

NUNNTIA

Newsletter

of the Congregation of the Mission

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Congregación de la Misión
Oficina de Comunicación



From Resilience to Hope

“what happens when we have to be by the side of those who no longer have the strength, whose vision has become so blurred that they cannot see those possible solutions?”

A friend once gave me some books about resilience, which they say is the ability to adapt to adverse situations with positive results. While you might think that all people are resilient in some way or another, I believe that not all of us have the same ability to move forward, or have sufficient confidence in ourselves, or, at least, a desire to get back on our feet. In fact, depression is becoming more and more notorious as a sort of “pandemic” that stalks people we know, such as family, friends, co-workers, even people who are socially

expected not to suffer from it, such as the consecrated. Like a kind of humidity in an environment, depression creeps



unnoticed into all our structures, our provinces, houses, community life, and even into the very heart of people. It makes us think that nothing makes sense anymore, that this is not going to change. It makes us believe that it is much better to keep everything we have as a kind of agony until magically everything disappears or even death brings us some respite. God knew how to put in my life people who have been an example of resilience, people who lived through extremely strong pain and knew (from that pain) how to stand up and walk, wounded but moving forward. They were the ones who taught me that it is possible to get through, even when it seems impossible to overcome reality. However, what happens when we have to be by the side of those who no longer have the strength, whose vision has become so blurred that they cannot see those possible solutions, when many times it does not depend on us but on external factors that go beyond our strength? When all this

that go beyond our strength? When all this happens, I am surprised by that biblical phrase that says, “Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” Thus, we cannot be mere wayfarers, God calls us to be believers and when this happens there is a leap from resilience to hope, because hope does not look at our strengths, our dreams or abilities, but only at that trust in the God of life who is able to raise the dead. As a member of this Little Company, many times I have looked only at my reality, my context,

or my history and many times I was wrapped in disillusionment thinking that there was not much left to do, that the

structure was old but almost impossible to modify. I had to become a vocational promoter and see that for many young people the Gospel proposal was something that had no place in their lives. But as God goes beyond what one can think, today He makes me look at new realities and discover a “Company” that many times is not so “Little,” not because it is big, but because God continues to accompany it. In every profession of vows, in every ordination, in every project that a confrere, a province, or even the Vincentian Family itself carries out, the Lord gives us hope. It makes us stop looking at our “abilities” to focus on “trust,” in that it does not cover our weaknesses, but allows that even with them God is the one who puts us on our feet. May the Lord not allow us to be merely resilient but lead us to the path of hope, the hope that makes us see his presence even in the greatest depression.

P. Hugo Marcelo Vera, CM

Thirty Years of Love Received, Thirty Years of Love Given.

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On June 20, 2021, Association the Community in Dialogue (La Comunità in Dialogo in Italian) celebrated 30 years of their history; a history of welcome and love that began when Father Matteo Tagliaferri met a young drug addict and welcomed him into a small parish house in the mountains. The Community began with the arrival of other young people. Today it has 10 centers in Italy and a Family House for HIV patients and, since 2004, it has opened centers in Peru, Colombia, Ukraine and Argentina, as well as a job insertion activity in Cameroon. Also, the Community has always carried out prevention and re-employment activities for young people who have finished their course. The celebration began with Holy Mass presided over by the Father General of the Congregation of the Mission, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič. He expressed his joy over the work accomplished by the Community in Italy and around the world over the years and he reiterated that he believes it is an example for the entire Vincentian Family of how to deal with numerous problems involving addiction and distress in the most diverse cultural and social realities. Later, professionals involved in the health, psychology and justice areas, some of whom have been friends and collaborators of the Community for years, delved into the impact the Community has had on the dialogue with society and institutions: the most innovative and prophetic proposal of Father Matteo's work, they reflected, is to put the person at the center of every intervention and action. Referring to the COVID-19 pandemic, Fr. Matteo observed that society cannot limit itself to seeking solutions of an exclusively scientific nature, without a greater awareness and assumption of social responsibility. Furthermore, he pointed out that in the Community there are doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists, but the response to one person's problems begins after the time of treatment, when, with the assistance and accompaniment of others, the deepest values are discovered and lived. It is this response, which makes each person the protagonist in the face of his or her difficulties, that gives meaning to life and heals the wounds which belong to every man and woman. It is love, as Father Matteo recalled on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Community, the true

therapy for the soul, which allows us to live life to the full in all its dimensions. In the afternoon, there was an online connection with the community centers abroad, while the young people of the Community shared their reflections, even in short presentations. Young people and workers from different countries, strongly affected by the consequences of last year's pandemic, were able to experience a moment of living together with Italy and with each other, expressing the emotion of being part of a vital entity that transcends distances, geographical and cultural, and makes everyone feel part of a single human family, united by solidarity and the sharing of hardships and rebirth. Finally, at the end of the afternoon, we came to the most powerful and immediate testimony that a new rebirth is possible, despite the sufferings and encountered hardships. Ten young people of the Community completed their program and returned to their families and to society as new people, conscious of their own qualities through the simplicity of the rediscovered values and converted into the center of their new life. Superior General handed the small crosses, symbol of this new life desired and now possible, to the young people, as it has been happening for several years now. Father Matteo recalled the words chosen for this feast, avoiding any ritualism or triumphalism: 30 years of received love, 30 years of given love. Words that, in their simplicity, describe the experience of the Community, beginning with the first young people - some of whom, today are workers, have been affiliated to the Vincentian Family since 2012- who, after having rediscovered their life, chose to help others on the same path of rebirth, and Fr. Matteo himself, who since meeting the first young people has given back to more than 5,000 young people their personal experience of being a person loved by God the Father, so that feeling loved they could discover and live the best of themselves.

Archbishop Jan Orosch (Diocese of Trnava) presided at the ceremony in which Patrik Borzecky, CM and Peter Majercik, CM were accepted into the order of deacon through the imposition of the hands of the archbishop.

On June 19, the seminarians from the Province of Slovakia were ordained deacons in the church of Saint Vincent, the parish in which the Motherhouse of the Province is located. Archbishop Jan Orosch (Diocese of Trnava) presided at the ceremony in which Patrik Borzecky, CM and Peter Majercik, CM were accepted into the order of deacon through the imposition of the hands of the archbishop. In his homily, the archbishop spoke about the great responsibility of being a good "father" during this era of much change in society and in our culture ... he spoke about this idea in the sense of being spiritual fathers. At the same time the archbishop spoke about those individuals who had lived the Vincentian charism during the community era, men of great faith and charity. Priests and Brothers and laity from the parishes of the young missionaries were invited to participate in this joyful event for the Church. They wanted to give thanks to God for all the good things that God had done for his people.





I am Joseph Swaris
CM.



I am Joseph Swaris CM from Austria-Germany province. On 19 June, I was ordained a priest for the Congregation of the Mission (together with six men for the Archdiocese of Vienna) by Christoph Cardinal Schönborn at St. Stephan '39;s cathedral in Vienna.

I was born on January 2, 1985 in Colombo, Sri Lanka and grew up in a Catholic family. I had my school education in a private Catholic school. I completed my philosophy and theology studies at Karl Franzens University in Graz, Austria. On November 11, 2020, I made my final vows and was fully incorporated into the community. I spent the diaconate year/ pastoral internship partly at Caritas in Graz and partly in the Lazarist parish in Vienna. Vincentian spirituality takes whole human person as the concern of its reflections. The holistic approach of the Vincentian charism has inspired me from the beginning, which was an important reason to join with Vincentian community. I was baptized by a Belgian Oblate missionary in my home country. His love for the Christ and his closeness to the poor, were not two separate things but one. He was an inspiration to me. I completed the Internal seminary in Philadelphia, USA in 2016-17. It was one of the most profound experiences I ever had in my Vincentian journey. Internal seminary was a great opportunity for me to deepen the Vincentian way of life. Inspired by the prayer, I was able to experience the charism concretely in action, in an institution for homeless men in Philadelphia and a soup kitchen in New York. Our internal seminary group was very international and we were from four different provinces. We also represented almost every continent. At the beginning it was challenging with so many adjustments. However, each person had something to offer. Through the contribution of the varied gifts of each other and with the support of many confreres, internal seminary finally became a very enriching experience for me. Deep gratitude goes to my late Provincial Franz Kangler CM who exposed me to the international reality of the congregation and who supported me greatly in my formation. I will spend my first year as the chaplain for Vincentian pastoral care in our parishes and facilities in Graz. In addition, together with Sr. Claire McKiernan DC, I will be serving as a member of Vincentian family advisory committee for Western Europe. I am glad about my pastoral work, that is specifically ours. There is much more to learn. Please keep me in your prayers and the people of God I will serve. May God bless you all.



The new Saint Lazare needs you!

Renovations at the Motherhouse

Always love your mother ...
and you will approve of
whatever she gives you
(CCD:X:301).

The new Saint Lazare is more than two hundred years old. For decades, this great house has been the soul of the Congregation. How many missionaries have prepared themselves here for their journey to bring the Good News to the ends of the world? Here saints, pioneers, founders and many erudite individuals were prepared! Here also many missionaries from other countries have had the opportunity to study and be formed and discover the country that gave birth to the Great Saint of the Great Century ... or to simply admire Paris and its surroundings. How many Provinces, from this Motherhouse, have been envisioned and established by the successors of Father Vincent? That was the era of the influence of the Congregation of the Mission on the five continents.



Our old and great House needs to be renovated especially as we approach the 400 th anniversary of the Chétive in 2025. This is an opportunity to give our Motherhouse "a new look" and rediscover her primary vocation: to be the place of the historical and living memory of the Vincentian charism in all its dimensions. Therefore, we ought to make our house a welcoming and modern place for the members of the great family of Saint Vincent and of the Church. The Motherhouse is a patrimony that the French State gave to us on October 2, 2006. Therefore, this is our house! Since the end of the French Revolution, we have been tenants of the State ... now we are owners! This tremendous gift implies a responsibility: preserving the space in its entirety. You have seen with your own eyes the dilapidated and deteriorated state of the House (its foundation has remained stable and solid). We must pay tribute to the Paris Province which, with generosity and devotion, has done everything possible to maintain and modernize the building. Now a large-scale operation is indispensable, and the current Province of France cannot finance all the work. For the past two year, the Province of France and the General Curia have looked for the means to renovate the whole Motherhouse: rooms, lounges, kitchen, refectory, walls, roofs, gardens ... An overall project was presented to Father General and to the members of the Curia. A confrere, specialized in grant-writing, is working creatively to find the necessary grants and donations to finance this project. The Province of France has raised part of the funds which (despite the arrival of COVID-19) has allowed the work to begin (currently 32 rooms with showers are being renovated and soon construction work will begin in the reception area and the kitchen).

COVID-19 delayed construction work. In the midst of the pandemic, thanks to the support of the Conferences and Teams of Saint Vincent, a day center, Louise et Rosalie, has opened its doors to serve women living on the street. In November 2020, an association was created, The friends of rue Sèvres 95, in order to facilitate the search for donations. Work is also being done to preserve "the historical monument status" of part of the house. Saint Lazare needs your help, the help of the confreres and the Provinces! If we do nothing, or if we are satisfied with little things, I am afraid that the Motherhouse will continue to decline and later, the work will be more expensive and more difficult. Well restored, thanks to your donations, our Motherhouse will be able to continue its vocation of welcoming and receiving people from all over the world. Our House is located in the heart of Paris, near the chapel of the Miraculous Medal which is located on Rue du Bac, near the French Episcopal Conference, in the university district... We are fortunate to have an area of 11,117m² in the heart of the French capital. Paris has witnessed Father Vincent's courage, zeal, and missionary fearlessness. You can visit many places that are reminders of the works of our Founder, of the Daughters of Charity, as well as some of our confreres. A missionary community and, in fact, an international community ministers so that the initial spirit of Saint Lazare might, as demanded by our Constitutions, be strengthened and might remain in a continual state of renewal (Constitutions #2). For all these reasons, the Motherhouse needs your help and support today. In the past, it was the Congregation, from the Mother House, that created, maintained and helped the Provinces. Today, just as in the past Jerusalem created the churches and had to receive help from them (Romans 15:26), so now, it is the Motherhouse that needs the help of her children. Is this not a fair turnaround of things?

Roberto Gomez, CM
Superior of the Motherhouse

Dreams of a rich harvest

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Gitare Rwanda was founded by the CM in 2016



Parishioners and Vincentian missionary and pastor Fr. Jean Pierre Kashori, C.M. clearing the grounds of the parish for planting.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Gitare Rwanda was founded by the Congregation of the Mission in 2016. Fr. Jean Pierre Kashori, C.M. is the pastor of this parish. The parish owns 9 hectares of fertile arable land. In 2018 they planted coffee on 3 hectares on their own. This year saw a small first harvest, but they expect a large one next year in 2022. This area in Rwanda is encouraged to grow coffee by the government. Coffee and tea are major exports for Rwanda. Rwanda produces 20,000 to 22,000 tons of coffee per year. Most years it ranks in the top 25 coffee-producing countries in the world. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, a poor and rural parish, saw an opportunity to produce income for the parish by growing coffee. Over the last two years 2020-2021, the Region of Rwanda-Burundi of the Province of Columbia sent two micro-project applications to develop their small coffee plantation. In phase one (2020), the VSO helped to finance the purchase of agricultural necessities like mulch, fertilizer, pesticides and banana trees for shade. In phase two (2021), The Region appealed to the VSO again for aid in planting 8000 additional coffee plants, doubling the size of the plantation. Since they have not started generating income yet, the VSO helped them purchase coffee plants for the new section. The plantation gives the Parish something to work on as a community, plus hope for a regular income. They are blessed to have a group of volunteers trained in agriculture to help in this endeavor. Plus, many generous parishioners volunteer their labor. They hope to add their own coffee washing station in the future. Washed coffee garners higher prices at market.



The area of the addition to the coffee plantation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NOMINATIONES / CONFIRMATIONES

LABITAG Ferdinand	09/06/2021	Visitor of Chinese Province (RECONFIRMED)
BIAŁKOWSKI Marek	09/06/2021	Director DC Chelmno-Poznan
FARATSELY Gaston	09/06/2021 (star 16/07/2021)	Visitor of Madagascar

ORDINATIONES

PARRA RESTREPO Rodrigo	Sac	COL	19/06/2021
JAKUBOWSKI Scott Daryn	Sac	OCC	25/06/2021

NECROLOGIUM

KALOKI Nicolas Kasomo	SAC	02/06/2021	OCC	39	12
TSEGAI Berhe	SAC	02/06/2021	SJJ	85	59
TANALEPIE Antonius Johannes	SAC	27/06/2021	IDS	81	57

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