



Congregazione Clericale

MISSIONARI DELLA FEDE

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* HAPPY CHRISTMAS * BUON NATALE * FELIZ NAVIDAD

CRIB AT ST. PETER'S SQUARE, VATICAN CITY, ROME

From the Editorial Desk...

With joy we bring out the 17th issue of our *News Letter* aimed at keeping all the members informed of the various activities, undertakings and events that are happening in the various parts of the Congregation. May we kindly remind everyone, especially the Provincial, Vice Provincial and Delegation Governance, to send us on time the news items to be published. Let us, as one family, share among ourselves all our achievements and our endeavours. We always welcome the corrections and suggestions for the betterment. We regret also for the errors and omissions if any. May the God grant us the grace to be courageous and joyful messengers of the Good News and a shining stars that lead others to the feet of the Lord. We wish everyone

A Very Happy Christmas and Grace filled New Year 2020

MESSAGE from SUPERIOR GENERAL



**“Following Christ evangelizer, sent by the Father to proclaim the Kingdom.
(Constitutions n. 5)”**

Dear Confreres,

Once again God gave us the grace to celebrate the first Provincial Chapters of our four Provinces and the Assemblies of our two other Major Organisms which we have just concluded. During our meetings and the elaborations of the local directories we emphasized the deep understanding of our congregational belongingness and co-responsibility and the invitation of renewing our hearts, our minds and our lifestyle.

Christmas urges us to focus our personal and communal attention on Jesus, our Lord to whom we MF have committed ourselves as evangelizer seeking to imitate Him in our lifestyle. We as religious have to put Christ always at the centre and as the primary and ultimate goal of our commitment as MF.

I wish to thank each and every one of you for your collaboration, support and hospitality during my visits this year. Your collaboration has been invaluable, and we have had great results from all the chapters and assemblies. God has surely been in our midst and for that we are blessed.

I wish you and your family and friends a peaceful, blessed and joyful Christmas and New Year and that you all be filled with the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.

God bless you all.

I wish you and your families a very happy and blessed Christmas and Happy New Year 2020!



Rev. Fr. Jesus Dajac, mf
Fr. Jesus Dajac, mf
Superior General

ONGOING FORMATION CORNER

PRINCIPLES OF ONGOING FORMATION

-Fr. Jaison Kalathiparambil mf

Ongoing formation seeks to address two concerns regarding priesthood: the personal maturation of a priest as human and as Christian, and his growth in the ministry. It is a revitalizing experience in the lifelong journey of priesthood so as not to let time cool the initial spirit. It demands a continuous interior growth (*The Gift of the Priestly Vocation* = RF 80). “One must constantly feed the ‘fire’ that gives light and warmth to the exercise of the ministry, remembering that, “*the heart and form of the priest’s ongoing formation is pastoral charity*’. Growing in pastoral charity enables a priest to keep alive the flame of vocation resulting in effective mission activities. Any formative proposal for this noble life has to be based upon sound and valid principles. In this article we discuss some of these general principles.

Human and personal principles

The apostolic exhortation, *Pastores dabo vobis* (PDV) noted that there are some “pure human reasons” (PDV 70) for the ongoing formation. In this way it highlighted the human component of the priestly vocation and the need to care for it. “*Every life is a constant path toward maturity, a maturity which cannot be attained except by constant formation*” (PDV 70). It has to care for various human faculties and dimensions, progressively integrating them to live meaningfully and joyfully the chosen way of life. The life of Christ himself is the best example of it. The document, *Starting afresh from Christ* (SAC) reiterates that every consecrated person be open to learn for the entire life, learning from the school of life which presents each day with diverse experiences and situations. So, everyone has the need of ongoing formation. Here we discover the motivation behind various ongoing formation programs at congregational level or at Major Organisms’ level.

We are reminded that priestly ordination is not an arrival port but a departing lounge! The reality of the humanness of every priest has to be accepted and formed gradually towards the full maturity possible. It is very clearly stated by SAC 15:

If, (...), consecrated life is in itself “a progressive taking on of the attitude of Christ”, it seems evident that such a path must endure for a lifetime and involve the whole person, heart, mind and strength (cf. Mt 22:37) reshaping the person in the likeness of the Son who gives himself to the Father for the good of humanity.

The above affirmations bring us to certain conclusions, that each human person is unique and has different levels of integration of life experiences, inserted into a particular socio-cultural context. It is logical then, to take into consideration the personal rhythm of the concerned person while proposing ongoing formation at individual level.

It is right to say that ongoing formation is also a personal responsibility. It is a human and natural reason that each individual be open to avail oneself of the opportunities to mature in every sphere of one's life. A good example for this aspect would be the continuous updating of the skills by professionals. It corresponds to the need to be efficient in one's profession. So also, a priest is compelled to be effective in his mission and relevant in action in the fast-changing socio-pastoral scenario.

Human principles thus provide for a strong foundation for ongoing formation at common and individual level for an internal growth and personal maturity.

Theological and pastoral principles

Every vocation has a Trinitarian origin. The post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Vita consecrata* (VC) substantiates it by three subtitles: "*A Patre ad Patrem*": *God's initiative*; "*Per Filium*": *in the footsteps of the Son*; "*In Spiritu*": *consecrated by the Holy Spirit*. The document traces the nucleus of the divine call to the fact that the creator draws a creature to himself. Experience of the gratuitous love of the Father inspires and animates the consecrated person. It concretises in the total abandonment and consecration in the concrete service to the neighbour. Thus, it has the dual dynamics of moving towards *the loving Father* and *towards loving the neighbour* (cfr. VC 17). This is the general theological character of any Christian vocation.

The specific nature of the call is in the witnessing life. It is a call to live a life in conformity to that of Christ by professing the evangelical counsels.

In the consecrated life, then, it is not only a matter of following Christ with one's whole heart, of loving him "more than father or mother, more than son or daughter" (cf. Mt 10:37) — for this is required of every disciple — but of living and expressing this by conforming one's whole existence to Christ in an all-encompassing commitment which foreshadows the eschatological perfection, to the extent that this is possible in time and in accordance with the different charisms (VC 16).

The disciple of Christ takes a decision that orientates his entire life thereafter. It is a radical decision to show and share Christ experience to others. Such a demanding call has its repercussions upon the psychodynamics of the person. It perceives the call as an attracting reality which solicits the reorganization of the hierarchy of values and personal behaviour. In this way the divine call renews a person making him aware of his strengths and weaknesses helping to form and develop his personal identity.

In this human-divine encounter one feels the need of the continuous conversion as he is drawn between the two poles of sanctity and sinfulness. He feels the need to grow in love so as to be faithful to the commitment of the consecrated life. Assuming the charismatic identity is a constant interior activity failing which, one may not live faithfully the commitment.

Ongoing formation is intended to ensure fidelity to the priestly ministry in a continuing journey of conversion, in order to rekindle the gift received at ordination. This journey is the natural continuation of the process of building up priestly identity begun in Seminary and accomplished sacramentally in priestly ordination, in view of a pastoral service that causes it to mature over time (RF 81).

Conclusion

The human-personal and theological-pastoral principles demonstrate the motivations behind the proposal of ongoing formation. Human and spiritual maturity enables the consecrated person to live a life of fidelity. It is attained by various personal and community activities of ongoing formation. One must not shun or shy away from the available opportunities or adequate programs of ongoing formation. Instead, should assume an attitude of constant attempt to interiorize the right hierarchy of values and concretely express them in right behaviour. Let not time cool the initial commitment! May Mary, Queen of Confessors of faith accompany us on our formative journey!

End Notes

1. Cfr. M. GAHUNGU, *Formazione permanente dei presbiteri*, Roma, LAS, 2008, 94.
2. CONGREGATION FOR THE CLERGY, *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*, 80, in <http://www.clerus.va/content/dam/clerus/Ratio%20Fundamentalis/The%20Gift%20of%20the%20Priestly%20Vocation.pdf> (Accessed: 4 September 2019).
3. Cfr. CONGREGATION FOR THE INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Starting Afresh from Christ: a Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium*, 15, in http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccsclife/documents/rc_con_ccsclife_doc_2002_0614ripartire-da-cristoen.html (Accessed: 20 December 2019).
4. Cfr. M. STEVANI, *Orizzonte di fede e realismo umano. Per una vita consacrata più incarnata*, Roma, LAS, 2016, 12–13.
5. Cfr. M. GAHUNGU, *Formazione permanente dei presbiteri*, 95.
6. JOHN PAUL II, *Vita Consecrata. Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the consecrated life and its mission in the world*, 17–19, in http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031996_vita-consecrata.html (Accessed: 27 June 2019).
7. Cfr. M. STEVANI, *Orizzonte di fede e realismo umano. Per una vita consacrata più incarnata*, 10–11.

NEWS FROM GENERAL CURIA

In the Service of the Lord and His Kingdom

1994 – 2019.

Congratulations.

*Wishing you all the happiness
that the years ahead can hold,*

may the Silver keep on glowing until it turns to Gold.

As you celebrate the Silver Jubilees of your priesthood, the whole Congregation of the Missionaries of Faith is proud of you and extends the heartfelt congratulations and prayers of thanksgiving for the years of dedicated ministry that each of you has given in the service of Christ, his Church and the Congregation. May you rediscover and reinvigorate your awareness of the extraordinary and indispensable gift of grace of your ordained ministry, for the whole Church, and for the world. May you realize day by day that your priesthood is a gift, which has been given, first and foremost, not for you but for others. Make your own these words: "This is my body broken for you; this is my blood poured out for you". We hope and pray that the celebration of your silver Jubilees will be an occasion for a renewal of joy in, and gratitude for, your priesthood. May it renew in you all the joy of priestly ministry.

Ad Multos Annos, vivant!!!



NEWS FROM MAJOR ORGANISMS

PROVINCE OF ST. PETER (INDIA)

Provincial Chapter

The first Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Peter was held at MF Provincial House, Eluru, from 9 to 14 December 2019. It was a remarkable event for the Province. Most. Rev. Jayarao Polimera, bishop of the diocese of Eluru was present during the inaugural day of the chapter. Rev. Fr. Jesus Dajac, mf, the Superior General was the president of the chapter and Rev. Fr. Maria Joji Rai mf, the Provincial Superior was the Moderator of the Chapter. It was indeed a great moment in the Province of St. Peter as it enriched the Province and special thanks to all the conferrers for all their support.

PROVINCE OF VIETNAM

Funeral mass of Fr. Dominic Nguyen Minh Tuan, M.F.

Fr. Dominic Nguyen Minh Tuan died unexpectedly on December 2, 2019 in an accident. The funeral mass was held on Thursday, December 5, at 8:00 a.m. at the provincial Chapel. The Holy Mass was presided over by Bishop Joseph Nguyen Tan Tuoc, bishop of diocese of Phu Cuong. Also were present for the celebration Bishop Peter Tran Dinh Tu, the former bishop of the Diocese of Phu Cuong, Fr Jesus Dajac, the Superior General, Fr Thomas Dinh Ngoc Loc, the Provincial Superior of the Province of Vietnam, Fr Martin Alukaputhessery, the Provincial Superior of the Province St. Paul, India, all the priests and brothers of the Province of Vietnam. Some other priests and religious men and women of some dioceses also attended the Mass to pray for the soul of Fr. Dominic. The burial took place at the provincial cemetery, an area in the cemetery of Ba Tra parish. He served our Congregation and the Church for 23 years as religious and 10 years as priest.





Medical Training Course – health care in the Christian spirituality

On October 23, 2019, a medical training course was held at God's Word community. All juniors and postulants were guided by Fr. Anthony Nguyen Chan Hong and Bro. Anthony Nguyen Ngoc Hoang (Brothers of the Hospitaller Order



of St. John of God – O.H). The aim of this course was to help the brothers to equip themselves with the knowledge of spiritual, physical, and psychological healthcare, so that they may serve others better in the future missions of the Province.

All Souls Day at the Province



On Saturday morning, November 2, 2019, the God's Word Community offered a Mass to pray for all souls. The Holy Mass was specially dedicated to the founders of the community, and

souls of those who have died in the Province. On the same day, at 10 a.m. the community celebrated a second Mass to pray for the souls of brothers' parents and relatives in the Province. Besides, the third Holy Mass was also offered at the cemetery located in the community to pray for those who have their burials in the cemetery of the community. The province of Vietnam also offered a Holy Mass to pray for souls of Vietnam Missionaries of Faith Family.

Migrants Day 2019

On October 27, 2019, Fr. Thomas Trương Hoàng Phúc, M.F. (the Director of Pastoral Care of Migrants of Phú Cường Diocese) organized Migrants Day 2019 to help and pray for all students and workers who come from other Dioceses and live in Phú Cường Diocese, follow-



ing the spirit of Pope Francis: welcome, protect, promote and integrate (migrants). This special day was celebrated at the Bishop's Palace (located in Thủ Dầu Một City, Bình Dương Province) with the motto: "The Holy Rosary – The Essential Luggage of Migrants" so that all migrants in the Diocese recognize the vital value of Mother Mary in their lives. On this day, the migrants received the sacrament of Penance, free medical examinations, played football, musical festival... and at the end there was the solemn Holy Mass for invoking God's graces.



Adoration for World Mission Sunday



On World Mission Sunday, October 20, 2019, with the spirit of the motto: “Baptized and sent” that Pope Francis had chosen for the Extraordinary missionary Month of October 2019, the Vietnamese Province spent the whole day to adore the Eucharist- representing the Phu Cuong Diocese - to pray for the missionary Church with following participants: all members of God’s Word Institute community, Christians of two parishes: Bà Lụa and Bà Trà, and religious of some other neighbouring Congregations.

The Eucharistic Adoration Day began with the solemn Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Joseph Nguyễn Tấn Tước in the chapel of the community.



Visitation of Bishop Joseph Nguyen Tan Tuoc to the Province of Vietnam

On September 4, 2019 Bishop Joseph Nguyễn Tấn Tuốc, Bishop of Phu Cuong Diocese had a visit to all brothers and students of the Vietnamese Province in the Formation Community of God's Word Institute.



In this day, Bishop Joseph gave a conference to all brothers, to motivate them to live strongly their vocation in the Charism of MF Congregation. He showed a positive view toward the development of the Vietnamese Province in the last years, especially the improvement of formation system, the spiritual life, and apostolic activities to collaborate with the local Church in Vietnam. In the common meeting, Bishop Joseph reminded brothers and students: *“With the study, you are not only taught about the academic knowledge, but also guided to have a good spiritual life”*. He further exhorted: *“You should spend much time in personal prayer in front of God, so that you can recognize clearly the grace that God grants you every day, even when you have mistaken. About the personal abilities, he said: “God calls the ones whom He wants, He will grant that one all abilities to serve God and His Church”*”.



Provincial Chapter of Vietnam

The Provincial chapter of Vietnam was celebrated from December 1 to 5, 2019 at the house of juniors with the presence of the Superior General and 57 participants. Opening the chapter, the Superior General shared with all participants about the nature and the identity of the Missionaries of Faith and some particular orientations for



Vietnam province. The chapter was opened by a Holy Mass presided over by Fr. Jesus Dajac, the Superior General. In the first three sessions of the chapter, Fr. Thomas Loc, the Provincial Superior, presented a general report of the Province. The prefect of formation also had a report on formation in the province. Following the report of formation was the summary of the financial situation of the Province. In the later sessions of the chapter, the Provincial Directory was drafted and edited to fit the situation of the Vietnam Province. The chapter was closed in hope and the co-responsibility of all members by a Holy Mass with Bishop Joseph Nguyen Tan Tuoc, bishop of Phu Cuong diocese, as the presider.



VICE-PROVINCE OF ITALY

The Feast of St. Nicholas

The feast of the patron saint of our Basilica, St. Nicholas, was celebrated on 6 December 2019. This saint is also very much loved by our Orthodox brethren, especially the Russians. The festal Holy Mass was presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski. The rector of the Basilica Fr. Aldo Sperolini, mf, Fr. Domenico Borge, mf, the vicar general and several other priests joined the concelebration. At the end of the Holy Mass the relics of St. Nicholas Bishop was presented to the faithful for veneration.

DELEGATION OF NORTH AMERICA

25 Years in the Priesthood

With the blessings of His Excellency, Most Rev. David L. Ricken, Bishop of Green Bay, Fr. Joel Jores, MF in celebration of his 25 Years in the Priesthood, was joined by friends, parishioners and clergy including DNA Fathers Judah BenHur Pigon, Robert Ni Ni, Benjamin Magnaye, Joy Kumarthusseril and Celso Yu. Also present were Fr. Christopher Panlilio, Fr. Edmund Eduarte and Luis Lunario.



MF NEWS BULLETIN

Drafting: Via Nulvi, 11 – 00148 Roma

Tel: + 39.06.45493990

e-mail: tomedasserymf@gmail.com

or

missionaridellafede@gmail.com

Visit @ www.missionaridellafede.org