

New Appointments



Fr. Carl Pieber, C.M. named Sub-Director General of the Association of the Miraculous Medal

Rev. Carl L. Pieber, C.M., Executive Director of the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal (CAMM) in Philadelphia, PA, USA has been appointed the Sub-Director General of the Association of the Miraculous Medal, the international organization promoting devotion to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. Fr. Pieber has served as Executive Director of CAMM in Philadelphia for seven years.

Fr. Pieber is a native of St. Louis, MO, USA. He entered the Congregation in 1975, and was ordained in 1980. He has had various assignments in educational and pastoral ministries in both the Province of the West and the Eastern Province, of which he is a member. In his time at CAMM, Fr. Pieber has pioneered an extensive outreach to create awareness and encourage devotion to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal using both traditional and digital media. The weekly novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal at the Shrine in Philadelphia is viewed on-line by large numbers of people, and its “Facebook” page reaches thousands of people submitting prayer intentions and sharing their faith.

In his new ministry, Fr. Pieber will work with national organizations in various countries that promote devotion to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal through the weekly novena, works of charity and encouraging personal piety. He reports directly to Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M. the Director General of the Association of the Miraculous Medal. Fr. Gay also serves as Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity.

Fr. Gay noted, “I am grateful to Fr. Pieber for his willingness to accept this assignment. I know his deep devotion to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal will be a catalyst to help our many associations to make people aware of the story of the Miraculous Medal”. Fr. Pieber observed that “the Miraculous Medal has been had a profound influence in my spirituality as a Vincentian. In my years of working for the Miraculous Medal, I have heard so many stories from devotees all over the world of what Our Lady has done for them through their prayers and acts of charity. It is a truly great gift in our faith”.

Fr. Pieber begins his new assignment on January 1, 2014. He replaces Fr. Juan Bautista Iborra of the Province of Saragossa, who served as Sub-Director General since 2010, and who resigned for reasons of health.



Fr. Simon Kaipuram, C.M. appointed Bishop for the Diocese of Balasore, India

Pope Francis has appointed Rev. Father Simon Kaipuram, C.M. as Bishop for Balasore Diocese in Odisha State in Eastern India. He will replace Bishop Thomas Thiruthalil, who has resigned after reaching the canonical age of retirement of 75. This was announced by Fr. Joseph Chinnayan, deputy secretary general of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI).

The bishop-elect, a member of the Congregation of the Mission, is currently Rector and Professor at Aquinas College in Gopalpur, Odisha. Bishop Thiruthalil who is also a member of Congregation of Mission headed the Balasore Diocese since 1990. Bishop-elect Fr. Simon was born in Thannermukkom, India in 1954. He entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1975, and was ordained in 1980. He holds a doctorate from the Gregorian Pontifical University in Rome. He has served as a parish priest, seminary formator, retreat master, professor and lecturer.

Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M., Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, said the news of the appointment of Fr. Kaipuram "was a bittersweet one for me, as I know he will do great work for the Church in Balsore, as he has done for the Congregation in over thirty-three years of service. But he has been a great confrere and collaborator, and I will miss his presence in the Congregation. However, we are honored at the appointment. I join with all my Vincentian confreres in offering my congratulations and prayers for Bishop-elect Kaipuram".

Fr. Mathew Kallammakal, C.M., Assistant General of the Congregation, has worked with Bishop-elect Kailuram in the province of Northern India, and noted that "Fr. Simon is a well respected and much sought after lecturer and retreat master. I used to see how quickly his schedule would fill up with retreats and talks. Besides all his talents and accomplishments, I consider him a model confrere, as he embodies the virtues of simplicity and approachability".

The diocese of Balasore covers the civil districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar which were part of Calcutta archdiocese until 1968. It has over 17,000 Catholics in a population of 8.2 million. They live in 24 parishes and missions, served by 54 diocesan and 10 religious priests, 9 Brothers and 134 Religious Sisters,

according to the latest statistics from the CBCI. Christianity first came to the area in 1514 through a Portuguese settlement in Pippli.

The ordination of Bishop-elect Kaipuran to the episcopacy is scheduled for January 30.



Fr. Patrick J. Griffin Steps Down as Director-General, Daughters of Charity

Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M. Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, announced that, due to health concerns, Fr. Patrick J. Griffin, C.M. has resigned as Director General of the Daughters of Charity. This position is based in Paris.

In a letter to the Daughters of Charity signed by both Frs. Gay and Griffin, they said, “We have come to this unwelcome conclusion only after much discussion and prayerful reflection. It is based solely on Fr. Patrick’s health situation. He has been attentive to a heart condition which has raised greater concerns over the last six months. His doctors recommended a program of care and lifestyle that make carrying out the responsibilities as Director General difficult and incomplete”.

The letter acknowledged the difficulty the decision to step down presented for Fr. Griffin, noting, “Patrick and I have spoken about our love for the Company and our desire to serve them and our beloved poor in the best way. Both of us recognize that this goal is not possible in Patrick’s role as the Director General because of his doctors’ advices. Acceptance of the sometimes mysterious will of God, as reflected in the circumstances of our life, brings us to this point”.

Fr. Gay expressed gratitude for the years of service Fr. Griffin has provided as Director-General of the Daughters of Charity since his appointment in 2010. He expressed hope that his future ministry will continue to be rewarding. “I am sure that I speak for all of us when I thank him for his service and offer him our continued prayerful support. Thankfully, Fr. Patrick will be able to carry out another ministry with different responsibilities in his Province and for the Congregation”.

Fr. Patrick Griffin, a native of Brooklyn, NY, is a member of the Eastern Province, USA and was ordained in 1979. He studied at the Catholic University of America, earning a doctorate in Sacred Scripture. His 35 years in priesthood have been spent as an educator, both as a seminary professor and formator, and in higher education as an administrator and teacher. He has also organized ongoing education programs for diocesan clergy and given numerous retreats for the Daughters of Charity. Before being named the Director General and moving to Paris, Fr. Griffin served as Executive Vice President for Mission at St. John’s University in Queens, NY.



Fr. Bernard Schoepfer, C.M. Appointed New Director General of the Daughters of Charity

Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M. Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, announced that he has appointed Fr. Bernard Schoepfer, C.M., a confrere from the Province of Paris as the Director General of the Daughters of Charity. He will serve in this position for a three-year term. In a letter to Visitors, the Superior General noted, "After informing you of the resignation of Fr. Patrick Griffin, C.M., due to health concerns which no longer allow him to carry out his ministry as the Director General of the Daughters of Charity, I asked for your prayers. Having considered the suggestions I received, and with the consent of the General Council, I have appointed Fr. Bernard Schoepfer, C.M., as the new Director General".

Fr. Bernard was born in Bale, Switzerland and grew up in the Alsace region in eastern France. A member of the Paris Province, he was admitted into the Congregation on 10 September 1984, and was ordained on 4 May, 1989. In his quarter century of ordained ministry, Fr. Bernard has fulfilled a number of varied ministries. He has engaged in pastoral work in rural areas of the Diocese of Amiens; accompanied candidates in seminary formation for the Congregation; served as chaplain to the shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, worked as spiritual advisor to the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and served as member of the provincial council for the Province of Paris. Currently, Fr. Bernard serves as Superior at the Maison-Mere, and the national chaplain to the AIC in France.

Fr. Gay expressed gratitude to Fr. Bernard Schoepfer for his generosity in accepting this assignment as well as offering thanks to the outgoing director Fr. Patrick Griffin: "I thank Fr. Bernard for his willingness to serve, and I assure him of our prayers and fraternal support in his new ministry. I express my deep gratitude to Fr. Patrick Griffin for his tireless devotion to duty as Director General these past three years. We pray the Lord grant him good health, so that he may continue for many years to *'serve the Lord with gladness'*" (Ps. 100: 2).

Fr. Bernard is scheduled to assume his new duties in late March. In closing his letter to the Visitors, the Superior General exhorted all confreres, "Let us entrust Fr. Bernard's mandate to our Blessed Mother, because as St. Vincent told us, *'When the Mother of God has been invoked and taken as patroness of important matters, everything can only go well and accrue to the glory of Jesus, her Son'*" (SV XIIIb: p. 3).



Fr. Donald J. Harrington, C.M. to serve as Consultant to Vincentian Solidarity Office

Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M., Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, announced that he has secured the assistance of Fr. Donald J. Harrington, C.M., President Emeritus of St. John's University, New York to advise in fund-raising efforts for the Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO), a fund-raising arm of the international Congregation. Fr. Harrington, a member of the Eastern Province, USA will serve as a consultant to the VSO. In this capacity, Fr. Harrington will assist the VSO in two crucial ways. First, he will advise on the best means to reach their \$5 million dollar goal to qualify for a matching grant from a charitable foundation. Secondly, Fr. Harrington will use his expertise to design a long-term plan that will coordinate and enhance fund-raising efforts of the VSO for the Congregation on the international level.

The Vincentian Solidarity Office provides financial support for provinces in developing countries for their works with the poor in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul. The VSO is building up what it calls "Patrimonial Funds" that will promote the economic viability of Vincentian provinces in developing nations, and also fund the activities of Vincentian Family groups that are under the responsibility of the Superior General. The monies raised will help provinces to get on solid financial footing, so they can fund programs to offer formation for their members and initiate new works with the poor.

Fr. Gay said, "I am gratified that Fr. Harrington has generously agreed to serve as a consultant to the Vincentian Solidarity Office, and I thank him for his willingness to assist the international Congregation in this fund-raising endeavor. We are at a crucial time in our efforts to achieve a matching grant. Fr. Harrington brings a great wealth of knowledge and expertise to this task. His very successful fund-raising efforts, both as President of Niagara and St. John's, resulted in major enhancements in the quality of academic and student life at both universities".

Fr. Donald Harrington is a native of Brooklyn, NY and was ordained in 1973. His entire priesthood has been spent in the higher education apostolate of the Eastern Province, USA. He served as an administrator and professor at Niagara from 1973-1989. In 1984, he was named NU President. In 1989, Fr. Harrington left Niagara to become President of St. John's University, where he served until his retirement in 2013. In both Vincentian schools, Fr. Harrington established successful capital campaigns, including the first-ever major fund-raising effort at Niagara. At St. John's, he carried out two very successful capital campaigns, resulting in a major transformation of the University.

Fr. Miles Heinen, C.M. is the Director of the Vincentian Solidarity Office, and has served in this capacity since 2009. The Vincentian Solidarity Office is based in Philadelphia, at the provincial house of the Eastern Province. Fr. Harrington, currently on sabbatical, will begin his consultant duties with the VSO in August, 2014.