionist authors (from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries); there were valuable liturgical vessels, including some Baroque specimens; a collection of over 700 ancient prints (etchings, lithographs, silkscreened); and albums with over 6,000 photographs relating to our Congregation (people and events); a series of popular colored lithographs; and, finally, antique and modern furnishings. Among these furnishings were different pharmaceutical instruments, glassware and medicines from our provisions for the sick. In addition, there were two pianos made in Vienna, which were donated to the Retreat in 1840. Everything was brought to Itri for the simple reason that the Retreat had a storage locker which already housed the portrait of our Founder attributed to Sebastiano Conca (purchased by the community in 1953). The precious vestments manufactured at the famous silk factories of San Leucio, near Caserta, had been brought for safe keeping to San Sosio in 1866. When this Retreat was closed, they were transferred to Paliano. The local archive was taken to Naples, and later taken to Rome, to be integrated with the Generalate Archive. Personal items and the furnishings in the cells are not recorded.

The museum remained to be moved, as well as the vintage and modern book collections, for which no instructions had been given. With regard to the museum, following on several requests, a commission was appointed by the Provincial Superior to see to the relocation of the museum. This commission was made up of Father Vincenzo Fabri, Father Antonio Coppola, and myself. After surveying the contents for an appraisal, and in light of the urgency to relocate the museum, it was decided to transfer the museum assets to the Retreat in Itri because it had suitable and available space, unlike the other Retreats which could not house the museum contents without first undergoing costly struc-





tural alterations. With the Provincial Superior's approval, the indefatigable Father Vincenzo Fabri contacted the municipal authorities, and on April 11, 2022, he personally began transporting the museum's contents. Afterwards, a professional company of movers took care of the difficult transport of the display cases, without any charge for the Passionists.

This new arrangement, curated by the local superior, Father Emiddio Petringa, has also provided displays for objects which had been in storage for some time. The locale is equipped with a modern alarm system and video cameras. The local civil authorities have been informed of the relocation, and foresee a stream of visitors emanating from the pool of students and tourists in the area; e.g., Gaeta, Formia, Terracina, etc. The museum is expected to continue strengthening the message which had already been successfully conveyed in Falvaterra (as evidenced by the visitor register). The project is consistent with the spirit of the documents promoting "Pastoral Care of Our Cultural Heritage" from the Holy See, and the agreements between the Italian Episcopal Conference and the Ministry of Public Education.

Now, based on our experience, we recommend the following procedural steps for moves of this type:

- Determine, in collaboration with the Provincial authority, the ultimate location for collections and property which has been inventoried: library, archive, museum, and collections of early published works; also silver artifacts and valuable liturgical furnishings, if any.
- Distinguish between what is subject to FEC (Faith, Education, and Culture) control, and what is the property of the house. If the "OA cards" of the Ministry of Public

Education, Directorate of Antiquities and Fine Arts, are kept in the archive, the distinction is easier to determine. What is indicated as "Acquisition for the Church" should not be touched.

Notify the Superintendency in the appropriate "Regione" (a territorial division) of the move, and follow the procedures regarding the works of art, the antique collections, and archives. As for the transport of the Congregation's art, keep in mind the regulations which require insurance for goods in transport, and the use of a professional for the packing of the lots. Of course, the destination must be reported to the relevant officials. The same applies to the collections of antiquarian books, where they exist. Unfortunately, the collection of antiquarian books in Falvaterra is still there. It consists of 4,200 volumes, including many editions from the 16th century and two incunabula, which are kept separately.

For the relocation of contemporary libraries, their own procedures should be followed if there are any in place, and funds are available. The library in San Sosio is still there and in a state of abandon. It had been destined to be sent to a parish in Pontecorvo, following a request to the Provincial, but nothing was done. The parish changed its mind without even notifying anyone. It has undergone some pillaging for obvious reasons and is deteriorat-



ing. The library contains several thousand volumes, many of which date back to the 1800's, besides the older antiquarian volumes, and were used by the best Passionist minds of that century, such as Fathers Dominic Barberi, Gaspare Forti, Silvestro Zannelli, and Giacomo Sperati

Continuing the suggestions:

- Before selling any antique furnishings, or similar items, an independent appraisal should be made because once accustomed to seeing an item, one may have lost a sense of its true value.
- Make an inventory of all that is being relocated or sold. When goods are not sold but relocated, record the recipients and their locations should there be a subsequent change of opinion regarding their transfer.
- Do not leave the house until all civil procedures are complete, and all valuables have been safely relocated.

Keep in mind that in only a very short time, a heritage which took years of continuity and local presence to fashion, can be dissipated. In the case of San Sosio, the continuity has lasted for 267 years. What San Sosio has harbored over the years has achieved a value that exceeds what any one person can imagine, and what is beyond appraisals. For these reasons, it is suggested that everything

be done wisely and thoughtfully; the interested religious, friends, and the faithful should have time to process their sense of loss. We have learned that some people have shed tears over the closure of San Sosio. We religious are able to shift our allegiance into other communities and houses; but the local people who lose "their Retreat" cannot do the same because their relationship to the Retreat is not able to be dislodged from their locale.

This emotional response to the closing of a Retreat may surprise the younger generation, or those who have never formed a bond with it and what it represents; or not even as an institution in a civil perspective. As religious people, we recognize that we are part of a landscape of different values, notwithstanding our religious presence. A significant number of signatures were collected relative to the closing of San Sosio. Articles have appeared in the local press, such as "Cio-ciaria Oggi" and "La Provincia", which have fueled resistance to and suppositions about the closing. Therefore, it is not a pointless exercise to explore an event which is simple enough in its basis, yet is so complex in its consequences. It would have been appropriate to engage with the local civil administration, to inform them and win their understanding; not to submit to their consent, but rather to keep them informed of the process. By Allowing them to remain in the dark

about our associations and plans has greatly compromised the transparency normally associated with our image. What emerged from the press coverage and local comments in social gatherings projected our operation as a banal financial opportunity for profit. A further negative influence over the procedure was the decision to not reveal the names and the plans of the prospective buyers. The protracted delay of approval required from the civil authorities, more than two years, resulted in the Red Cross' termination of their offer to buy.

Even on the diocesan front, we should reconsider some steps. The bishop, Monsignor Ambrogio Spreafico, with ties to the San Egidio community, is an admirer of the Retreat, would have liked to be engaged in determining the future of the structure.

We agree that it is easy now to acknowledge our mistakes and regrets; in fact, it is essential we do so because responsible management is an obligation that all of us bear. Just the same, our standing in the public opinion should concern us and should be included as part of a prudent pastoral approach; one which seeks collaboration with the faithful, rather than tolerating their disappointment.

For example: if the local institutions tell us that the closure of a Retreat such as San Sosio would result in an impoverishment of the quality of life for the territory, we should somehow take it into account. Similarly, when our assiduous provision of religious services is brought to an end, the distances between churches will create a burden for the diocese when it tries to fill the resulting need for services, which may not be promptly resolved. Fortunately for the people of San Sosio, their popular affection for the Passionists is still so strong, that after almost five years, it seeks to prolong the relationship with the Passionists through the Sunday Mass which is celebrated by a member of the community in Paliano, over 60 kms away. The upkeep of the church is in the hands of the "Confraternity of San Paolo della Croce" which also organizes the festive celebration of the feast of our Founder, which is still very close to their hearts.



In conclusion, we repeat that these observations are meant to stimulate caution without accusing anyone; we wish to correctly read the present moment by bowing our heads to the lessons of history. Our movements are constrained by a human caution; but we do not know where the ways of the Spirit are leading us in this challenging moment of the Church's journey. We ourselves will cease, but the values we have espoused will remain.

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

It might be thought that the historical atmosphere of the origins of the Congregation would be maintained among the other early Retreats. It was not entirely so, because each Retreat contributed to the strategies for stability of the Congregation, especially during the first major trial which occurred just 50 years after its founding — the French occupation. The fragmentation of Italy prior to the mid-19th century struggle for unification (the “Risorgimento”) put our Retreats under different authorities. The location of San Sosio placed it between the Papal States, the Kingdom of Naples, and the “enclave” of Pontecorvo. This positioning made possible escape routes from 1798 to 1814. When Religious Institutes were dissolved by law in 1810, and the religious were forced to disperse, the religious of the Retreat of San Sosio were able to take refuge a few kilometers away, in the enclave of Pontecorvo, which was under the rule of Governor Giulio De Nota, the interim governor appointed to supply for Marshal Jean Bernadotte, whom Napoleon had appointed to be Prince of Pontecorvo, and later King of Sweden. Governor Giulio De Nota had a deep esteem for the Passionists, and offered them his protection. He allowed them to live in common, to wear their habits, and to carry out pastoral ministrations. Our religious occupied the Dominican convent of “Annunziata” which was cared for by a single Dominican. The people kept the Passionist refugees active with abundant requests for ministries, and the people generously supported them. Our Religious called that refuge the “Pro-ritiro dell’Annunziata,” and it is reported as such in the register of masses. At the same time that the



Passionists of San Sosio were there, it welcomed other refugees, including the rector of Passionist Retreat of Monte Cavo, who was sought for execution because he refused to take the civil oath. Pontecorvo was the only Passionist residence still in existence and functioning. The Superior General, Father Tomasso Albesano, was cut off from contact, and forced to stay in Piedmont. In Pontecorvo, everything was directed by the Provincial of the Naples Province, Father Filippo Antonaroli. Among the 22 Passionist refugees was Father Antonio Colombo, the successor to Father Filippo Antonaroli, and who would later be elected the Superior General. Another was Father Antonio Testa, who would also later be elected the Superior General. Others are listed in the registers. Between San Sosio and the Annunziata in Pontecorvo, there was a transport and surveillance service operated by young men working with the Vicar, Father Francesco Saverio Asquasciati, who commuted between the two due to their proximity. The rector of San Sosio, Father Ludovico Belloni, died in 1811 in the Pro-ritiro.

When, in July 1814, Pope Pius VII returned to Rome from captivity, in light

of the departures and abuses brought about by the preceding civil anarchy and suppression of religious life, he issued stern admonitions before restoring the religious institutions. The Passionist Provincial, Fr. Antonaroli, in that same month of July, went to pay his respects to the Pope. Fr. Antonaroli could represent himself as the Superior of a community that had not interrupted its canonical life. The Passionist Congregation was the first of all the religious institutes to be fully restored by Pope Pius VII. The next year, 1815, Fr. Antonio Colombo was elected Provincial, and Fr. Giuseppe Molaioni was elected Superior of San Sosio to the spirited approval of the new community. Unfortunately, he did not continue in his mandate for long, because he was appointed to the mission in Bulgaria, where he would serve as Bishop. The affectionate bond between the people of Pontecorvo and the Passionists remained after the restoration. The creation of a stable Passionist presence in Pontecorvo had long been in the air. The diocesan bishop, Mons. Giuseppe Montieri, a friend of King Ferdinand II, saw to it. In 1849, he met King Ferdinand and Pope Pius IX in Gaeta, and secured the



presence of the Passionists who took possession of the former Capuchin monastery in 1850. Today this Retreat has also been closed. With the decisions to close these related Retreats, a collection of Passionist memories has passed into oblivion. Near the San Sosio foundation is found the Cayro family farmhouse, which gave two illustrious figures to the history of the Congregation: Fr. Pio Cayro, the right-hand man of Superior General Antonio Testa, and his brother, Fr. Pietro Paolo Cayro, Superior General from 1863 to 1869. A little farther on is the shrine of Monte Leuci, where Father Tommaso Struzzieri, on the request of our Founder, withdrew to write the first Regulations of the Congregation. A little farther down the road is the site of the Retreat of Pontecorvo, which has been adapted to house the headquarters of an assisted living residence (RSA — “Residenza Sanitaria Assistenziale”).

This short historical narrative means to emphasize a specific fact: that when the French occupation of Italy ec-

clesiastically and politically deadened the life of religious institutions, the heart of our Congregation continued to beat in and around San Sosio. Much was due to its geographical position, and its contact with the populations of the Kingdom who engaged our apostolate even beyond the Caserta area. This brought prestige with economic advantages to the Community. The superiors of the Retreat sent some of that economic benefit to other, more deprived, communities of the Congregation. San Sosio was also a center for the diffusion of the Passionist spiritual life. Even St. Gaspare del Bufalo frequented the Retreat of San Sosio. This Retreat realized the mission of the Congregation as a formation agent, as an agent of growth and as the provider of stability at the most critical moment in the history of the Congregation, the initial one. It was a bridge between the age of those who knew the Founder and the age of restoration, making possible the preservation of its spirit.

In fact, the restoration depended on those Religious who had been the

refugees in Pontecorvo. Being from a family in Paliano, surely Father Antonio Testa would have recounted to the novice Dominic Barberi, in 1815, the values they had to call upon in those years. Later, when Father Antonio Testa, as Superior General, began the expansion of the Congregation abroad, he counted on Father Dominic Barberi, the Provincial of the Naples Province of Our Lady of Sorrows, to transplant those values into Northern Europe. Fr. Dominic Barberi left for the new mission precisely from San Sosio in 1840.

We had said that we had to bow our heads to the lessons of history. In fact, time has produced circumstances and necessities that have given rise to new directions which at first seemed like crises but in reality have led to the emergence of new structural elements within the Church and the Congregation. In the “gatherings” held at the Shrine of St. Gabriel in the 1950s, our theologians and historians, faithful to the Thomistic approach which gives primacy to the intellect, determined that the essence of the Passionist charism is found in contemplation. A decade later, in the reformulations suggested by the Second Vatican Council, a process of historicization was initiated; this renewal of charism recognized in the very crucifix that archetypal essence of the Passionist charism.

This was the opposite of our Founder’s path, who left the sick of San Galliano hospital, to whom he had bound himself with a vow, to follow the irresistible and productive impulse that we know as the “original fire”, as Fr. Stanislaus Breton called it. In the history of the Church we can see that there are cycles of saturation, of completion. It is clear that the work started by St. Paul of the Cross needed a powerful re-charge, similar to that of St. Camillus de Lellis, another confidant of the Crucified, who had served Christ in the sick a century and a half earlier. Our option of chapter programming on behalf of the poor in the current ecclesial ethos is not the point here. What is emphasized here is that such an option has never been put into practice by the Chapter’s decreeing specific actions for equivalent instances. The closure of some of our houses has provided us with emergency exits from a sterile embarrassment. +



PAOLO GIOIA

SECOND CENTENARY

MARRIAGE OF THE PARENTS OF SAINT GABRIEL

1823 - 13 May - 2013

In May of this year, 2023, a festive celebration linked to the story of Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother (baptized Francesco Possenti) occurs. It is the second centenary of the marriage of the Saint's parents.

This treasured occasion was celebrated on May 13, 1823, in the church of San Marone, in the seaside town of Civitanova, in the Marche region of Italy. Although this date is from long ago, and also distant from contemporary concerns, nevertheless it marks the beginning not only of the Possenti-Frisciotti union, but is also the earthly story of a popular saint in the Catholic world and especially dear to the entire Passionist family: Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother — their eleventh child.

Who were Sante Possenti and Agnese Frisciotti? How did they meet? What brought their marriage to an end? How many children did they have besides Francesco (later Gabriel)? These and other questions come to mind in the wake of another special tricentenary, that of the Congregation. What is special about a saint's family?

Let us briefly go over the story of Agnese and Sante's marriage, especially for those who are not familiar with the details of the life of our cheerful saint.

SANTE POSSENTI, ADVOCATE-LAWYER.

Sante Possenti was originally from the city of Terni. His family was a landowning family belonging to the city's bourgeoisie, and related to families of the local



nobility. The Terni branch of the Possenti family came from Rome. Sante Possenti's family was a typical bourgeois family employed in the administrative offices of the Papal States.

Sante was born on June 18, 1791, the son of Francesco Possenti and Vincenza Fantozzi. On May 13, 1823, Sante married Agnese Frisciotti from Civitanova Marche, and they had thirteen children. Only two of their children married: Teresa married Pellegrino Pellegrini, and Michele married Marianna Dionisi Vici. Michele, in turn, had seven children, but only one, Francesco, started a family. Francesco's son, Guido, had a son, Franco, whose son, Roberto, born on April 6, 1971, is the last of the Possenti male line, which traces back to Sante, the father of St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows.

After completing his legal studies and becoming a procurator-lawyer of the Roman Rota, Sante embarked on a career in the administrative service of the Papal States, which had just been reinstated after the Congress of Vienna. His first assignment was that of governor of Camerano, in the apostolic delegation of Ancona, on September 14, 1814. In his district,

the governor was a judge in civil matters over local disputes; he also exercised criminal jurisdiction over minor crimes. The governor was also an intermediary between the higher authorities and the local law enforcement which was overseen by a leader, called the prior, and several elders; in today's terminology, the mayor and his council. The governor mediated communication between the local and superior officials. Frequent transfers were part of the administrative career. In Sante Possenti's case, the relocations were often due to his weak health, and his rapidly expanding family.

AGNESE FRISCIOTTI

His appointment as governor of Civitanova, within the district of Macerata, occurred in June of 1821, and Sante arrived there the following month. The governor's residence and offices were within the former Conventual Franciscan convent, which is located to the left of the church of St. Paul the Apostle.



The circumstances under which Sante and Agnese met, were engaged and married are not known. Agnese, the daughter of Alessandro and Maria Acquacotta, was born on April 8, 1801; making her ten years younger than Sante Possenti.

1) The descendants of Sante's brother, Giovanni, received the title of Terni Nobility only in the year 1911.

It is very likely that the two young people met during one of the many social occasions that colored the city's life. Sante Possenti, by virtue of his office, frequented the social receptions of the most prominent families in the city; he would have also taken part in civic and religious events such as Carnival and other festivities. As Fr. Ladislao Ravasi, C.P., supposes, perhaps the young governor already knew Agnese from Matelica, her maternal grandparents' hometown, where he may have met her at the Acquacotta palace or at the home of her grandmother's family, the Razzanti's.

Their wedding took place in the church of San Marone, which is situated at the port. There is uncertainty about their choice of a church which was frequented mainly by fishermen, rather than the closer parish church of Saint Paul the Apostle, next to where the governor resided. There is a commemorative plaque in San Marone which recalls the wedding two hundred years ago. The Frisciotti family was very attached to this church, and had been since the sixteenth century, according to some ancestral information. This could explain the choice of this church for the wedding celebration, since Agnese's family were long-standing patrons of the church.

The wedding ceremony was conducted by the archpriest of Civitanova, Don Luigi Pantanotti. The witnesses were Don Filippo Quintili, the vicar of the Church of San Marone, and Mr. Antonio Prato, the husband of Pacifica Cucchi from Cingoli (also newly weds), who were respectively the butler and housekeeper of Sante Possenti. Later, the young Gabriel would often remember the housekeeper Pacifica in his letters home.

The Alesandro Frisciotti family was one of the best families in the coastal town. Two of Agnese's siblings became religious, namely Angelica and Federico. Angelica



+ Church of San Marone, Civitanova Marche.

entered the monastery of the Augustinians in Montegiorgio, taking the name of Sister Maria Teresa. Federico became a Capuchin friar, taking the name of Giovanni Battista da Civitanova. Another brother, Emidio, was a canon of the Holy House of Loreto. A cousin of Agnese, Don Cesare Acquacotta, also a canon and pro-vicar of the Holy House of Loreto, would be the one to examine the young Francesco Possenti regarding his possible vocation in September of 1856.

The Frisciotti family played a leading role in the local events of the Risorgimento that would lead to the annexation of the Marche region into the new Kingdom of Italy.

A FAMILY'S PILGRIMAGE

After the wedding in the church of San Marone on May 13, 1823, Sante's stay in Civitanova lasted only until the following year.

A year after their marriage, on February 13, 1824, their first child was born. He was named Paolo, but unfortunately, did not survive past his third year. For his own health reasons, Sante asked to be transferred elsewhere. He was assigned to a mountain town called Orvinio, in the province of Rieti. Agnese did not feel comfortable leaving Civitanova. We will recount the principal transfers that marked the life of Sante and Agnese Possenti.

After Civitanova, he was offered the possibility of going to the city of San Ginesio in 1824, where he arrived in October of that year. Unfortunately, he did not feel well there, especially due to the climate. He remained in this city for about two years, suffering from both physical and mental discomfort. He was then assigned to the town of Valentano, in the delegation of Viterbo, in Lazio. While still in San Ginesio, two more children were born: Luigi (1825) and Lorenzo (1826). Sante refused the new assignment to Valentano and was instead assigned to the government of Corinaldo, a coastal town not far from Civitanova. In Corinaldo, another child was born on June 1, 1827, who was given the name Paolo, the name of their firstborn who had died in February 1827. Unfortunately, their second-born, Luigi, also passed away on April 30, 1828, and his name would be given to their next child, born in 1831.

In the government of Corinaldo, the lawyer Sante Possenti took care of ordinary matters and worked hard to promote harmony and collaboration between the local authorities and the central government. His work was appreciated by everyone. Sante remained in Corinaldo, living in the house of a certain Mr. Martorelli in the district of San Pietro, for about two years. Then, in the autumn of 1828, he was assigned to Cingoli, still in the Marche region.

CINGOLI

The government in Cingoli was more important than that of Corinaldo. Sante Possenti and his entire family arrived there in early December, 1828. During his tenure, in 1829, Cardinal Marquis Francesco Saverio Castiglioni, a native of Cingoli, was elected to the papacy. He chose to be called Pius VIII. His pontificate lasted a very short time, as he passed away on November 30, 1830.

The election of the new pope, the Camaldolese Cardinal Mauro Cappellari, which took place on February 2, 1831, coincided with a very critical social and political situation in the Papal States. The revolutionary movements, behind popular uprisings and attacks, began in Bologna, spreading to Romagna and then to the rest of the Papal States. After the insurgents took control of the city of Macerata on February 17, 1831, Cingoli was also occupied by armed forces. Governor Possenti was not involved in the attempt to establish a new government, which had a short life of little more than a month. Austria's intervention restored the papal government and on March 27, the authority of the Papal State was also restored in Cingoli.

Even during the short-lived national government, Sante continued to administer his office according to the laws in force, seeking to maintain the good order and tranquility of the vast territory of Cingoli. Sante stayed in Cingoli for eight years. During this time, that is until 1837, six more children were born: three girls and three boys: Maria (1829), Teresa (1830), Luigi (1831), Adele (1833), Michele (1834), and Enrico (1835). Then, on January 14, 1837, Sante Possenti was appointed governor of Assisi. He was 47 years old; Agnese was 36; and the eldest of their children, Lorenzo, was only 11 years old.

With the governorship of Assisi, during which the little boy Francesco was born, the personal and family story of Sante Possenti is no longer the history of a family in service to the Papal States, it becomes the history of a young saint who will ensure an imperishable memory for his family. After Assisi, the Possenti family moved to Poggio Mirteto, in the province of Rome, for a few months. Their last baby, Roma, was born there; but she survived only a few months. After leaving Poggio Mirteto in the second half of November, 1841, Sante brought his entire family to their new appointment, Spoleto. Francesco was just three years old.

On the road that now bears the name of a Piedmontese soldier, Filippo Brignone, where it intersects with Via della Trattoria, Sante found a suitable apartment for his large family in the palazzo Benedetti, which was three floors high in addition to the ground floor. The palazzo was within the parish limits of Sant'Ansano, which was then staffed by the Redemptorist Fathers. However, in the very beginning of their stay, the family had lived within the area of the parish of San Filippo Neri, which was

staffed by the Fathers of the Oratory. Having found the palazzo, Sante could not afford to buy the building, but he rented an apartment that would suffice for the whole family. A plaque still exists there today, commemorating the long stay of the Possenti family in this palazzo.



A TRAGIC 1842

Unfortunately, the beginning of the Possenti family's stay in Spoleto was marked by tragic deaths that deeply affected the family's life. The first tragedy, which we have already mentioned, was the sudden death of Rosa, the youngest child who had been left with a wet nurse in Poggio Mirteto, until she could be reunited with the family after the move to Spoleto and her weaning. She passed away on December 8th of the same year as the move. She was seven months old. The second tragedy was the equally sudden death of Adele, a bright and charming ten-year-old girl. She was struck by a sudden paralysis and passed away on January 26th, 1842. She was buried in the

chapel of the Angels, adjacent to the church of San Filippo Neri.

A few days later, her mother, Agnese Frisciotti, followed her to the grave. She died after a few days of illness on February 9th, 1842, having been comforted by the ministrations of the faith. The exact cause of her sudden death is not known, but according to some witnesses, it was due to fulminant meningitis. Her son, Michele, a physician, concurs with this explanation. Others attribute her death to the sudden loss of Adele, and her grief over the baby Rosa, who had died far from the family. These two losses must have deeply affected Agnese's sensitive soul. Her heart as a mother and a wife was already tested by other losses, numerous pregnancies, and the strain of moving from one city to another with her husband, who was in poor health.

Their son, Michele, recalled: "after a few weeks, she became ill with meningitis, which led her to the grave. During her illness, I stayed with a friendly family. Checchino (Francesco) was hugged and kissed by his mother just a few hours before her death." She was buried next to her daughter in the chapel of the Angels. She was only 41 years old. "The bitter loss of my beloved spouse," as Sante expressed it, plunged the whole family into an extreme desolation. Francesco was only 4 years old. Sante regretted the loss of his beloved spouse, the mother of his children, for his entire life. He did not remarry and lived the years of widowhood in the sweet memory of the graceful girl he had married in Civitanova on May 13th of the distant 1823.

With his new position as a civil assessor, and with more time available to him, Sante Possenti could devote himself to the care of his family. There was a handwrit-

ten booklet which Agnese had used with was treasured in the family. It was a collection of prayers that she recited regularly. A silent but eloquent witness of her religious devotion; it was remembered with affection by her sons Michele, Enrico, and Luigi. Her religious piety was combined with an unwavering commitment to the marital bond, resulting in a true and sincere conjugal affection that never wavered, even in the midst of her husband's professional struggles.

Although with great sacrifice, the unity of the family held, and the mutual affection between parent and children largely compensated for the almost insurmountable loss of a mother and a wife. The moral integrity, the scrupulous fulfillment of his duties as a magistrate, widely recognized by his superiors, as we have seen, together with his deep and sincere piety, were a great example for his children and their moral and spiritual growth.

Some of them did not fully meet his expectations. Some disappointments and bitterness for the Possenti family were caused by the troubles and upheavals of the time, which was deeply conditioned by the cause of Italian unity (the Risorgimento).

However, the education received could not but remain at the core of the children's behavior even in adulthood. In this family, like in all families, tragic shadows would befall them, but they did not obscure the clear light that penetrated and warmed their family circle. The sanctity of St. Gabriel has its roots in this family where adherence to the Catholic faith, daily prayer, unaffected piety, frequent reception of the sacraments, as well as compassion for the poor, were lived sincerely, without hypocrisy, duplicity or for appearances' sake. +



GIOVANNI ALBERTI, CP

LIKE A CEDAR OF LEBANON THE FIRST CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE EAST DEDICATED TO SAINT MARIA GORETTI

On September 24, 2022, in a festive and emotional atmosphere, thousands of people from the Lebanese coast at Tripoli and from the capital city of Beirut flocked to Miziara, in the Zgharta district, northern Lebanon, to take part in the consecration of the first Shrine in the Middle East dedicated to St. Maria Goretti.

The extraordinary event was broadcast by numerous television stations, including some non-Christian ones, in the Arab world. The main celebrant was His Beatitude Cardinal Mar Bechara Boutros Al Rai, the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East for the Maronites. The concelebrant was Monsignor Yousef Soueif, the bishop of the Archeparchy of Tripoli.

The road leading to the Shrine was decorated in festive pink flags and balloons. Banners carried images of St. Maria Goretti and some quotations from her life which are essentially her spiritual testament.

Her name echoed repeatedly during the solemn consecration rite of the new church dedicated to her. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the Maronite rite and in the Arabic language. Speaking in Italian, the Cardinal warmly thanked the Italian delegation composed of representatives from the communities linked to St. Maria Goretti: Nettuno, Corinaldo, and Paliano.

The construction of the Shrine and the organization of this impressive inaugural event were made possible by the deep faith and the generosity of Marie and Francois Chidiac, who were deeply affected by their tragic loss in 2017, when their eldest daughter Raja was attacked and murdered by a household employee shortly her wedding.

The immense pain and desperation of this practicing Catholic family, who held a notable position in Lebanese society, led to their providentially coming to know the story of St. Maria Goretti and the forgiveness she granted her attacker and murderer.

Marie and Francois Chidiac made a pilgrimage to the places in Italy associated with Maria Goretti, and thus conceived the idea of constructing a shrine in Miziara to be dedicated to the young saint.

The project, called “Roses and Candles,” was completed after years of study, fundraising and construction on the 2,600 foot hill of Miziara, 10 miles from Tripoli. The church is designed in the shape of a rose (Raja’s favorite flower), and alongside, on the square, stand three giant candles of different sizes.

Inside the shrine church, the ceiling is adorned with the image of St. Maria Goretti, numerous Lebanese saints, and the face of Raja surrounded by angels and the blessed. From the Shrine at Nettuno, the Rector, Father Pasquale Gravante, personally brought a relic of St. Maria Goretti; it was solemnly received at the Beirut





Airport, and then displayed for the veneration of the faithful in the new church well into the night.

Two days earlier, on September 22, 2022, five years after her death, Raja's mortal remains were transferred from the city cemetery to be interred in one of the three giant candles located beside the Shrine.

On this occasion, the Mass of remembrance was celebrated outdoors by Bishop Yousef Saneif, with over 50 priests concelebrating and the participation of thousands of people. At the end of these liturgical celebrations, the Cardinal Patriarch unveiled two commemorative plaques.

The hymn in honor of St. Maria Goretti, sung in Italian and Arabic, set the stage for the concluding community celebration of music and good food which was offered to the more than 5,000 attendees. +





JAVIER SOLIS, CP

ST. MARIA GORETTI PARISH, MALAGA (SPAIN)

In the city of Malaga, in Spain, is located Santa Maria Goretti parish. It is under the care of the Passionist Community, which dedicates great effort to carrying out its entrusted mission.

Upon entering the parish and looking at the sanctuary, you can see the large image or altarpiece that depicts a girl holding a lily in her hand, a young man receiving the flower from her, and in the center of the scene, above them, Jesus.

Father Nando shares the meaning of the image/altarpiece. He says: "We are seeing in the altarpiece an image of forgiveness. It represents Maria Goretti's offering of forgiveness to Alessandro, who was her killer. As a result of his murder, he went to jail. While in jail, Alessandro had a dream in which Maria Goretti forgave him and offered him a lily."

At the time of her death, Maria Goretti forgave her aggressor, Alessandro, and said, "I forgive Alessandro for everything he has done."

Years pass, Alessandro is released from prison, he goes to see Maria Goretti's mother and asks her, "Asunta, do you forgive me?"

Asunta responds, "How could I not forgive you? My daughter Marietta has forgiven you."

Alessandro becomes a member of the Capuchin Franciscan Tertiaries and dies some years later with a saintly reputation.

Maria Goretti's mother manages to see her daughter first beatified, and then canonized by Pius XII in 1950.

We thank Father Nando for sharing part of Maria Goretti's life. We hope that Maria Goretti's witness to forgiveness and love continues to encourage the Passionist Community to continue spreading the Gospel and bearing witness to the Passionist charism in the mission they fulfill day after day in Malaga, Spain. +



CRISTIANO MASSIMO PARISI, CP

THE PASSIONIST CHARISMATIC IDENTITY

THEOLOGICAL-SPIRITUAL AND PEDAGOGICAL-FORMATIVE ASPECTS

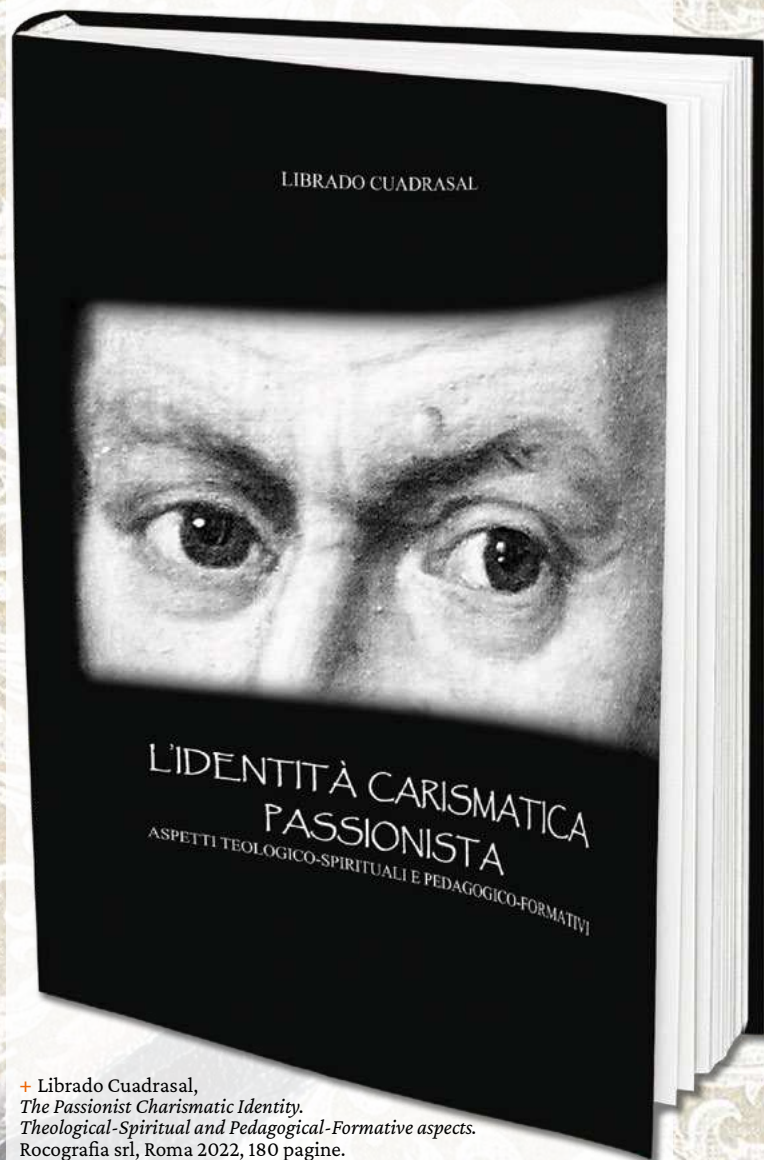
This book by Librado Cuadrasal, a Passionist priest, is one of those publications which have emerged after Vatican II, whose objective is to rediscover the importance and the meaning of a Founder's, man or woman, "charisms," in order to thoroughly live them while the institute adapts to the needs of the times. Since charisms are ecclesial gifts, if a religious institute has surpassed the limitations of an earlier time-frame, this is a sign of a particular divine, providential plan for the sake of the entire people of God, including those who are not believers.

In his introduction, Father Librado presents the objective, the limitations, and the methodology of his research. He intends to analyze the Christo-passiocentric spirituality which is present mainly in the Founder's Diary and its pedagogical application. From a methodological point of view, he conducts a serially chronological investigation around the "heart" of the Passionist charism, which proves to be an effective method for appreciating its continuity over time. Still within the Introduction, he also lists the sources of his research: the writings of our Founder and the documents produced in the Congregation of the Passion. In a section dedicated to Studies, he cites the works of Blessed Bernard Silvestrelli and some more important works by fellow Passionists. He notes that beginning in the second half of the twentieth century, Passionist authors have given a great impetus to the study of the Congregation in its various aspects; and finally, he recalls the magisterial documents.

In the first chapter, the author presents a biographical profile of our Founder and the historical context (religious, social, and political) in which he lived. This is followed by the identification of the relevance for the founding of the Congregation in the Founder's 40 day retreat in Castellazzo; the author presents the entire Diary and some of its theological-spiritual dimensions. The second and final chapter offers pedagogical and formative guidelines for the consecrated Passionist life.

The text, of a scientific nature, lends itself to a quick reading and an immediate understanding. The second chapter is undoubtedly the heart of the book,

a serious and well-structured attempt that provides guidelines for a pedagogical and formational experience for the Passionist religious throughout his development. It is an important manual that, in our opinion, could primarily be used by formators (directors, novice masters) to assist those who are called by God to enter the Congregation. The book has been printed in both English and Italian. Those interested in learning more about it or purchasing it can contact Father Librado directly at the following email address: libradocuadrasal@gmail.com +



+ Librado Cuadrasal,
*The Passionist Charismatic Identity.
Theological-Spiritual and Pedagogical-Formative aspects.*
Rocografia srl, Roma 2022, 180 pagine.



FROM THEOLOGY TO PASTORAL PRACTICE

CLEMENTE SOBRADO, CP

Since the second half of the last century, including what we have experienced in this new century up to now, many cultural, theological, pastoral, social, political, etc., events have taken place which, in one way or another, have affected us at congregational, communitarian, and personal levels.

We have witnessed an interesting transition from the historical research into the life of the Congregation, to the exploration of the biblical and theological development of

our charism. To this we would have to add a profound shift in our congregational pastoral approach.

AT BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL LEVELS

We cannot deny that there has been a deepening exploration of the biblical and theological meaning of the mystery of the Cross, and therefore, of our charism. We have an awareness that neither our Founder nor the Congregation previously enjoyed. Of course, our Founder may have known, perhaps at a personal



mystical depth, what we now appreciate at an intellectual level.

Today, we know much more about the process and reality of the Passion and the Cross. Today we have a much better understanding of the meaning of “charismatic” in the Church and in the Congregation. Scripture scholars and theologians have provided us with knowledge that we did not have before. Therefore, we have a better understanding of what is the center and axis of our spirituality and of our pastoral ministry.

AT THE PASTORAL LEVEL

Things have also changed a lot. This is because the locales in which people lived, and in which pastoral work was carried out, have changed. We have gone from a population that was mainly rural to a population that is mostly ur-

ban. In fact, in many areas, the rural population is decreasing while the large cities are growing rapidly.

Whether we like it or not, this has also changed what we considered essential among us: the popular, preached missions. The organization of the work-day, personal mobility and resultant city traffic, and the sectoral organization of cities have all contributed to this fundamental change.

I would say as much about pastoral ministry. Parishes now operate with a different dynamism, its pastoral ministry is much more dynamic, lively and organized. Diocesan pastoral plans are passed on to parishes, and this also includes parishes entrusted to religious communities. The clergy is often notably much more prepared, active and dynamic than it used to be.

Into this process we should include a congregational phenomenon. How informed was I when previously we sought out a life of solitude? Today, the majority of us are engaged in parochial ministry. What used to be prohibited is today the norm.

CONSEQUENCES

All of this has had and continues to have consequences at both the community and personal levels, as well as at the pastoral level. This cultural shift has modified community schedules and the prioritization of our communities.

Communities that used to function at the sound of a bell for everything, are now communities that function according to the duties and external commitments of the parish and parish office schedules. Our times for prayer and Divine Office, as well as our for our meals and com-



munity recreations have also undergone significant changes.

And hasn't the societal milieu also influenced the application to study and cultivation of spirituality for the religious?

We also recognize consequences at the pastoral level. We had lived from a conviction about the "Popular Missions" and these have almost completely disappeared. There may be places where they are still requested, but I don't think they are operative at the congregational level. With the diminishment of the Popular Missions, it's as if we've lost our charismatic footings. Even the so-called "Passionist pious devotions" have lost relevance.

PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

Starting with our 300 Year Jubilee, we have been talking a lot about "a new creation." It is an expression, that even with its limitations, could point us in new directions. However, as a term, it suggests that a "charismatic void" has arisen and needs completion, an unfortunate imagery which was not needed. "The old wineskins" have failed us. We wanted to continue our lives with this "new enriched mentality," but "we have not discovered the new pathways."

We cannot blame the societal changes that have occurred, nor can we blame the changed pastoral conditions. We should look at the lack of creativity in developing "new expressions," i.e., "new wineskins." I do not believe that the cause of this void is that we are engaged so broadly in parish pastoral ministry. The void comes from the feeble or complete lack of creativity.

I even think that parish pastoral work offers us possibilities that the older ministerial formats did not. We have not researched

or brought about new expressions of "continuing to be charismatic communities within these new circumstances," instead, we have continued with the same formulas. And that is how we lose both "the wineskins and the wine."

Parish ministry offers us options and opportunities that we didn't have before. The simple reason is that our charism, is not a charism of "functions," such as "education or caring for the sick, etc." Rather ours is a "charism of animation/inspiration." This is also the fundamental charism of the Church. The Church is born from the Cross and proclaims the Cross; the sign of the Christian is the Holy Cross. And, therefore, the Cross must be the inspiration for all pastoral ministry and the entire life of the Christian.

Let us hold that the mystery of the Cross, before being a "Passionist charism", is a "gift from God to the People of God." Before being the "charism of a Passionist consecration," it belongs "to the sacramental-baptismal structure" of every Christian. Before being "the *raison d'être* of the Congregation," it is the "*raison d'être* of every baptized person" and "*raison d'être* of the Church." That is why our Founder speaks so much about "forgetfulness" and "memory." St. Paul of the Cross did not invent something

new, but wanted to awaken what we had for too long left dormant in the Church.

The Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, 1985, in its Final Report speaks of "the value, the importance and the centrality of the cross of Jesus Christ (II. D.2)"; and its value as "the criterion for the true and false meaning of so-called '*aggiornamento*' (II. D.3)." It affirms that:

"The Church makes herself more credible if she speaks less of herself and ever more preaches Christ Crucified (cf., 1 Cor 22) and witnesses with her own life (II A.2)."

In its final suggestions, it offers some conclusions, the first of which responds to our concerns:

"In this context, we ought once again to consider what is, and how to put into practice: a) the theology of the cross and the paschal mystery in the preach-



ing, the sacraments and life of the Church of our day” (II. D.7).

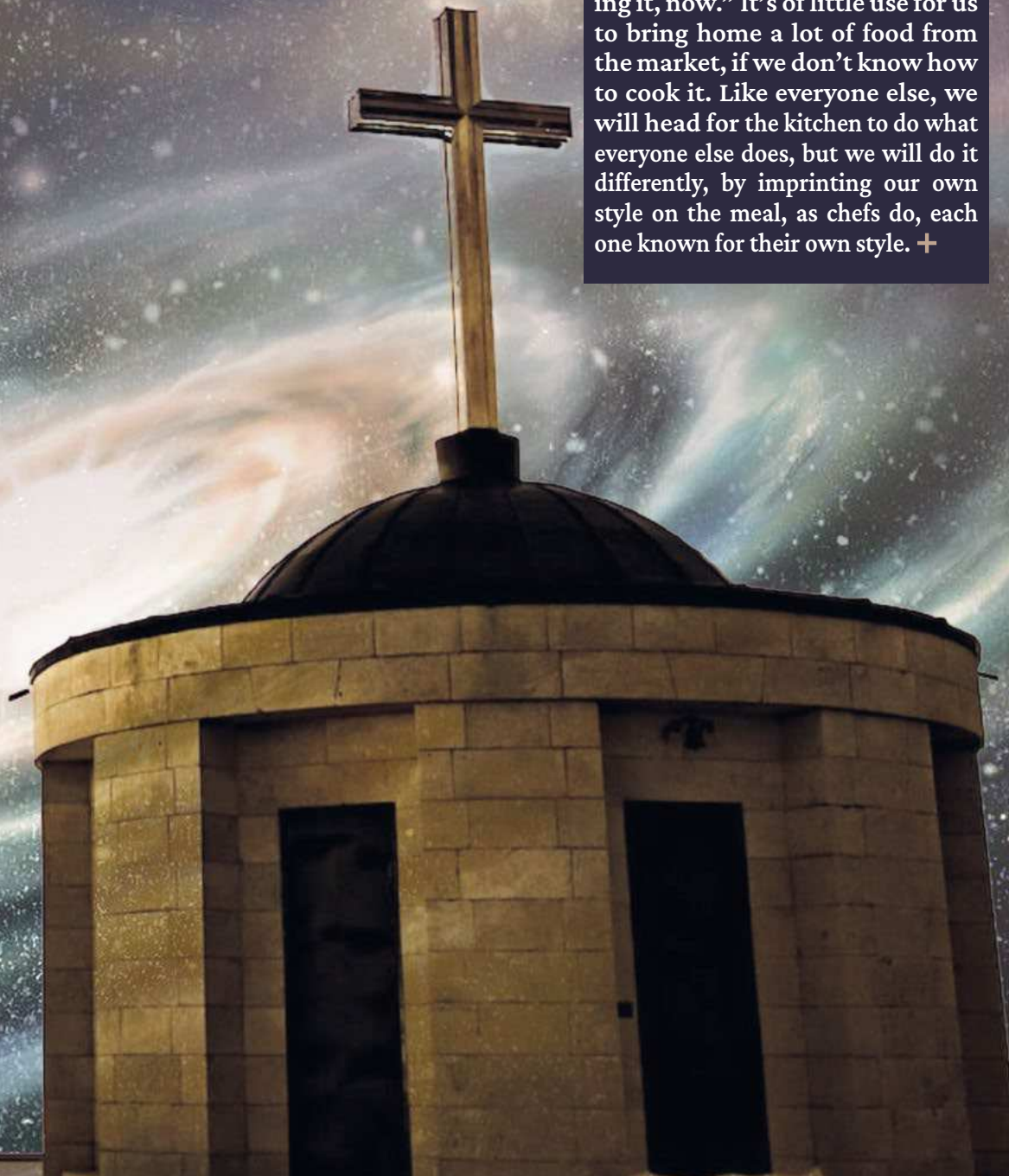
Consequently, how shall we achieve that “re-creation” about which we have been speaking and which we need so dearly?

The scholars of Scripture and Theology have already explained to us the “what”; what we need now is for them to tell us the “how”. This is because our problem is that “we know a lot”, or at least we know “more” than before; but “we don’t know how to do it”. How do we embody our charism in our everyday pastoral ministry?

However, the answer to this question is no longer within the competence of specialists in Sacred Scriptures or theologians. It is, rather, a problem for “pastoralists”. We need pastoralists to tell us “how to do it” — that is their contribution and competence.

In the past, we have appointed “theological commissions”. They have already given us what they have to say. Today, we need “pastoral commissions” to give us their practical wisdom. They are the ones called to “create the new wineskins”.

We have organized theological congresses and gatherings, but we need congresses and gatherings for pastoral specialists. It’s of little use to us to know “what to do” if we don’t know “how to do it.” And we need “re-creating communities” that explore for new pathways for the incarnation of our charism while guided by the Holy Spirit: “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. (Jn 16:13, NABRE)” We can’t just say “we should do this...”; but “we should start doing it, now.” It’s of little use for us to bring home a lot of food from the market, if we don’t know how to cook it. Like everyone else, we will head for the kitchen to do what everyone else does, but we will do it differently, by imprinting our own style on the meal, as chefs do, each one known for their own style. +





ANTONIO MUNDUATE, CP

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

If we compare canon 573 (a description of consecrated life) with canon 607 §1 (a description of religious life), what distinguishes religious life within consecrated life is its totality: a total consecration of the person, a complete sacrificial giving of self, all of one's existence becomes a continuous worship of God in charity.

The second paragraph of this canon changes the subject from “religious life” to “institutes of religious life.” It is as though it were saying that the theological qualities which characterize religious life in section §1 are found in the institutes of religious life. Thus, in sections §2 and §3, the canon gives the juridic elements of religious life; they are three: the profession of public vows; a fraternal life in common; and separation from the world.

This reflection deals with this third element.

“Separation from the world” is, perhaps, one of the elements of religious life, and of Passionist life, which receives less attention; or, is perhaps the element which is most abused and overlooked at this time.

Canon 607 §3 says: *The public witness to be rendered by religious to Christ and the Church entails a separation from the world proper to the character and purpose of each institute.*

“Separation from the world” is a quality which should accompany all religious institutes (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 5), and it is not, as often thought, solely for contemplative institutes, although these are to live it more intensely (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 7). Furthermore, the canon specifies that this separation from the world should be *proper to the character and purpose of each institute*. We understand through our Passionist history, charism and spirituality how separation from the world has influenced our congregation from its beginnings. The cited canon does more than ask us to live in separation from the world, it asks that this separation be “Passionist”; that it be in accord with our origin and tradition.

Our Constitutions dedicate almost all of Chapter I to “public vows”; and Chapter II is about our fraternity in a common life. Throughout our Constitutions we find references to these two elements. As for “separation from the world,” there is an explicit reference in the text of Constitutions, 54: *Withdrawing to some degree from the world, we can... appraise more objectively secular trends and standards*. There are indirect references to separation from the world in other numbers of our Constitutions: a spirit of solitude (1), times and places of silence (28), enclosure (34), interior and exterior silence (37), solitude and communication

media (54-55), to name just a few. In fact, separation is a criterion to be considered when establishing or remodeling houses, or organizing apostolates (General Regulations, 6). In the Rule of St. Paul of the Cross we find his convictions and his efforts on behalf of this and related topics.

The separation from the world is characterized and expressed by the different elements that are incorporated in our lives: the use of the religious habit, the houses/retreats in which we live, what we do or cannot do under submission to the permission of superiors, the commitment to live the evangelical counsels with public vows, the rhythm of our prayer life, silence,



solitude, recollection, our work, and enclosure.

[This atmosphere] *hushes the clamour of the demands made daily upon us (Constitutions, 37)*, so that we will better manifest to all believers the reality of heavenly goods already present in this life, we will witness to the Redemption of Christ, and proclaim the future resurrection and the glory of the heavenly Kingdom (*Lumen Gentium*, 44). This is a dual dimension, pedagogical and eschatological, of religious life: *consecrated persons...have a teaching mission for the People of God* (“Message of John Paul II to the Plenary of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life” [CICSAL], September 21, 2001; 2).

Saint Paul, in his letter to the Romans, says, *Do not conform yourselves to this age (Rm 12:2)*, because *the world in its present form is passing away (1 Cor 7:31)*. This challenge should resonate even more strongly in the context of religious life. A professor once said that while the world is a “theological” place for the laity (*Lumen Gentium* 34: *the laity consecrate the world itself to God*), for religious, the world is a “sociological” place. One of the characteristics of religious life is the “separation from the world”; we are not of the world, we do not belong to the world, but we are sent to the world to give our witness. The Instruction *Starting Afresh from Christ: A Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium* states that *It is precisely in the simple day-to-day living that consecrated life progressively matures to become the proclamation of an alternative way*

of living to that of the world and the dominant culture (CICSAL, “Starting Afresh from Christ...,” 6). Using the words of our Constitutions: *our communities become a leaven of salvation in the Church and in the world* (Constitutions, 6).

Returning to the norms that guide our life, we are told that Saint Paul of the Cross desired and lived this dimension of separation from the world, solitude, and silence... and he wanted it to be so for his followers, whom we are today (Constitutions, 1, 37). It is also affirmed that these principles remain values for our life today (Constitutions, 54) and we are asked to commit ourselves to and to respect this value (Constitutions 28, 34, 54. 55). However, the implementation of these principles and good intentions is lost and diluted in the context of provincial regulations and the good intentions of communities and religious.

Our reality, as we know from experience, is very different. Enclosure, silence, solitude, and recollection, I dare say, have disappeared from our communities. The world has overwhelmed our lives and communities, by seeping through the cracks in the windows of our homes. We carry the world with us in our personal phones and in the multiple technological platforms we subscribe to in order to watch television.

Is it possible to continue saying today that *we maintain a discerning distance from worldly standards and undertakings?* Is it still a value for our lives today? Immersed in and surrounded by worldly interests, how

can our Passionist life, personally and communally, be a *proclamation of an alternative way of living to that of the world and dominant culture?* Are we not losing the ability to discern what is essentially Christian? What remains for us of what Paul of the Cross, in his mind and endeavors, wanted for us, his followers? What sense does it make for formators to try to instill the value of separation from the world if the young religious will not find it in the communities?

Many questions appear when we reflect on separation from the world.

At the conclusion of this reflection I recall what we read in the Liturgy of the Hours for the memorial of Saint Charles Borromeo: *One might complain that when beginning the Liturgy of the Hours, or celebrating the Holy Mass, at that very moment a thousand interruptions to his recollection in God flood through his mind. However, what did Charles do before going to the choir or to celebrate the Mass? What did he do in the sacristy? What was his preparation? What were his strategies to focus his undivided attention?*

Saint Paul of the Cross writes in Notizie, 1768 (nn. 3-4): Solitude helps one to achieve true wisdom. One of the impediments that usually slows the growth toward perfection in religious is the engagement with the world and socializing with seculars.... It is in order to obviate this that the Holy Rule proposes the practice of solitude.

Final Note: The number of the beast in Apocalypse (Ap 13:18) is the same as the canon which refers to social communication media in the code of canon law: 666. +





DARIO DI GIOSIA, CP

WHY THE CHURCH?



LET US READ FROM THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (13, 1-15)

¹Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper, ³fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, ⁴he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Master, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later." ⁸Peter said to

him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me." Jesús le contestó: «Si no te lavo, no tienes parte conmigo».

⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well." ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed, for he is clean all over; so you are clean, but not all." ¹¹For he knew who would betray him; for this reason, he said, "Not all of you are clean." ¹²So when he had washed their feet [and] put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? ¹³You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. ¹⁴If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

his word. His entire ministry is characterized by his feelings of mercy and compassion. The episode of the paralyzed man, who is forgiven his sins and then miraculously healed, is one of the many manifestations of Jesus' love for anyone in need of care and attention (cf., Mark 2:1-12). It is love which has gathered the Church. "Church," in fact, means "the assembly brought together." Jesus is the reason for this gathering. This, therefore, is the reason why we are told "having loved his own who were in the world..."

These attributes of Jesus' compassionate love, of his life spent for others like the good Samaritan, are, however, still incomplete without what follows. The Gospel continues by saying that "...he loved them to the end," he loved them to "fulfillment," to the pinna-

The washing of the feet takes place during the Last Supper, before the Passover celebration. It is a solemn moment for Jesus, "his hour to pass from this world to the Father." His gestures and words have the significance of being his most important recommendations, Jesus' "last will and testament." His most beloved companions are together with him. It is in this moment that the synoptic Gospels recount the institution of the Eucharist and the Priesthood in Christ. Therefore, it is a particularly ecclesial moment.

In this passage, the Gospel reveals the true feelings of Jesus, who having "loved his own in the world... loved them to the end". All that follows begins with Jesus' love for his disciples, men and women. We recall this love in remembering some earli-

er passages of the Gospels. Mark recounts Jesus' encounter with the rich young man, emphasizing that since the young man longed to do more in order to have eternal life, Jesus called him to follow him: "Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, 'You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to [the] poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me'. (Mark 10:21)" This experience of being gazed upon with love by Jesus is the origin of every Christian vocation. There is love, as well, in Jesus' gaze towards the woman charged with adultery. That moment has three facets; there is the risk he takes in order to save her, there is his word that reaches out to her, and there is the forgiveness he grants her (cf., John 8:1-11). Jesus loves by healing those who are sick, by teaching with

ple of love. This Passover reveals the complete giving of himself by Jesus, it shows us love taken to its ultimate consequences, a love that is pronounced in his Passion and his death on the cross. The sacrifice of Jesus is given to us as a gift of love for all humanity and, therefore, first and foremost for his own, for the Church. The Son of God brings about salvation which frees us from the violence of sin and death; he makes it his experience, suffering death with love for all, even for his crucifiers. This is why it is love which appears as the very nature of God. The First Letter of John clearly states it: "Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love (4:8)." It further says: "In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins (4:10)." And it

concludes: “God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him (4:16b).” This is why we are introduced to the Passion of Jesus with his gesture of washing the feet of his beloved apostles, a sign of the same outpouring of love.

The circumstances do not seem particularly tranquil. The Gospel says that not everyone was in sympathy with Jesus. Love, compassion, did not interest some, even among the disciples. It doesn’t speak of how many did not accept Jesus, but of those who, at least initially, had followed him enthusiastically. John says that “The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over.” This is the mystery of the human condition and freedom. Judas, already in Jesus’ Church, has decided to betray the teacher and will hand him over to his enemies.

Given this situation, Jesus does not back away from what lies ahead; on the contrary, he resolutely continues by beginning to wash their feet. The first letter of John continues: “There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love (4:18).” This is the expression of Jesus’ love even when the menacing situation foreshadowed his greatest suffering. He then “rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet.” Let us examine these moments in detail, because they image the essence of love.

He got up from the table, which means that he put aside his own interests, leaving himself and his own comfort in the background. Selfishness leads one to think about oneself, one’s hobbies, one’s free time. Jesus thinks of the others, he gets up from his own table to serve the others. He would certainly have also eaten some of the meal, but at a certain point, he turned to the others at table with him and dedicated a part of his being to them.

He took off his outer robe, that is, he stripped himself of his own dignity, his own prestige. One can be heavily influenced by what others think, by what is said about oneself. Jesus demonstrates great freedom. His only desire is to do what is right, not what pleases or what is popular. In “losing himself” for a higher purpose, Jesus reveals even greater independence and dignity.

He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin... meaning that Jesus picked up the humble and necessary means to perform a humble service. Jesus put on the garments of a servant.

Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet. Washing the feet of another was a service performed only by foreign slaves before their masters. Therefore, Jesus performs an act of unheard-of humility, doing so without fear. Feet are the lowest part of our human form. They are dirty, dusty, smelly; and here they symbolize all people and the scope of human misery experienced by human beings. How much courage and love must it take to bow down to human poverty, not only a physical poverty but all moral and psychological poverty; to open ourselves to what is base and ignoble, to everything that is repulsive and which we would rather not have to acknowledge about our humanity. Jesus bends down before the poverty that makes one feel insignificant, to offer a kindly, welcoming, and merciful attention. How difficult it is for us to face these kinds of poverty!

We are like Peter who says, “You will never wash my feet.” Never would we want anyone to humble themselves for us. From a human perspective, we think that important people should not take the lowest place, they should not perform the lowest service. We wouldn’t want it for ourselves; and therefore, we don’t want it for others either—especially if they are our superiors and teachers. The human objections to the mindset of love arise from prioritizing personal pride and personal prestige. Humanly speaking, roles and tasks

should be appropriate to one’s status and never be degrading. But love knows other ways. Love does not fear the judgment of the world, nor does it hold back out of fear of losing dignity.


“Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me.” This is Jesus’ response, and it clearly refers to Baptism, to the water that cleanses from sin and pours forth new life in the Holy Spirit. How important this gift is! The waters of Baptism join us to Jesus and make us part of the Church, the community of those reborn in Christ. In order to be one with the Church, we must let ourselves be loved by God. If we do not follow the path of humility, the path which acknowledges that our “feet are dirty,” we will not be one with Jesus. The Savior cannot reach us by force; He cannot save us by force; He needs our consent. Peter gives his consent: “Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well.” This is the consent that each one must give. The waters of Baptism cannot have their effect over us without our personal consent to be washed by God’s mercy.

Once having completed His humble service to them, Jesus speaks and says to everyone, “You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master,’ and rightly so, for indeed I am.” Here Jesus proclaims His identity and His highest dignity: Teacher and Lord. It is an important theological declaration: the affirmation of His divinity. At the same time, he asks us to act likewise: “If I...therefore...you....”

“I have given you a model to follow.” Jesus is the model to follow. His actions and words are essential for the disciple. The first letter of Peter says, “...Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps (1 Peter 2:21).”

“...you ought to wash one another’s feet.” In this verse lies the very soul, the profound meaning of the Church.

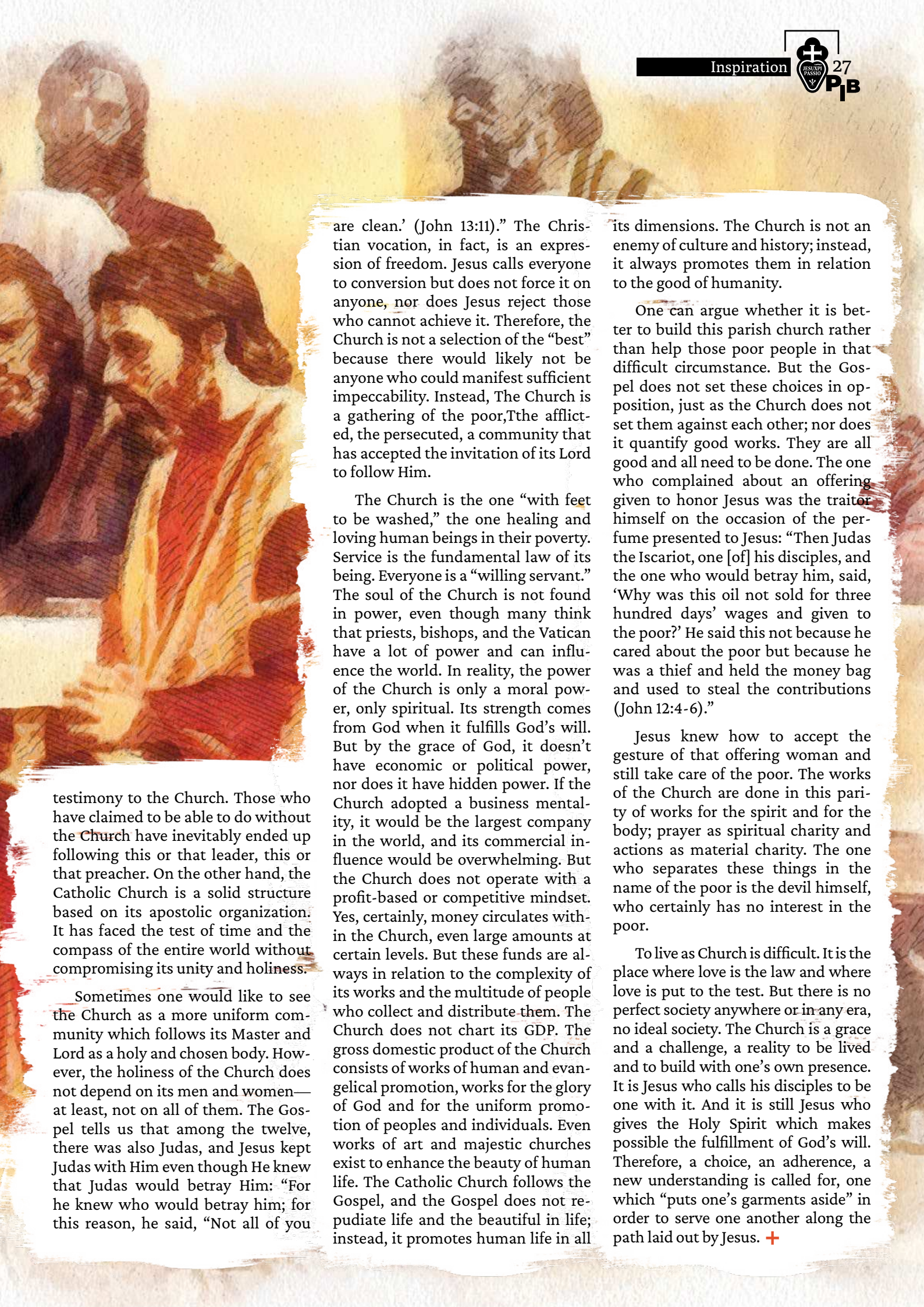
Jesus called His disciples, both men and women, to form a community. In fact, He says in the Gospel of



John, "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain... (John 15:16)." He also gave a structure and an organization to this community. He chose twelve of them and appointed Peter as their leader. "He appointed twelve [whom he also named apostles] that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach...(Mark 3:14)." He said to Peter, "...you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matthew 16:18-19)." Finally, He gave them this command: "Then he...called the Twelve, and said to them, 'If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all (Mark 9:35)." The washing of the feet, therefore, becomes an icon of the Church, the community gathered by love and for love.

The very nature of love requires a relationship with others. Whether it is purely spiritual, as in monastic prayer communities, or affectively expressed in conditions of togetherness, closeness, and communion of life, the Church is understood as the essential instrument for living the commandment of love: "This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:35)."

Christianity without the Church is a contradiction in terms. There may be discussions about the ways of being the Church, about the different roles and tasks which are possible within the community, but not about its importance and nature. The others—brothers and sisters—are indispensable to the very mission of the Gospel. Jesus entrusted His precious treasures of salvation to His Church. He entrusted the sacraments to the Church, He entrusted His word and His



are clean.' (John 13:11)." The Christian vocation, in fact, is an expression of freedom. Jesus calls everyone to conversion but does not force it on anyone, nor does Jesus reject those who cannot achieve it. Therefore, the Church is not a selection of the "best" because there would likely not be anyone who could manifest sufficient impeccability. Instead, The Church is a gathering of the poor, the afflicted, the persecuted, a community that has accepted the invitation of its Lord to follow Him.

The Church is the one "with feet to be washed," the one healing and loving human beings in their poverty. Service is the fundamental law of its being. Everyone is a "willing servant." The soul of the Church is not found in power, even though many think that priests, bishops, and the Vatican have a lot of power and can influence the world. In reality, the power of the Church is only a moral power, only spiritual. Its strength comes from God when it fulfills God's will. But by the grace of God, it doesn't have economic or political power, nor does it have hidden power. If the Church adopted a business mentality, it would be the largest company in the world, and its commercial influence would be overwhelming. But the Church does not operate with a profit-based or competitive mindset. Yes, certainly, money circulates within the Church, even large amounts at certain levels. But these funds are always in relation to the complexity of its works and the multitude of people who collect and distribute them. The Church does not chart its GDP. The gross domestic product of the Church consists of works of human and evangelical promotion, works for the glory of God and for the uniform promotion of peoples and individuals. Even works of art and majestic churches exist to enhance the beauty of human life. The Catholic Church follows the Gospel, and the Gospel does not repudiate life and the beautiful in life; instead, it promotes human life in all

testimony to the Church. Those who have claimed to be able to do without the Church have inevitably ended up following this or that leader, this or that preacher. On the other hand, the Catholic Church is a solid structure based on its apostolic organization. It has faced the test of time and the compass of the entire world without compromising its unity and holiness.

Sometimes one would like to see the Church as a more uniform community which follows its Master and Lord as a holy and chosen body. However, the holiness of the Church does not depend on its men and women—at least, not on all of them. The Gospel tells us that among the twelve, there was also Judas, and Jesus kept Judas with Him even though He knew that Judas would betray Him: "For he knew who would betray him; for this reason, he said, "Not all of you

its dimensions. The Church is not an enemy of culture and history; instead, it always promotes them in relation to the good of humanity.

One can argue whether it is better to build this parish church rather than help those poor people in that difficult circumstance. But the Gospel does not set these choices in opposition, just as the Church does not set them against each other; nor does it quantify good works. They are all good and all need to be done. The one who complained about an offering given to honor Jesus was the traitor himself on the occasion of the perfume presented to Jesus: "Then Judas the Iscariot, one [of] his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, 'Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?' He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions (John 12:4-6)."

Jesus knew how to accept the gesture of that offering woman and still take care of the poor. The works of the Church are done in this parity of works for the spirit and for the body; prayer as spiritual charity and actions as material charity. The one who separates these things in the name of the poor is the devil himself, who certainly has no interest in the poor.

To live as Church is difficult. It is the place where love is the law and where love is put to the test. But there is no perfect society anywhere or in any era, no ideal society. The Church is a grace and a challenge, a reality to be lived and to build with one's own presence. It is Jesus who calls his disciples to be one with it. And it is still Jesus who gives the Holy Spirit which makes possible the fulfillment of God's will. Therefore, a choice, an adherence, a new understanding is called for, one which "puts one's garments aside" in order to serve one another along the path laid out by Jesus. +

HOPE-FILLED EASTER EGGS.

Benedetto Ricini,

in L'ECO di SAN GABRIEL,

March 2023

Nº. 3, Year 111



Amid the Corona virus pandemic and during the past year of the war in Ukraine, Father Lawrence Rywalt, assigned to the secretarial staff of the Passionist General Curia in Rome, had second thoughts about observing his annual Lenten tradition of making “pisanki”, the intricately designed and brightly coloured eggs typical for Easter in Eastern and Central European cultures. Initially he reflected that decorating Easter eggs can seem frivolous, when people are suffering due to sickness and war, and whose lives are in chaos.

However, he decided to continue this tradition when he remembered an old eastern European legend: “It is said that there is a huge evil creature chained to a hillside.

Every year when *pisanki*, are made, the number of eggs is counted. If only a few eggs are made, the creature’s bonds are loosened, and evil flows throughout the earth. However, if many eggs are decorated, the creature’s bonds are tightened, and its evil is kept in check.” For us Christians, it is Jesus’ death on the hill of Calvary, and his resurrection that achieved the ultimate triumph of life over evil and death. As Pope Francis said: *“Beyond all defeats, evil and violence, beyond all suffering and death, the Risen One lives and guides history.”*

Father Lawrence has made *pisanki*-making a usual Lenten practice since 2001. “It’s a form of meditation, since I have to totally concentrate on what I am doing,” he said. “I listen to Gregorian chant

or Eastern-rite liturgical music while I work, primarily during the quiet hours of the day.”

In Polish, Easter eggs are called *pisanki*, which comes from the verb *pisac*, or to write. Like the writing inscribed on an icon, decorative Easter eggs are “inscribed”. The process begins with choosing a design and applying it onto a hollowed-out egg by hand with drops of beeswax on the head of a pin. One egg takes about two hours to complete.

“No two eggs are exactly the same”, he noted, “just as each one of us is a unique creation of God.”

Father Lawrence remembers *pisanki* as part of the Easter traditions growing up in New York City in his family of Italian and Polish origins. On Holy Saturday, his Polish grandmother would prepare a basket of meats and dairy products, and other foods, including the *pisanki*, from which they had fasted during Lent. A priest would come to the home and bless the food basket, or they would take the basket to the parish church to be blessed — an Easter tradition that continues in many Eastern and Central European countries today. This memory remained and, in 2001, Father Lawrence returned



to the traditional art of making *pisanki*.

There is another legend that explains why the *pysanki*, that he designs are coloured red. An old legend recounts that Simon of Cyrene, a farmer, had gone into Jerusalem to sell his eggs to those who were preparing the Jewish Passover feast that evening. When the soldiers forced him to carry the cross of Jesus, Simon had no choice but to put down his basket. As he did so, some drops of the blood of Jesus fell on the eggs. Later, when he returned for his basket, the eggs were no longer white, but coloured bright red.

For this reason, Christians continue to colour eggs red to recall the redeeming blood of Christ, shed during his Passion, and to remember the first man to take up the cross

of Jesus and follow him. “In the midst of all the darkness and death that surround us”, Fr. Lawrence continued, “we are celebrating the Resurrection. Christ has overcome death. Death will not have the last word”. The Founder of the Passionists, St. Paul of the Cross, said that “*the love of God is ingenious*, always creative, and therefore, the paschal mystery of the death and the resurrection of Jesus is always new. The Holy Spirit is always creative even amid suffering and death.

“After the pandemic and the war in Ukraine”, concluded Fr. Law-

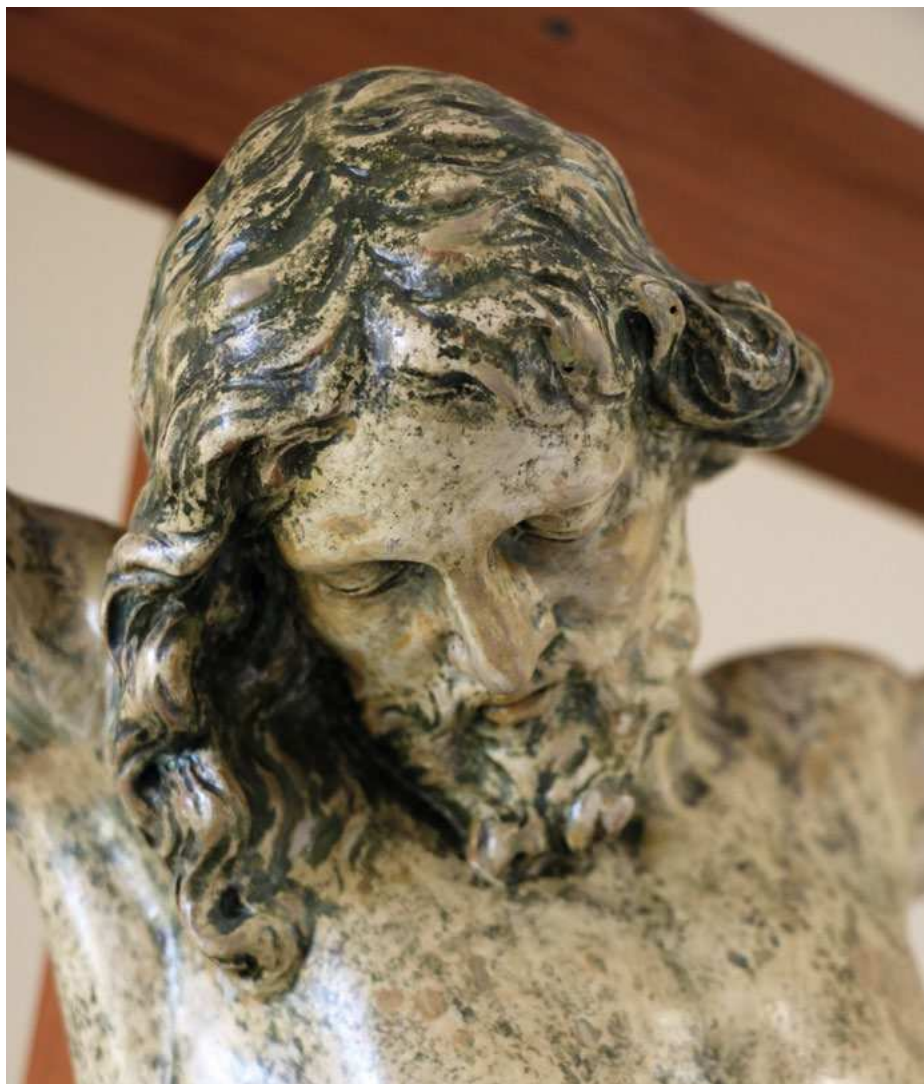
rence, “our world and our lives will be different. Something new is taking place. Perhaps in a small way, visually, these Easter eggs are saying that the breath of the Holy Spirit is always innovative, filling us with the joy and hope that flow from the glorious wounds of Jesus and the merciful heart of the Father.” +





ANDREA MARZOLLA

CHANGING THE FOCUS CHANGES THE WHOLE PICTURE



In 2009, I entered the Passionist retreat in Vetralla, the Community where those who were interested in joining the consecrated life as Passionists could begin their formation. I embarked on a path which was, little by little, unfolding before me. However, in 2017, I decided to leave the Community in order to live my life as a married man.

I confess with no small amount of embarrassment that, despite living, studying, and praying for seven and a half years with the Passion-

ists, I returned home without a clear understanding of this charism. Yes, I knew what the “Memory of the Passion” meant: to meditate on the Passion of Christ every day and to bring the world to appreciate it. However, at least personally, something was lacking; it was like firing a pistol loaded with blanks.

Especially during the novitiate, we prayed the Stations of the Cross often, recited the chaplet of the Five Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ, prayed before the Crucifix, and so

on, to keep our minds focused — in this direction. Sometimes I went through the motions mechanically, repeating words, while my heart and mind were elsewhere; at other times, I was fully present and responding to the prayer and meditation, thinking about how unjustly an innocent person had suffered. It was the same emotion and indignation I would feel when watching a television program showing the wrongful conviction and subsequent execution of an innocent person.

What I am trying to say is that I could be equally moved or distracted before scenes of the Passion of Jesus, but in either case, I did not feel a deep connection between this event and myself.

In 2019, I bought a book, and unexpectedly, as I read it, my mind and heart were opened, and I understood, at least in part, something that had always been before my eyes but that I had never been able to recognize. The author was a Protestant pastor, a Christian with a good understanding of the Scriptures, but evidently not a Catholic. He had dedicated his entire life to helping people with various types of addictions. He holds that bulimia, smoking, alcohol and drug dependencies, and sex and/or pornography addictions are the ways that individuals try to compensate for the wounds they have received from life or, more explicitly, the LACK OF LOVE they have experienced. Furthermore, this lack of love has created a sort of “black hole” in their lives that they try, unsuccessfully, to fill with compulsive vices.

Andrew Comiskey, in “Wounded Identity,” explains that the way to reverse this addictive behavior, the only way, is to receive a love greater than that which was denied one. This may seem impossible, and yes, it is humanly impossible. But in fact, there is a love greater than the absent love in our lives which we can embrace by entering into contact, through daily meditation and contemplation, with that unfailing love which compelled Christ, in His passion, to love us more than he loved His own life. Therefore, focus fully on love and not on pain. For Jesus there was certainly atrocious, horrendous, heart-wrenching, unbearable, and incomparable pain; more than perhaps anyone has ever suffered, but He suffered more than physical pain; His suffering was much more mental and spiritual, as taught by the holy mystic Camilla Battista da Varano.

A “nuclear bomb of pain,” but it was love that rescued us!

The pain of the Passion was not the purpose, pain was not the goal, but it was the means to pay our indebtedness and to show us that God exists, and that for Him, the salvation of our souls is more important than His own life.

While the nails burned in His wrists and feet, while His positioning kept Him from freely drawing a breath, while men mocked Him and demons jeered at Him, He was more concerned about our salvation than His own fate. And out of His whole being, in every movement and with every thought, came a piercing cry of intercession to the Father for us.

If we accept that Christ died for us, personally for us, then we are no longer alone, we are no longer orphans, we are no longer unloved. But this awareness is reached slowly, day after day, with the help of God’s grace, and without which everything would be darkness, without which there would be no slightest glimmer of light.

If we understood God’s saving love in this way, even if only partially, then we could be only grateful to Him. And this feeling of gratitude would become the main reason for our joy, and the “Memory of the Passion” would be transformed into the “Grateful Memory of the Passion of Christ,” as proclaimed by Saint Paul of the Cross. And it is precisely as Grateful Memory that the love of God transforms us, because even the devil has a memory of the Passion of Christ, but he is not at all grateful.

Sometimes God chooses paths that may seem to us as detours in order to make us understand certain things. For me, through a book written by a Protestant pastor, God helped me to finally grasp some of the Passionist charism. Now, with the little insight that was granted to me, I am finally able to understand why and how “The Passion of Christ is the only remedy for all the evils of the world” (Saint Paul of the Cross). +





KEN MACDONALD

UNDERSTANDING THAT CHRIST DIED FOR ME, CHANGED MY LIFE

My wife Glenda and I celebrated our 48th wedding anniversary in August. We have been blessed with two children, Travis, a Police Officer, and Marisa, an ICU Nurse. We have a seven-year-old granddaughter and a five-year-old grandson who occupy much of our time. We are truly blessed to be able to spend as much time as we do with the grandkids. We recently returned from Hawaii on our annual family vacation chasing the grandkids around the pool

My initial contact with the Passionists was at a Family Retreat with my wife's family back in the 70's. I attended a number of the Men's Retreats with members of our Parish in the mid 80's. We were out of the Sacramento area for eleven years with a job transfer.

Shortly after our return late in 1996, I was urged by a good friend to return to a Men's Retreat; I have been a consistent attendee ever since.

I had the privilege of serving on the Board of Directors at Christ the King at its inception. I served for nine years, with a short stint as Board President. At the request and direction of the Board, I served as the Chief Administrative Officer at Christ the King for over two

years. During that time as a Board member, I was a part of a number of retreat opportunities for Board members which brought the Passionist Mission much more into focus for me.

Understanding the love that God has shown in that Christ died for us, and for me, changed my approach to my life in a number of ways. I am much more cognizant of the "Crucified in Christ" that we see every day. The homeless and the poor have taken on a more significant focus in my life as I look to be of greater service to Christ. I am working with the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the feeding of the poor and tending to the needs of those in financial need.

I have been retired from my position as a Regional Sales Manager for a major pharmaceutical company for twelve years. During the final five years of my career, I believe I became an improved manager of my people as a result of my exposure to the Passionist Mission. I recall returning to work on a Monday morning following a retreat weekend with an approach of becoming more of a servant to those for whom I was responsible.

"What can I do today to help my people to be successful in their job?"

I found great satisfaction in being able to help people succeed and grow in their positions.

Over all, I believe that the Passionists have helped me to better define my definition of compassion. I try to see the "crucified" of today as people I can reach out to and bring the peace of Christ into their hearts. I am more patient and understanding of those who are in need.

Finally, having had the privilege of meeting the Passionist Family on many occasions, be it at the Province Retreat Center Board meetings or other opportunities, I have always been impressed and encouraged by the dedication the entire community has to God's less fortunate. The example of dedication to the service of others has been a wonderful experience for me. As a result, I believe that some of that compassion has "rubbed off" on me. I have truly been blessed to have had the opportunity to be a part of the Passionist Mission

As is true with most ministries, I have gotten much more out of my efforts than I have ever put in. While I am no longer a Board Member, I look forward to my retreat experience each year. We will continue to give our time and financial support to Christ the King Retreat Center. +



JAMES BOLOGNA

THAT WASN'T THE JOURNEY TO WHICH I WAS CALLED

(James Bologna is the Business Manager St. Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat Center, Detroit, Michigan).

A journey to becoming a lay Passionist can be circuitous. Growing up in a family of 8, we moved frequently and by high school I had attended 8 different schools.

We were not gypsies - my father worked for the Federal Government. When work returned him back to Detroit, Dad thankfully decided we weren't moving again. Our roots were in Detroit surrounded by grandparents, aunts, uncles and almost 40 cousins. Similarly, my journey to embracing the Passionist charism parallels my gypsy upbringing.

I am a "Cradle Catholic" that read, studied, and attended services from different Christian religions. I sang bass for a Baptist choir, played bass for an Evangelical church but never felt the same tradition and comfort as I do in a Catholic church.

When I stumbled upon the Passionist retreats in my late 30's, I immediately felt at ease. The Passionists have the same community and social justice teachings that my parents grounded me in. I appreciate the sense of belonging and the spiritual insights I get from all the Passionists (vowed and lay),

whether in-person or via Zoom. I try to take advantage of all opportunities to learn more about being a Passionist.

I never intended to be the Business Administrator at St. Paul's. I spent about 40 years working in healthcare analyzing data, consulting, and making projections – a nerd.

While involved with the retreat center for 10 years and 28 retreats, my plan was to retire and hike the entire Appalachian Trail (AT). I'd saved, planned, bought gear, and prepared months of backpacking meals.

When I read that St. Paul's was looking for a Business Administrator, I felt an overwhelming call to apply. I took my nerdy resume, wrote extensively why I wasn't qualified, and sent it in hoping I wouldn't be called.

Despite my cover letter and resume, Fr. Pat and Sandra Arnould hired me.

I think I could have hiked the AT, but maybe that wasn't the journey to which I was called.

My first year at St. Paul's was challenging. There's so much I needed to learn to be helpful to the Retreat Center.

Mercifully, I'm surrounded by dedicated coworkers who've helped me and my counterparts at the other retreat centers who have kindly guided me. Sandra is "on retainer" for all my questions, and I often stop in our chapel to ask for His advice.

The Passionists (lay and vowed) are a wonderful community, and I appreciate their insights. I'm finding deeper meaning in God's grace, letting go, and trusting in God. After all, He's the best guide for all our journeys.

No one travels alone. I met a girl Kim whom I am crazy about, and we've been married for 40 years. She's my best friend and puts up with my many silly hobbies. We raised four inquisitive children in the same house for 30 years, and, like their ancestors, they too have taken up careers focused on community and social justice.

They did not want to be gypsies growing up but now live all over the US and sometimes overseas. They've also provided us with 7 grandchildren who we adore and spend all our vacation time visiting.

I'm sure that there will be more journeys to take, but I'm comforted knowing that we have a community of Passionists who journey with us all. +





ADRIANO SPINA, C.P.

PASSIONIST POPULAR MISSIONS (THIRD PART) AND LAZIO IN THE 19th CENTURY

CAPRAROLA, LAZIO. MISSION 1839.



This Mission began on February 17, 1839, with three missionaries and a Passionist lay brother who was to oversee the logistics of the mission. The people responded very well, in spite of there being a pandemic in the area at the time.

The preacher's report begins with: "After three days of Mission it can be said, with all truth, that Caprarola had undergone a complete change; the taverns were empty, the theaters deserted, the brothels without business, courting postponed, while blasphemous and offensive speech was curtailed. The town's entire population (more than 5,000 souls) had one thought on its mind, to come together to listen to the word of God, and to receive the sacraments. At the first sound of the bell calling to the mission, the church would be immediately filled so that the preaching was always before a crowd, which, nevertheless, was listening and paying close attention. They were so committed to making their confession with the missionaries, that some excesses were produced. For example, in the evening, after the church was closed, the women remained there, in the night air, ignoring even the wind, the rain, and the hail which fell during the night. What is even more remarkable is that at the same time there was a contagion of the flu underway which was claiming three and four persons a day in death. The people, nevertheless, were constant; eighteen, twenty and more men

would stake out their places around the house where the missionaries were staying, even up the outside stairway, day and night, in order to make their confession. The missionaries were pleased to hear their confessions because they were so contrite, and found themselves moved to compunction by the example of their penitents. Throughout the mission, the compunction was felt by all."

MISSION AT ONANO, LAZIO, 1834.

By returning to the original documents, some other details can be included which did not appear in the summary already published.

The Passionist missionaries were preaching in a town named Farnese, when they saw "the Magistrate of Onano arrive, together with the clergy; they brought a petition to the effect that when the mission in Farnese was over, would they go to the town of Onano to conduct the mission there. The response of the Father Provincial, Antonio di San Giacomo, was that the request could be accepted only if the mission were reduced to only twelve days, instead of fifteen, due to the other commitments already made for other locations."

The mission began there on February 5, 1834. The town "has more than three thousand souls, and this mission was blessed by God in a very special way." In spite of having been reduced to only twelve days, "the populace was completely moved, right from the first sermon." On the second day, the bishop, Msgr. Nicola Belletti, arrived and stayed to the end of the mission. He "marveled at the missionaries, and how [the inhabitants] had already been so moved after only two days of mission; and he believed that the topics of the preaching were excellent." The report continues by describing "the men, standing for three, four, and five continuous days next to the home of the missionaries, standing by night and day, without a warming fire, content with a single piece of bread that their people brought to them, for no other reason than to confess to the missionaries. [The same] for the women; in the evening, after the sermon un-

til the morning, in spite of the very strong north wind, they waited. A considerable number of reconciliations were effected. Some sinners and even those who had not approached the holy sacraments for seventeen, eighteen and even thirty years, confessed and gave unequivocal signs of true penance. Daily, there were great numbers of people from other towns as well, especially from Sorano, in Tuscany. These people had to come through completely impracticable roads. The General Communions were



very numerous and conducted by Msgr. Belletti, bishop of Acquapendente, who deigned to attend all of the exercises of the holy mission which had moved all of the people to the highest devotion. Then, on the day of the papal blessing, February 16, large numbers of people flocked to it from Grotte di Castro, Ischia, Valentano, and Farnese. From Sorano came the philharmonic orchestra and a thousand people who gathered with such composure and modesty that they properly earned the admiration of the people. The blessing, amid groaning and crying, was given without delay to all of the persons who had gathered in order to allow them time to return to their respective towns. Then, in the evening, the same Bishop Belletti, accompanied by the parish priest, some pastors, the Superior of the Reformed Friars, and other principals of the region came to dine with the missionaries. On the following morning, February 17, they left together with the bishop for Acquapendente, but as they were leaving, almost all of the population crowded alongside the missionaries, in such a way that the missionaries could go neither forward nor backward. Only after struggling for two miles, were they able to convince the people to return to Onano, leaving the group in tears and sorrow for the unhappiness they felt.”

The report of the mission that took place continues with the following episode: “What happened to one of the townspeople is worth note. The day after the missionaries left, the Bishop himself told me at the time of the mission in Acquapendente when I was able to hear it from that most worthy Bishop, who had heard it from that most worthy parish priest of Onano who had dealt with the very one

about whom this had happened. That townsman had unfortunately led a scandalous life up to the time of the mission. Previously, under the French, he was twice sentenced to be shot for some of his crimes; but both times, he managed to escape. When the mission took place, it had been more than 20 years since he had made his confession, but he went to one of the missionaries and made his general confession. He still returned to the same missionary four more times, so he was very happy. The missionary, as the man himself told his wife, had told him to remain good, since it might happen that he would soon die. The man, however, took it as if the missionary had told him that he would die very soon. On the morning the missionaries left, he went to the church, saying many prayers and making the Via Crucis over and over again. When he returned home in the evening, he immediately told his wife that he felt ill, and that he might really be dying, just as he thought the missionary had said to him. He went to bed, and his wife called for the doctor, who recommended that he receive the Sacraments because in reality his life was in danger. The blessed man said that he did long to receive Holy Communion and Extreme Unction, but felt no need for Confession because he felt very satisfied with the General Confession he had made with the missionary. In fact, the parish priest came, gave him Communicated and [unreadable word]. Around midnight, the sick man, blessing the Lord for the great grace that he had received at the time of the holy mission, breathed his soul into the hands of his creator. Those with him envied his happy fate.” +



42nd PILGRIMAGE, ON FOOT FROM TERAMO TO SAINT GABRIEL'S SHRINE

On Thursday, July 21, 2022, Father Francesco Cordeschi, the founder and soul of Tendopoli [literally “tent city”, a camping experience for young adults held annually at the Shrine of St. Gabriel] introduced these two events scheduled for the month of August. The presentation took place in Teramo at the BIM Hall [“BIM” is a type of chamber of commerce for a geographical region in Italy]. There, Fr. Cordeschi explained that Tendopoli invites young people to keep going forward, and it is summarized in the motto “Talita kum, young person, I say to you, rise up.”

The two events were accompanied by two online meetings. On August 11, Father Cordeschi presented “Tendopoli: a love story,” and, on August 17, Father Alessandro Ciciliani presented “The Passionists, a love that made history.”

In keeping with tradition, the pilgrimage took place on the first Saturday of August (August 6, 2022), and began at the Teramo Cathedral at 9:30 p.m., for the blessing of the pilgrims by Bishop Monsignor Lorenzo Leuzzi, to be followed by the departure at 10:00 p.m. The pilgrimage was led by the Torch of Hope, first blessed by Saint John Paul II, then by Benedict XVI, and finally by Pope Francis.

The torch was carried in turns by a group of 20 competitive race-walkers from the town of Montorio al Vomano.

At 1:00 a.m., the pilgrims arrived at Montorio, where they stopped at the parish to receive the Eucharistic blessing from the parish priest, Don Paolo Di Domenico. After a few minutes of rest, they resumed their pilgrimage to the Shrine, where their arrival was scheduled for 6:00 a.m., to be followed by Mass at 7:00 a.m.

The second event, the Tendopoli, took place on the third Saturday of August (August 20, 2022).

TALITA KUM, I SAY TO YOU, YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN, GET UP.

We cannot allow ourselves to be stopped. Talita kum. “Young men and women, I say to you, get up.” Keep going.

Do not be afraid, do not hesitate, get going. Take your tent and move on. Don't search Google for where you should go. You create your own path as you walk along. Always remember this: the important thing is not the destination, but the journey. +



42nd TENDOPOLI AT SAINT GABRIEL'S SHRINE



Mission Land



Walk to discover your own self; to converse with the Lord, to meet many “others” and to share among yourselves the effort, the mud, the sun, the rain, a sip of water, a prayer, a laugh. This and much more is Tendopoli.

We are waiting for you. Tendopoli is an experience that speaks to you, intrigues you, draws you out, engages you beyond talk, depends on you, builds on you, and keeps you in the spotlight.

Tendopoli is a life choice. You can be like vagabonds who don't know where they came from or where they are going; you can be like tourists who carefully choose a comfortable place to camp, but Tendopoli asks you to be like pilgrims who, in addition to exploring their origins and their goals, also know how to fall to their knees when necessary.

Tendopoli introduces you to that fascinating and infinite pilgrimage of the heart, which ignites the fire of hope. It illuminates the night. “The night seems to have passed,” said Pope Francis in announcing the Jubilee Year of 2025. He added: “In the past two years, we have experienced doubts and fears over the pandemic; now science has provided a preliminary remedy. We have full faith that we will overcome the epidemic and that the world will return to its rhythms of personal re-

lationships and social life.” We also hope for this and that is why we cannot hold back.

We await you at Tendopoli, and we eagerly await the Jubilee of 2025. We have a dream in our hearts: to create the first international Tendopoli. The Holy Father has called on us to “keep the flame of hope burning” and to “do everything possible to help everyone regain the strength and confidence to look to the future with an open spirit, a confident heart, and an optimistic outlook.”

When presenting the Jubilee logo, the author Travisani said: “I imagined the Pope, today's Peter, leading the people of God towards our common goal, and embracing the cross, which becomes an anchor, a stable reference point for humanity; and we, the people, support each other so that together we can avail ourselves of that anchor, and symbolically recall the pilgrims down through the ages.”

We too are among these pilgrims who, for 42 years, have encamped upon the Passionist Sign over the heart of the Passionists, where the cross planted in the heart expresses the same concept as the cross of the jubilee logo which becomes an anchor. It is about the love that becomes life. We await you. +





REPORT ON THE MIGRANTS' POSADA, 2022

COH. CARLOS LANTIGUA CHECO, CP

On the morning of Wednesday, December 14th, 2022, the brethren of the retreat of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico) started setting up for the traditional posada prepared especially for migrants and people experiencing homelessness. This event is organized every year by the DIST Foundation (Discover, Imagine, Sow, and Transform). This Passionist initiative is an expression of the core of Passionist spirituality and supports other initiatives that are linked with our presence in the Mexican state of Jalisco.

The work was distributed equally among the various groups that operate out of the parish rectory. These individuals, committed to working for the benefit of the community, have organized themselves in order to more effectively respond to God's invitation that they take an active part in the building up of God's kingdom.

Having received their assigned tasks, each postulant, religious man or religious woman, lay man or lay woman immersed themselves in the carrying out of the planned program, which promised to become a day full of emotions.

Those for whom we had prepared with dedicated care, began arriving very early to the vicinity of the parish church. Everyone was looking forward excitedly to know what the day would bring.

At 9:15 a.m., we began with a moment of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. The prayer was under the direction of the group *40 Days for Life*, and about 250 people were inside the church as we began. The theme of the prayer was in thanksgiving to God, who has given us so much, and how we in turn, are the hope of those called "blessed" in the gospel who have little or nothing for themselves.

After the prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, we began the Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Father Cesar Navarrete, the Rector of the church which has been the principal provider of meals for those who daily come to the courtyard seeking to renew the strength needed for another day. At the Mass, the Christmas reflection was given by Clara Macias, on behalf of her group, *Fullness of Life in Jesus*. Her group has use of our rectory facilities as a main office for its central team, and they have been



entrusted with the parish territory in which to carry out their pastoral mission.

During the celebration of the Eucharist, particular mention was made of the origin and goals espoused by this Passionist Community of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, with an emphasis on the growth and the accomplishments made possible by the commitment to teamwork among all those collaborating.

After mass, we all moved into the church's courtyard which had been prepared for the serving of a meal. Those serving the guests were all members of the various ministerial groups of the parish. The backbone of the meal preparation was the group of volunteers who daily provide a meal for approximately 130 people in our parish lunch program.

After sharing in the meal, we moved on to the eagerly anticipated breaking of piñatas, something which always brings joy to those who have come together.

Recognizing the cold that can descend on the city during the middle of winter, the program concluded with the distribution of blankets and some toiletries. All of this generosity was made possible through the donations of the people who believe that God is guiding the parish in its mission outreach.

Having concluded the posada, and after putting everything back in its place, the workers met in the parish store where they could evaluate the day's program. It was also a chance to share with one another in thanksgiving for the witness they were able to give as followers of the Crucified One.

During this evaluation, Father Cesar thanked each of the pastoral teams that make up the DIST organization for their commitment and cooperation. He especially singled out the founders of what was initially called Adela's dining room, in honor of the woman who, while cooking for the Passionists, also served meals to the migrants who found their way to the community's door.

Three of those founders were present: Julia, Kristy, and Nena. Special mention was made of Brother Chuy, who was also a key collaborator in this God-inspired initiative.

Special thanks were offered to Father Cesar by Kristy, speaking on behalf of all the volunteers, to thank him for his commitment, dynamism, and dedication in building up this service project in which dozens of lay people are living out their ecclesial commitment as volunteers.

At the end, the traditional photographs were taken, an essential part of every gathering. Good wishes were shared among all, and a blessing was given, with the hope of soon being reunited in service to God's people. †





CAIO CÉSAR CUNHA DE SOUZA

PASSIONIST GETHSEMANI PROVINCE: FIRST NATIONAL VOCATIONAL-MISSIONARY PROJECT IN THE AMAZON

From January 5th to 17th, 2023, Frs. Leonildo Pedro dos Santos, C.P., and Francisco Maria da Esperança, C.P., both members of the Passionist Gethsemane Province, took part in the 1st National Vocational-Missionary Project for Seminarians, Rectors, Formators, and Young Missionaries, which was organized by the Pontifical Missionary Works (OMP) in collaboration with the Organization of Seminaries and Institutes of Brazil (OSIB), the national leadership of the Missionary Councils of Seminarians (COMISE), the Conference of Religious of Brazil (CRB), and the Archdiocese of Manaus.

The selection of the mission territory took into account the need for drawing the attention of the Church and government to the reality of the Amazon situation. Thus, the mission had the theme “Sent by the Spirit to the ends of the world;” and the motto “Christ directs us to the Amazon.” There were 280 missionaries from all over Brazil taking part in the project.

According to Fr. Leonildo’s report, this experience encouraged him in his religious vocation and caused him to ask some questions:

Participating in this down to earth experience has greatly encouraged me to recognize that we need to re-evaluate our presences and our activities; for example, when we complain of being tired after celebrating three masses, although the community is right next door or just a short distance away by car. What is happening to us? Are we too comfortable? I also have to question our presence as religious in dioceses



es that have enough priests and whose parishes are holding out for the status quo. How long will we accept this situation? I believe we must have the courage to undertake change.

Father Leonildo worked at the Parish of Nossa Senhora de Perpétuo Socorro in the city of Careiro, where there are 72 ecclesial communities, most of them located on the riverbank of the Paran  River and boats being their only means of transportation.

The pastor of the parish, Father Donizetti Maciel, had been in the parish for four years, having also come from a larger metropolitan diocese, that of Ribeir o Pretos (Sao Paulo). Among Father Leonildo’s parish duties was that of helping Father Donizetti Maciel in administering the Sacraments, something very important due to the reduced number of priests, the large number of communities, and the difficult access to the communities.

Despite his fear of falling into the rivers since he did not know how to swim, and

the risks posed by the river creatures, Father Leonildo expressed his satisfaction in living with the people of this community:

Despite these personal challenges, the experience itself brought a lot of joy and desire to be of help. All of the families I stayed with were poor economically speaking but very rich in faith and hospitality. I witnessed a great happiness in these families as they spared no effort to gather at their chapels, although it meant arriving with their feet covered in mud. A foot washing at the door prepared them to join in the liturgical celebration. The Church in this parish is alive; every Sunday a layman or a laywoman presides over the celebration of the Word. In one of the communities, the people mentioned that the last time they were able to have Mass was in September; almost four months had passed, but the community never stopped gathering for their weekly celebration of the Word.

Francisco, a third-year theology seminarian, stayed in the city of Itacoatiara, 200 kilometers from Manaus. It is the headquarters of the Prelature and therefore a vast territory with few priests. This means that in some areas opportunities for the reception of the sacraments occur perhaps once a week or may not happen for months. The parish that hosted him is dedicated to Our Lady of Aparecida. As he himself reports, the greatest difficulties were: *the diminished participation of the people and the increasing conversion of individuals to other religious denominations. These conversions have further increased since the closure of churches during the pandemic.*

During the mission week, his two main activities were visiting families and celebrating liturgical services in the communities. During this time, despite the primitive conditions and

the poverty, there was never a lack of sharing and joy. He said:

The people were very welcoming, and at none of the houses where we knocked did the door remain closed. On the contrary, my group, accompanied by parishioners singing and praying in the streets, attracted the people's attention and moved them to invite us in and pray in their homes.

In addition to his urban experience, Francisco was also able to visit an indigenous village of the Tuiuca people. He saw that their culture is based on a life in harmony with nature. Their livelihood and their food come from their own production of crafts and from farming.

For him, this experience caused him to reflect seriously on what it meant for him to be a "religious" and his "mission" as a Passionist:

This experience greatly affected me regarding my religious identity and my mission as a Passionist. I came to realize how much simple things, a word, a presence, a hug, a visit, can change people's lives, encouraging them, giving them hope, helping them realize that life is much bigger than their difficulties. To help people to see that God's love surpasses any of our struggle and pain is a confirmation of my Passionist vocation to be a witness of God's love.

Additional information and accounts of the Vocational-Missionary Project can be found on the website of the Manaus Diocese. May this contact with the crucified peoples of the Amazon Region move our entire Province to prayer and action following the example of Jesus. After all, as our Father and Founder said, "the Passion of Jesus is the most effective remedy against the evils of the world. +





GREGOR LENZEN, CP

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF PASSIONIST PRESENCE IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

Address given at the jubilee celebration Schwarzenfeld (Bavaria) – 16 October 2022.

Let me begin my talk on “100 Years of Passionists in Germany and Austria” with two fundamental questions.

What exactly are we celebrating today?

A success story? Or are we not rather talking about a “mission impossible”, an enterprise that was doomed to fail from the outset? I think the answer is “neither.”

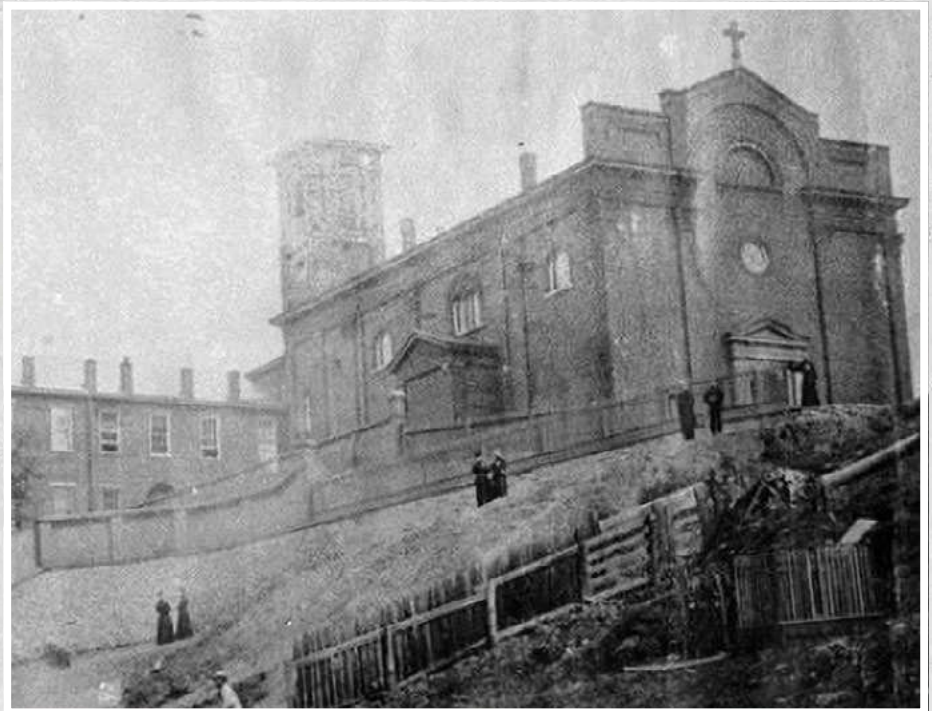
What lessons do we draw for us today from this history of the German-Austrian Passionist foundation?

This seems to me to be the even more important question today, one to which I will try to give an answer in my following remarks.

This commemorative lecture is not intended to be a chronological event list — for that I refer you to the presentation recorded in our anniversary album — but rather, this is a reflection on the core motives that led our founding fathers to undertake the hardships of this foundation in Germany and Austria.



+ P. Viktor Koch (1873-1955)



+ The first Passionist retreat, Pittsburgh.

In order to do so, I will frequently draw on the personal testimony of our Province Founder, Fr Viktor Koch, C.P.

But let us first look at the roots from which sprang the idea of establishing the Passionist Congregation in Germany. Let us look at the **history before the history**.

In 1852, the sons of St. Paul of the Cross entered the “new world” to lay the foundation for their USA presence in Pittsburgh. Among those pioneers was a confrere from Prussian Poland who spoke German. He was soon appointed pastor of a German parish in Pittsburgh, St. Michael parish.

The German Catholics of this parish were particularly supportive of the first Passionists in America. Therefore, our confreres decided to

found their first monastery in this area of the city. The site was atop a hill from which the observer has a magnificent view over Pittsburgh.

After the construction of the monastery and church, which were consecrated under the name of the recently beatified founder of the order, Paul of the Cross, a large number of young men of German descent came forward and asked to be accepted into the Passionist Congregation.

The Passionists never forgot the substantial help they had received from the German Catholics; and, when their ministries expanded in the following years, they also included pastoral care for the local German Catholic community.

The American Passionists confessed with heartfelt gratitude

“that the German Catholics have always been their best and most devout friends”.

Against this background, the German-American brethren had long cherished the hope of establishing our congregation in their old homeland of Germany as well.

The Passionist General Superior, now Blessed, Bernard M. Silvestrelli (1831 - 1911) was once asked when the Passionists would go to Germany; he answered prophetically: “After the next war...”. The “next war” was the First World War, which lasted from 1914 to 1918.



+ P. Valentine Lehnert (1868-1941)

As a rule, new beginnings in history do not come about by default; they are, rather, triggered by concrete people. Thus, in the case of our German-Austrian foundation, there was **a man with a vision**, at the beginning. This man was **Fr Valentine Lehnert (1868 - 1941)** from the American Passionist Province of St Paul of the Cross.

For years, Fr Valentine, the son of German immigrants, had been moved by the idea of founding the Passionist congregation in Germany. It is thanks to his determination and perseverance that the step was finally taken.

On the occasion of the canonization of Gabriel Possenti, May 13,

1920, Fr Valentine visited Rome. At that time, he submitted his plans to the General Superior. Although the General Chapter was also meeting at that time, no action was taken on the proposal.



+ P. Silvio di Vezza 15^o Superior General

The following year, 1921, the re-elected General Superior, Fr. Silvio di Vezza, came to America for a visitation. Fr. Valentine again presented his request. This time, Fr. General finally commissioned Fr. Valentine and Fr. Viktor Koch, who was then Rector of the monastery in Pittsburgh, to undertake the establishment of the Congregation in Germany.

Fr Viktor was appointed superior of the new foundation.

In 1922, a Eucharistic Congress was held in Rome. Fathers Viktor and Valentine decided to travel there in order to consult with Fr General, and to make contact with the German bishops who would be attending the Congress.

Fr General advised the Fathers to contact Cardinal Faulhaber, the Archbishop of Munich, who was also in Rome at the time. Although he received them very kindly in the Anima College residence, his answer was a clear “No”.

The reason for the refusal was because after religious orders were

expelled from Germany during the Kulturkampf under Bismarck, they had all returned in the new Weimar Republic. The Bavarian bishops had decided not to admit any new religious orders in their church provinces.

Cardinal Faulhaber cited reasons for this decision of the bishops: the aftermath of the Kulturkampf, the uncertain political situation, the resistance of the socialists and the terrible economic poverty of the people after the First World War.



+ Card. Michael Von Faulhaber

Fr Valentine, nevertheless, did not want to give up so easily. He explained to His Eminence the objective of our Order, which was to proclaim the cross and suffering of Jesus Christ during popular missions and retreats.

This idea pleased the Cardinal, and he told them about an old monastery in his diocese that he was hoping to give to a religious order.

Then, he made an appointment to meet them in Munich, after the Corpus Christi procession, on June 15, 1922.

Our two Fathers arrived in Munich on June 13, 1922, and were received by Cardinal Faulhaber on



+ The first Passionist foundation in Germany, the “Schloss Gatterburg”

June 15, after the Corpus Christi procession, as planned.

The property in question was the monastery in Fürstenfeldbruck. However, due to difficulties with the ownership title, it was not possible to take possession of the monastery.

The Cardinal then informed them that they would have to accept a parish and finance the building of its parish church. However, the General Superior of the Congregation in Rome had not given permission for them to accept a parish.

At this critical moment, the Vicar General, Dr Buchberger, intervened. He offered a compromise proposal that the Passionists should build a parish church in the west of Munich, but without the obligation to also take over the parish.

This led to the financing of the construction of the “Leiden Christi” [Passion of Christ] church in

Obermenzing, which was consecrated in 1924.

In the search for a suitable location for a monastery, the Vicar General, Dr Buchberger, had again drawn the attention of our Fathers to the “Schloss Gatterburg”, a large villa with associated buildings and large, park-like grounds in Pasing, a suburb of Munich.

On December 14, 1923, the Fathers were finally able to move into their new home, “Schloss Gatterburg”, but initially into only four empty rooms because Countess Gatterburg was still living, and she reserved the remaining 20 rooms for herself and her servants.

Four rooms — without furniture, without a stove, without a bathroom, without running water. Throughout the winter, water had to be carried from a pump in the courtyard..

From the time they moved into the “castle”, the nearby old Pasing Parish Church of the Birth of Mary

was made available to the Fathers for services.

That is how the Passionists opened their first monastery in Germany, in “Schloss Gatterburg”, in Munich-Pasing. A small seminary was subsequently established here for the training of the next generation of Passionists.

In the 1923 Acts of the 21st Provincial Chapter of the Mother Province in the USA, we read: **“Our Fathers planted the cross in Germany.”**

What did the capitulars in America want to express with this sentence?

First and foremost, that the opening of the first house in Germany was the first step towards the planting of the Congregation of the Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in our country.

Secondly, in a figurative sense, it could also mean that the start was underway for the Passionists’ to carry out their mission of pro-

claiming the “Word of the Cross” to the people.

The third dimension, which probably only later became clearer to all those involved, is the reference to the cross as a symbol of personal suffering, but also as a place of reconciliation and overcoming the conflict of opposites, as well as a sign of peace.

These three dimensions of the cross of Christ were to have a lasting influence on the founding of the Passionists in Germany and Austria.

Historically, there could not have been a worse time for the German foundation. Between two world wars, in a politically troubled time, in an economic crisis, these pioneers came to Germany as former enemies of war.

Each of the three monastery foundations - 1923 in Munich, 1925 in Maria Schutz (Austria) and 1934 in Schwarzenfeld - had to overcome many obstacles and difficulties.

Great financial sacrifices were made by the founding Province in the USA and our American benefactors. Above all, the supplying of personnel for the new foundation demanded a high level of personal commitment from each religious.

Nevertheless, our founders did not lose heart. They were inspired by a supernatural motive, which Fr. Viktor expressed in a letter to the members of the Provincial Chapter of St. Paul of the Cross Province on June 15, 1923:

“...we have gone out to win over new countries, to bring them under the benign influence of the Mystery of the Passion and Death of Christ. If we succeed in establishing this work, it will certainly add to the luster of our Mother, the Congregation, and

especially the Province of Saint Paul of the Cross.”

This was the strong motive that made Fr Viktor fight on despite all opposition. But not everyone, especially in the American mother province, shared the same view regarding the German foundation.

In our reflection we have now reached a point where we must bow to the historical truth. The material problems being dealt with would alone have been enough to diminish the will of our founders to continue, but what hurt Fr. Viktor most was the negativity and the lack of moral support from those in authority in his home province, especially in the early years of the foundation.

This negative attitude is quite clear from the correspondence that unfolded between the Provincial Superior, Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, and Fr. Viktor in the years 1923 to 1929.

In a letter of February 17, 1925, addressed to the then Procurator General, Fr. Leo Kierkels in Rome, Fr. Provincial Grennan summarized the results of his visitation to the German foundation in the following damning statement:

“We regret very much the sad possibility of the German Foundation’s proving a total failure; like all true Passionists, we wish to see the Congregation grow and spread, and we would be delighted to have a real strong German Province. But we are forced to admit that the prospects for this, at present, are very, very dark.”

A short passage from a letter to the Provincial, written on August 12, 1925, reveals Fr Viktor’s deep disappointment at this criticism:

“Such news is apt to rob a person of all courage and spirit. Disappointments from strangers, while unpleasant, can be

endured, but coming from trusted friends and Superiors – it is hard.”

The words of his Provincial, Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, in a letter addressed to him on September 14, 1925, leave nothing to be desired in terms of clarity:

“To be candid, the opinion in the province is that the German Foundation was most inopportune – brought about by Father Valentine over the head of the Provincial and without any approval from this Province. Add to this the universal sentiment of the country against Germany since the war – it makes it a hard task for any American Provincial to arouse enthusiasm or to assume responsibility for the German Foundation.”

These lines provide us with a deep insight. The German foundation had been started by order of the General Superior in Rome, with two Fathers from the North American Province of St. Paul of the Cross.

Rome wanted the personnel and financial support to come from this province in the USA, but apparently never having obtained an explicitly positive vote from the provincial leaders.

Fr. Viktor, on the other hand, did not think in terms of narrow, provincial boundaries. He was much more concerned with the expansion of our Congregation and its fundamental mission to all peoples.

This is confirmed by the following quotation from a letter — addressed to the Provincial, Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, and dated September 11, 1925:

“Now whatever view we may have of the means that were taken to start this foundation: that it was only a private religious

that pushed the matter; that it was not done by the Chapter, but done over the head of the Provincial; one thing is certain, that when the General Curia decreed the Foundation, it was no longer the work of a private religious but that of the Congregation. This is the foundation for my confidence that the work will and must succeed.”

The work of the Congregation, that’s what Fr Viktor was all about when he founded the German-Austrian foundation.

Years later, after assuming care of the Maria Schutz shrine, when it came to appointing a canonical superior for the new monastery, who would then also have a seat and a vote in the Provincial Chapter of the founding Province, an even deeper problem came to light.

It was again the Provincial, Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, who wrote on December 21, 1928, to Fr Leo Kierkels, who had by then been elected General Superior, about the “real difficulty”:

“It may be hard for one who has not lived long in this Province to understand this difficulty. It is the danger of introducing the spirit of nationality into this province. This Province is made up chiefly of German and Irish, or the descendants of German and Irish parents. At different times in the history of the Province, a pronounced national spirit, either on the part of the Germans or on the part of the Irish, was manifested. Thank God, it never became serious. The recent war made all our Religious, even the German born, thoroughly American.

If now, one or two Capitulars come from Germany with the right of voting, they will naturally have at heart, first and above



+ P. Stanislaus Grennan

all, the interests of the German Foundation. Hence, they will try to elect to the Curia some Germans, or those who give them some assurance of favoring the German foundation. If they should happen thus to swing an election, it is going to create a very unfavorable commentary in the Province. To me this is a very great danger, and I, perhaps better than anyone in the Province, am able to judge, because being myself half German and half Irish, I have all along had the confidence of both sides.

We did not think it wise to tell Father Viktor of this real difficulty, for he cannot appreciate it.”

Maybe that’s why he couldn’t understand it; because Fr. Viktor thought in completely different categories.

Anti-German sentiments after World War I, or the question of which ethnic group had greater influence in the province, were not Fr. Viktor’s approach to the Passionist foundation in Germany.

In a letter to the Provincial, Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, of September 2, 1925 he had already formulated the following admonishing words: **“It seems to me that there is too much of the ‘ego’ in this whole**

matter. Where does the spirit of self-sacrifice come in? What becomes of our Fourth Vow? Are there private interests or the interests of our Congregation at stake?

How many of those who helped establish our Congregation in the States, had to leave their country and go into a land that was not only foreign to their birth, but also in regard to language.”



+ P. Leo Kierkels, 16th Superior General

The same idea was taken up by the General Superior, Fr. Leo Kierkels, in a letter to the Provincial, Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, on October 10, 1925:

“It would be lamentable if the German foundation were to collapse solely because no one could be found who would temporarily sacrifice himself for that work. It is unthinkable that a Province, which owes its very existence to the labors of men who left home and friends not for a time but for a lifetime, can not find a few Fathers who will leave their country for a few years in order to propagate an Institute to which they have pledged their lives.”

Two years later, in a letter to Fr. Provincial Grennan, dated November 7, 1927, Fr. Viktor emphasized

the need to keep the common goal of the Congregation in view and to work for it in a spirit of self-giving:

“Surely we all have only this in view, to make Christ and him Crucified known to all men alike. (...) I have sacrificed everything in this life, home, country and citizenship, I have nothing more to give up. But I am happy because I feel that I am serving the interests of our Congregation to the fullest extent of my powers.”

How much Fr. Viktor was affected by the critical attitude of the founding Province towards the German foundation becomes clear from the following passage of a letter to the Provincial of August 1, 1928:

“We not only have not had any official encouragement from the Consulta, but as I said before, obvious opposition at every move we made for progress. God certainly has been generous in his graces to me or I would have gone to pieces long ago. Your Paternity cannot have any idea

what it means for me under such circumstances to keep things running smoothly. As said above, outside of God and our Patron Saints, I have no one to go to for an encouraging word.”

This treatment, which he perceived as unjust, finally led him to the bitter conclusion in a letter to Fr. Stanislaus Grennan of September 24, 1928:

“I was a fool for listening to the General and his Consulta when they ordered or sent me to Germany and I resigned the [Pittsburgh] Rectorship, where there were prospects, at least, of further advancement. Is this the reward of obedience?”

At the Provincial Chapter of the Province of St Paul of the Cross in 1929, a decree was finally passed in which the Chapter requested the General Superior to place the monasteries of Munich-Pasing in Bavaria, and Maria Schutz in Austria, under his direct authority as a General Commissariat.

This was intended to achieve a separation from the USA. This separation was then cemented by formally elevating the German-Austrian foundation to a General Commissariat on May 10, 1930.

Nevertheless, the capitulars did agree to financially support the German foundation for at least a few more years.

At this point, it must be stated that the North American Passionist Province of St. Paul of the Cross is rightly called the Mother Province of the German-Austrian foundation, even if it had its problems in fully accepting this child.

In addition, the Province of the Holy Cross, in the USA, also helped with personnel and material.

In total, over thirty confreres from America have worked in the German foundation, some of them even for most of their religious life.

Before the outbreak of World War II (1939), the German-Austrian foundation had about 40 members. After the war, only a small remnant remained.



Nevertheless, the foundation was elevated to Vice-Province status at the General Chapter of 1946.

However, the reconstruction was difficult. Despite personnel support from the USA, Holland and Italy, the former membership level could never be reached again.

It is significant that in 1947, Fr. Viktor again turned to the Provincial Chapter of his original Province, the Province of St. Paul of the Cross, with an appeal for personnel help.

About this, he said:

“Our work is the work of the Congregation. And I think I voice the sentiments of most, if not all, here when I say that it is also the work of this Province, the Province to which is due the honor of having established the German Province.”

Foreseeing the possible new “recruits”, he said: He himself had gone to Germany in obedience, and despite the many difficulties he had experienced, he considered his years there the happiest of his life.

The founding of the Passionists in Germany was, as already explained, not Fr. Viktor’s idea. He had been chosen for it by his superiors. After he had, as he said, gone to Germany in obedience, he wanted to do “the work of the Congregation”, i.e. “plant the Cross”. This formed his strongest motivation. For this he put up with all difficulties and resistance.

The motives of the people he met at the individual monastery foundations were often quite different. Politically and economically, Germany was in crisis when the first Passionists arrived there.

The “rich Americans, enemies of the First World War” were not exactly met with a wave of sympathy. If they wanted to gain a foot-

hold, then they should at least create jobs and improve the economic situation. In the American mother province, however, as we have seen, people were already tired of the many subsidies and considered the enterprise a failure.

Despite pressure from all sides, Fr. Viktor did not give up. And his efforts were rewarded. Before the outbreak of World War II, he could look back on a flourishing foundation, with stable structures and promising young people.

But parallel to his work of establishing the Congregation in Germany and Austria, the National Socialist movement had also developed, from the Hitler putsch in 1923 to the seizure of power in 1933. With their xenophobic and anti-church decrees, the new rulers destroyed the work that had been built up at great sacrifice.

After the war, Fr. Viktor literally had to start all over again. Why did he do that? Why didn’t he just leave the Germans to their own devices and go back to America? Why? — Because he wanted to do the work of the Congregation, because he had once come to plant the Cross in this soil, and because he believed in the triumph of this Cross over human wisdom.

He wanted to continue to be for the people entrusted to him what the local parish priest of

Schwarzenfeld had said at the inauguration of the monastery: he expressed his hope that the Passionists would be heralds of peace as well as counselors and helpers in the concerns and distresses of the soul.

The former wartime enemy had come with friendly intentions, and had become the friend of many, despite great opposition. Suddenly he found himself in the role of the enemy again, without actually wanting it. In this awkward situation, he did not withdraw his friendship, and some thanked him through their display of loyalty.

This became particularly clear when the Schwarzenfeld monastery was confiscated by the Nazis in April of 1941.

In the hour of greatest danger, the involuntary enemy demonstrated his friendship and thereby saved an entire town and its population.

After the invasion by the Americans in April, 1945, Fr. Viktor helped with great personal conviction to manage a dangerous situation which arose in Schwarzenfeld.

Prisoners from the Flossenbürg concentration camp were to be transported south by train. In the immediate vicinity of Schwarzen-



feld, American fighter bombers attacked the transport, mistaking it for a military train. There was a horrific bloodbath, caused partly by the attacking planes and partly by SS guards. The approximately 140 victims were buried outside the cemetery.

When American troops marched into Schwarzenfeld, they learned of the terrible events. They wanted to hold the people of Schwarzenfeld responsible. But Father Viktor's intervention and explanation were able to avert an impending disaster.

Fr. Viktor, as a priest and religious, did not think in friend-foe categories. As a German-American, as a member of an international religious community in which all meet as brothers, he was not conditioned by any nationalistic bias.

He was concerned with human persons and their salvation, which for him had its origin in the cross of Jesus Christ. He came to Germany to plant this cross in the ground and thus became the herald of peace.

In the decades after the Second World War up to the present day, this German-Austrian foundation has continued to experience seasons of change, ups and downs.

We saw a wave of departures from the Congregation at the end of the 1950's; then a new religious springtime in the 1960's; then dry spells again with small numbers and few new recruits in the 1970's and 1980's. Time and again, in between the up-turns, the viability of this small vice-province was questioned.

Now, at the time of our 100th anniversary, in the decade of the 20's of the 21st century, we can

report a very pleasing influx of new vocations.

The almost prophetic words of the then Provincial Superior, Fr. Andreas Schmidbauer, which he wrote in the commemorative publication for our 50th anniversary, seem to be coming true:

“No, it is simply inconceivable that so much selfless idealism, so many sacrifices, so much suffering patiently endured, so much hoping against all hope, should remain unfruitful!

“This idealism is purified and unbroken in this foundation. Could it not be like a seed that, according to God's will, still has to wait for its hour to bear fruit a hundredfold?

“This faith gives the strength to persevere and to endure. The struggling foundation, started 50 years ago, knows that it is committed to a great heritage and a high mission. It also knows that there is no deceit in the suffering of Jesus (Theresa of Jesus).”

At the beginning of this lecture I asked about the lessons we can learn from the 100-year history of our German-Austrian Passionist foundation.

We can learn the lessons of the Cross of Jesus Christ, “who made peace on the cross through his blood” (Col 1:20).

The Cross stands for the overcoming and reconciliation of all opposites through sacrificial love.

The Cross stands for the great truth that life comes from death.

This foundation would no longer exist today if people had not been prepared, from its beginnings to the present day, to die, i.e., to leave behind what is dear, familiar and secure; to set off to a different place, and to throw their own lives wholeheartedly into the balance in order to let something new come into being.

Moving beyond all national biases, cultures and political systems, humanity must once again understand — especially in our present world situation — that peaceful coexistence is ultimately only possible on the basis of that greater love which — following the example of Jesus on the cross — lays down its life for others (cf., Jn 15:13).

The 100 years of our German-Austrian Passionist foundation also stand for this truth! +



+ Today, 100 years later, vocations continue to arrive.

Congratulations,

MACOR



(L-R): Fr. Dominic Jin Jeon, Fr. Peter Yeong-Dae Cheong, Fr. Fabiano Kwang-Hui Ko.

NEW PROVINCIAL AND COUNCIL

PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR:

+ Fr. Peter Yeong-Dae Cheong.

CONSULTORS:

+ Fr. Fabiano Kwang-Hui Ko (First Consultor).
+ Fr. Dominic Jin Jeon.

REPAC



(L-R): Fr Yohanes Sukiman, Fr. Adiantus Aloysius (1° Consultor), Fr. Sabinus Lohin (Provincial), Fr. Paschalis Nores, Fr. Yoseph Pedhu.

NEW PROVINCIAL AND COUNCIL

PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR:

+ Fr. Sabinus Lohin.

CONSULTORS:

+ Fr. Robertus Yohanes Sukiman.
+ Fr. Adiantus Aloysius (Primer Consultor).
+ Fr. Paskalis Nores + Fr. Yoseph Pedhu.

Brothers!

PASS



(L-R): Fr. Rogie Villarente Castellano, Fr. Orven Obispo Gonzaga, Fr. Edwin Sumagpao Flor, Fr. Joachim Rego, Fr. Nazario Alarba Plaza (Provincial), and Fr. Julito Sanate Villarente (First Consultor).

NEW PROVINCIAL AND COUNCIL

PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR:

+ Fr. Nazario Alarba Plaza

CONSULTORS:

- + Fr. Julito Sanate Villarente (First Consultor)
- + Fr. Rogie Vasquez Castellano.
- + Fr. Orven Obispo Gonzaga.
- + Fr. Edwin Sumagpao Flor.



May
the Passion
of Jesus
be always
in our
hearts +

Congratulations,

MAJAP



(L-R): Fr. Paul Motoyuki Hata, Fr. Joseph Harauo Someno, Fr. Francis Katsunori Nakamura.

NEW PROVINCIAL AND COUNCIL

PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR:

+ Fr. Joseph Haruo Someno.

CONSULTORS:

+ Fr. Francis Katsunori Nakamura (First Consultor).

+ Fr. Paul Motoyuki Hata.



Brothers!

MAPPALAS



(L-R): Fr. Carlo Scarongella, Fr. Matteo Piccioni, Fr. Aniello Migliaccio, Fr. Joachim Rego, Sup. Gen, Fr. Giuseppe Adobati, Provincial, Fr. Gianluca Garofalo and Fr. Daniele Pierangioli, First Consultor. (Fr. Francisco Xavier Pinho Oliveira, absent).

NEW PROVINCIAL AND COUNCIL

PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR:

+ Fr. Giuseppe Adobati.

CONSULTORS:

+ Fr. Daniele Pierangioli (First Consultor).

+ Fr. Carlo Scarongella.

+ Fr. Aniello Migliaccio.

+ Fr. Gianluca Garofalo.

+ Fr. Francisco Xavier Pinho Oliveira.

Professions and Ordinations

NOVEMBER 2022 - MAY 2023

TEMPORARY PROF.

Cl. Lucas Daniel da Silva

EXALT 01/07/2023

Cl. Francisley José Da Silva

EXALT 01/07/2023

Cl. Felipe Gomes Scarpatti

EXALT 01/07/2023

Cl. Euclides Evangelista Marçal

EXALT 01/07/2023

Cl. Luiz Carlos Rodrigues da Silva

GETH 01/07/2023

Cl. Joseph Enrique Cermeño Lasso

SCOR 02/03/2023

Cl. Dilson Maguiber Reyes Barbosa

SCOR 02/03/2022

Cl. Isaias Paulino Sitaube

GETH 02/03/2023

Cl. Daniel Urquina Quintero

SCOR 02/03/2023

Cl. Luis Fernando Vélez Restrepo

SCOR 02/03/2023

Cl. Andrés Duván Zapata Gómez

SCOR 02/03/2023

PERPETUAL PROF.

Cl. Pedro Lucau Canganjo Massuca

MAPRAES 12/10/2022

Cl. William Chapa

MATAF 01/13/2023

Cl. Francis Katongo

MATAF 01/13/2023

Cl. Felix Katongo Mpange

MATAF 01/13/2023

Cl. Victor Fernando Monasterios M.

SCOR 01/26/2023

Cl. Jorge David Martínez Sánchez

SCOR 02/03/2023

Cl. Boniface Eweru

CARLW 02/17/2023

Cl. Jacklord Roly Onyango

CARLW 02/17/2023

Cl. Vitalis Otieno Owich

CARLW 02/17/2023

Cl. Orlando Mirón Olmos

SCOR 02/17/2023

Cl. Luis Alonso Santiago Chicas

SCOR 02/27/2023

Cl. André Luiz de Souza Muniz

GETH 03/04/2023

Cl. José Osvaldo Mateus

GETH 03/04/2023

Cl. Prem Prakash Besra

THOM 03/17/2023

Cl. Noble Manayath

THOM 03/17/2023

Cl. Abiyouth Raj

THOM 03/17/2023

Cl. Jaime Javier Velásquez Zambrano

SCOR 03/25/2023

Cl. Víctor Franco

EXALT 03/25/2023

Cl. Cleyton Torres Brilhante

EXALT 03/25/2023

ORDAINED DEACONS

Diac. Paolo Ratti Scudellari

SCOR 11/27/2022

Diac. Vinzenz Schlosser

VULN 12/03/2022

Diac. Nelson Enrique Rogel Baide

SCOR 12/08/2022

Sac. Adrianus Dilan

REPAC 12/16/2022

Sac. Viktor Riyadi

REPAC 12/16/2022

Sac. Kristianus Damianus Tepo

REPAC 12/16/2022

Diac. William Chapa

MATAF 14/01/2023

Diac. Francis Katongo

MATAF 01/14/2023

Diac. Felix Katongo Mpange

MATAF 01/14/2023

Diac. André Luiz de Souza Muniz

GETH 03/05/2023

Diac. José Osvaldo Mateus

GETH 03/05/2023

Diac. Prem Prakash Besra

THOM 03/18/2023

Diac. Noble Manayath

THOM 03/18/2023

Diac. Abiyouth Raj

THOM 03/18/2023

Diac. Nicola D'Ettorre

MAPRAES 04/01/2023

ORDAINED PRIESTS

Fr. Luis Daniel Guivas Gerena

PAUL 01/27/2023

Fr. Adrianus Dilan

REPAC 02/27/2023

Fr. Viktor Riyad

REPAC 02/27/2023

Fr. Kristianus Damianus Tepo

REPAC 02/27/2022

Obi tulus+

OBDORMIVIT IN DOMINO

NOVEMBER 2022 - MAY 2023

- + **Fr. Vincent Segotta**
DIED ON 12/02/2022
AND WAS 81 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/26/1973
- + **Fr. Allard Praet**
DIED ON 12/12/2022
AND WAS AÑOS • GABR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/14/1939
- + **Fr. Celestino di Domenicantonio**
DIED ON 12/19/2022
AND WAS 92 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/22/1951
- + **Fr. Vital Baerts**
FALLECIDO EL 12/22/2022
AND WAS 84 YEARS OLD • GABR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/21/1960
- + **Fr. José Manuel Pindado Jiménez**
DIED ON 12/24/2022
AND WAS 80 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 06/15/1981
- + **Fr. Vincent Younberg**
DIED ON 12/31/2022
AND WAS 97 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/15/1960
- + **Fr. Salvatore Riccardi**
DIED ON 12/02/2022
AND WAS 88 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 07/16/1955
- + **Fr. Stanislaus Tyler**
DIED ON 01/09/2023
AND WAS 91 YEARS OLD • SPIR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/19/1950
- + **Fr. Mario Elia**
DIED ON 12/02/2022
AND WAS 73 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/16/1973
- + **Fr. Yovinianus Abui**
DIED ON 01/11/2023
AND WAS 67 YEARS OLD • REPAC
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 10/08/1981
- + **Fr. Eric Meyer**
DIED ON 01/13/2023
AND WAS 85 YEARS OLD • CRUC
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 07/09/1959
- + **Fr. Earl Keating**
DIED ON 01/13/2023
AND WAS 99 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 10/07/1956
- + **Fr. John (Ambrose) Cashman**
DIED ON 01/14/2023
AND WAS 85 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/15/1960

+ **Fr. Benigno Villa Lores**
DIED ON 01/18/2023
AND WAS 90 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 10/07/1952

+ **Bro. Bernardino Lanci**
DIED ON 01/18/2023
AND WAS 101 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 07/16/1940

+ **Fr. Krzysztof Kot**
DIED ON 01/26/2023
AND WAS 94 YEARS OLD • ASSUM
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/04/1949

+ **Ep. Jesús Agustín López de Lama**
DIED ON 02/08/2023
AND WAS 94 YEARS OLD • SCOR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/21/1947

+ **Bro. Arcangelo Cinquegrana**
DIED ON 02/08/2023
AND WAS 84 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/15/1956

+ **Fr. John Craven**
DIED ON 02/09/2023
AND WAS 78 YEARS OLD • PATR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/21/1978

+ **Fr. Renato Penetrante Ventajar**
DIED ON 02/09/2023
AND WAS 61 YEARS OLD • PASS
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 05/16/1985

+ **Fr. Richard Parks**
DIED ON 02/14/2023
AND WAS 86 YEARS OLD • CRUC
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 07/22/1963

+ **Fr. Luis Alberto Cano Seijo**
DIED ON 03/01/2023
AND WAS 76 YEARS OLD • SCOR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/15/1968

+ **Fr. Ronald Thijssen**
DIED ON 03/11/2023
AND WAS 88 YEARS OLD • SPE
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/07/1955

+ **Fr. Peter Gaughan**
DIED ON 03/14/2023
AND WAS 83 YEARS OLD • SPIR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/16/1969

+ **Fr. Robert Van Assche**
DIED ON 03/15/2023
AND WAS 85 YEARS OLD • GABR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/16/1958

+ **Fr. Joseph Jones**
DIED ON 03/16/2023
AND WAS 88 YEARS OLD • PAUL
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/01/1958

+ **Fr. André de Clercq**
DIED ON 03/22/2023
AND WAS 88 YEARS OLD • GABR
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/24/1955

+ **Fr. Danilo Mazzoni**
DIED ON 04/03/2023
AND WAS 83 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/08/1958

+ **Fr. Ian Kalumba**
DIED ON 04/25/2023
AND WAS 41 YEARS OLD • MATAF
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 07/14/2009

+ **Fr. Flavio Toniolo**
DIED ON 04/30/2023
AND WAS 83 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERA 09/08/1958

+ **Fr. Vittorio Masin**
DIED ON 05/02/2023
AND WAS 80 YEARS OLD • MAPRAES
VOTA NUNCUPAVERA 10/22/1961

MONIALES ET SORORES DEFUNCTAE

+ **Sr. Gemma di San Gabriele dell'Addolorata (Cecilia) Scalzone**
DIED ON 12/10/2022 AND WAS 91 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 02/11/1958
Congregatio Monialium Passionistarum
NAPOLI (ITALIA)

+ **Sr. Marie-Lutgart Van Het Kruis Vervaeke**
DIED ON 12/15/2022 AND WAS 87 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/15/1965
Congregatio Monialium Passionistarum
KORTRIJK (BELGIË)

+ **Sr. Augustine Mageau**
DIED ON 12/19/2022 AND WAS 93 YEARS OLD
Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis et Passionis D.N.I.C. (USA)

+ **Sr. Mary Grace of the Peace of Christ (Marilyn) Reis**
DIED ON 12/19/2022 AND WAS 90 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/25/1969
Congregatio Monialium Passionistarum
ERLANGER (USA)

+ **Sr. Oliva Carvajal Bernal**
DIED ON 01/06/2023
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 02/02/1953
Inst. Filiarum Passionis D.N.I.C. et Dolorum
B.V.M. (MÉXICO)

+ **Sr. Marie David Joseph of Jesus (Catherine) Lafferty**
DIED ON 02/16/2023 AND WAS 88 YEARS OLD
ANNI DI PROFESSIONE: 68.
Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis et Passionis D.N.I.C.
(ENGLAND)

+ **Sr. Theresina Scully**
DIED ON 02/24/2023 AND WAS 76 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 08/29/1970
Inst. Sororum SS. Crucis et Passionis D.N.I.C. (USA)

+ **Sr. Maria Agnese di Gesù Bambino (Antonietta) D'Amato**
DIED ON 03/31/2023 AND WAS 87 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 10/04/1953
Congregatio Monialium Passionistarum
VIGNANELLO (ITALY)

+ **Sr. Maria Gratia of the Holy Face (Catharina) Huijskes**
DIED ON 04/16/2023 AND WAS 91 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 04/27/1967
Congregatio Monialium Passionistarum
ATNHEM (THE NETHERLANDS)

+ **Sr. Gema de S. Paulo da Cruz (Lúcia) Cezerira Mottin**
DIED ON 04/21/2023 AND WAS 92 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/15/1948
Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce
CURITIBA (BRASIL)

+ **Sr. Arlete de Jesus Crucificado Balarini**
DIED ON 04/27/2023 AND WAS 79 YEARS OLD
VOTA NUNCUPAVERAT 09/15/1965
Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce
SAN PAOLO (BRASIL)

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