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# SPIRITAN NEWS

November/December 1998

N° 124

CONGREGAZIONE DELLO SPIRITO SANTO - CLIVO DI CINNA, 195 - 00136 ROMA

## NEWS ABOUT CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

### The East African Province Celebrates its Silver Jubilee

On 2nd October, the East African Province celebrated its Silver Jubilee. For the occasion, its Communications Office shared the following thoughts with us:

#### FULL CIRCLE REACHED

The Holy Ghost Fathers in East Africa have now reached the full circle of Evangelization, even though much work remains to be done in this area. They came, they evangelized, they established the local clergy and now a good number of locally-born missionaries are being sent to distant countries.

When our earlier confreres arrived in 1863, as the first missionaries to bring the Gospel into East Africa, they shared their faith through first evangelization. From this sharing came the first converts who were baptized, married and began to form the early Christian families. From these came the first students in the seminary. But the missionaries had to wait half a century before the first East African priest was ordained.

Many other diocesan priests had to be trained and ordained before our confreres could start to train a group of local missionaries since the diocesan clergy had to become the basis for the local Church. And so it wasn't until 1973 that this group of East African Holy Ghost Fathers could be started. In the meanwhile, many other missionary congregations joined the work of evangelization in East Africa and some have recently started to train local members.

As the East African Province celebrates its Silver Jubilee, it has over 80 locally born missionaries working in 12 countries in Africa and beyond. A hundred and seventy-six young men of East Africa are preparing themselves to follow in their footsteps, bringing the total to over 250. These dynamic men orientated to the Missions in today's Church are mostly youthful. This is not new to our congregation. Our founder, Poullart des Places, was only 24 years old when he started the congregation nearly 300 years ago in 1703. Almost all the pioneer leaders and missionaries were young and a good number of the thousand members who died bringing the Gospel to Africa were also young.

When Pope John Paul II came to Mount Kilimanjaro in 1990 to participate in the Centenary of the Church in northern Tanzania, he spoke of our early Missionaries and said they "were moved by the Holy Spirit, after whom their missionary institute was named." Turning to the Catholics present, he proclaimed, "You are the joyful harvest of the missionaries' labours; you are a new creation of the Holy Spirit, and now it is your turn to be Christ's witnesses in

Tanzania, on the continent of Africa and to the ends of the earth."

This call is being implemented in many ways. Young members of the Province have been sent to Kenya, Uganda, many parts of Tanzania, and to Zambia, Guinea-Conakry, Congo-Kinshasa, Congo-Brazzaville, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, USA, Germany, France and two members to the staff at the Generalate, Rome.

<b>BAGAMOYO</b>	: Spiritan Centre and Museum
<b>MAGAMBA</b>	: Spiritan Novitiate
<b>ARUSHA</b>	: Spiritan Provincialate and Philosophicum
<b>NAIROBI</b>	: Spiritan Theologicate
<b>KAMPALA</b>	: Spiritan Postulancy



The apostolate of the East African Province of the Holy Ghost Fathers involves the whole gamut of missionary activity including First Evangelization, deepening the faith, staffing seminaries, work with nomads, Refugees, Trade Schools, orphans, AIDS patients, development work, Flying Medical Service and so on. Over the years, three Tanzanian Spiritans have been ordained bishops.

The locally born members of the East African Province form part of the 692 African members of the congregation who were born in 24 different countries on the continent and are now "a new creation of the Holy Spirit" in the Congregation.

## The Paraguay International Group welcomes two confreres

In 1967, the Congregation started a mission in Paraguay which was confided to our Trinidadian confreres. Nine years later only two Trinidadians remained. In 1976, the Enlarged General Council agreed to adopt Paraguay as one of the three projects of high missionary priority. Since then there has been a gradual increase in numbers as confreres from different Circumscriptions joined the Group, making it international.

Guided by the spirit of Vatican II, Puebla, and Spiritan General Chapters, our confreres are involved in Justice and Peace, Family, Education, Youth, establishing and strengthening Basic Christian Communities, forming and encouraging the laity to take active participation in the life of the church. They have been able to welcome new projects like

**Philip (I.S):** How did you come to know the Spiritan family? What impressed you?

**Pius:** My first contact with the Spiritans was while I was in the minor seminary. I wrote to them and I was invited to attend a 'Come and See' after which I decided to join them.

What actually impressed me about Spiritans and moved me to join them was their sense of community, their readiness to go to the poorest people in whom other people were not interested. I strongly felt that I would like to do the same.

Spiritans have given me a sense of belonging to this international group; I have been posted to work in Paraguay, I hope to give my best in that mission. As one of the two first Africans appointed to the group, I hope to bring my 'Africanness' to the mission there and also learn from the Paraguayans themselves.

**Remigius:** The Spiritans have been working in my home town for many years. I grew up as a child knowing them, especially the Irish Spiritans, but I never thought of becoming a priest. However, I was greatly touched by their availability and readiness to go on the mission; to places they did not know and different from their own. And I was impressed by the love Spiritans had for my own town, living in a strange place, living with and eating the food the people had. So I was deeply touched and decided I would like to become a spiritan missionary priest. Since I joined them I have been very happy and encouraged, and have received a lot of support.

**Philip (I.S):** What was the reaction of your family members and friends to your decision to become not only a priest but a religious missionary?

**Remigius:** The initial reaction was one of a kind of surprise. My father was not alive. My mother felt that I had my future in my hands and what I could decide best for myself is what

Missionary Animation and Initial Formation without abandoning the direction they had chosen to follow from the very beginning: to minister to the most oppressed, especially those peasants without land.

The Group has just welcomed two newly ordained confreres, Fr Remigius Demby from Sierra Leone and Fr Pius Kokose from Ghana, both belonging to the West African Foundation. The group has now 25 members in all, coming from 9 different countries.

Pius and Remigius called at the Generalate on their way to Paraguay. Philip Ng'oja, director of the Information Service interviewed them on 14<sup>th</sup> October:



Fr Remigius

Fr Pius

she thought I should do. But my brothers did not want me to become a priest; they wanted me to go to the University and study. But I still insisted that I was resolute in my decision. So they had no choice but to welcome my decision to become a Spiritan. I know that they are praying for me and they want me to be a good example to the people wherever I will go.

**Pius:** When I told my parents that I wanted to be a priest they were very happy. Later, during my formation, I explained to them the kind of priest I would be. Some of the other members were against my decision. They wanted me to study, get employed, married and have children before they died. Concerning my becoming a Spiritan and therefore going outside my country to work, the initial reaction, especially from my mother, was one of sadness. But as I went on during the formation years she got used to this absence of mine from the family. So also did the other family members. Hence they received the news of my going out to another country with happiness.

**Philip (I.S):** What was your initial reaction to your first appointment?

**Remigius:** My appointment to Paraguay came to me as a big shock. I never expected it. But now I am ready to go with an open heart. I still have apprehensions; I am going to stay with and serve a different people with a different culture and language.

**Pius:** For myself I never dreamt of going to South America. In fact when we were asked to write our applications I never

dreamt of Paraguay. I was hoping to go back to Sierra Leone.

I had a hint from my Superior. So when my appointment to Paraguay was announced to me it was not a complete surprise. I had prepared my mind and left myself open to the Spirit to direct and use me for that particular mission.

**Philip (I.S):** Any expectations as you go to Paraguay - of the Group, the country and its people?

**Pius:** Thinking about going to live in an international community and working in Paraguay brings apprehension but I am prepared for any eventuality with an open mind.

**Remigius:** I am told there is much work to do there. We expect much support from the confreres already there, in terms of language and apostolate. We are just ordained and we need support from people who have already experienced the field.

**Philip (I.S):** Have you a word to your younger broth-

ers still in formation in our Congregation and particularly in Africa?

**Remigius:** Everybody in formation would have his own goals and expectations set. But as much as we are religious and have taken the vow of obedience, I would advise them to be open and available for mission.

**Pius:** I want them to be themselves and not follow the crowd. If they are themselves they will know themselves, what they want in life and the vocation they have followed. Therefore they should make it a point of duty to really be themselves. If they think that the path they have taken is not for them then they should give it up rather than leaving this to the last minute.

**Philip (I.S):** Remy and Pius I thank you and wish you the very best in your new apostolate.

## Meeting of the European Justice and Peace Co-ordinators

For the past 10 years, the Justice and Peace Co-ordinators from the different European countries have been meeting together to look at issues that affect Spiritans in their apostolic activities in Europe. This year, from 10-16 October, the meeting took place in Gentinnes, Belgium, and discussed once again the pastoral challenges involved in helping migrants and refugees here in Europe. Some concrete proposals were outlined to help Spiritans orientate themselves better in this ministry.

Representatives from most of the European Provinces were present for the meeting.

The main intervenants were Fr Michael Begley, cssp, from Ireland and Fr Michael Blume, svd, from the Pontificium Concilium pro Migrantibus. Fr Begley gave an overall view of the situation of refugees in Europe and how the Irish Province has set up a new project to work directly in this area. Fr Blume gave an outline of the church's work with refugees and asylum seekers and the new legislation that will affect the movement of refugees in Europe. Also present among the 14 people who attended the meeting was Mr Dermot McNulty, Spiritan Associate from English Province, who spoke of his work with asylum seekers at Manchester Airport, and outlined the process that they have to go through to get asylum in England.

### The following main points emerged at the Meeting:

1. In reading the "signs of the times", we as Spiritans need to take into account the mass migration of the people today and the reality of 33 million refugees worldwide. We should not ignore this phenomenon in our overall ministry.
2. Aging personnel in Europe means that we cannot do all that we might like to do in regard to the above.
3. However, we commit ourselves to have an active Justice and Peace Co-ordinator in each Province who would help to set up a Justice and Peace program as outlined by the General Chapter at Maynooth.
4. And to have a Justice and Peace contact person in each community.
5. That each Justice and Peace Co-ordinator would, before the next European Justice and Peace Meeting, compile a list of all the different agencies in his/her country which are already engaged in the ministry and work with refugees. Afterwards we can see if we as Spiritans can link into their programs, or fill a need that is not already being attended to.
6. We will encourage Spiritans in Parish ministry to become more aware of the migrants and refugees in their parish and work to integrate them better into overall parish structures.

## NEWS ITEMS

### Decisions of the General Council

The General Council

- on 16 September 1998 confirmed the election of Fr Emmanuel MEAUDRE as Superior of the District of Bangui for 3 years from 19<sup>th</sup> October 1998;
- on 23 September 1998 confirmed the election of Fr Louis CESBRON as Superior of the District of Cameroon for 3 years from 9<sup>th</sup> October 1998;
- on 07 October 1998 nominated Fr Max DOMINIQUE as Superior of the District of Haiti, for a third term of 3

years, from 7<sup>th</sup> October 1998;

- on 16 October 1998 confirmed the election of Fr Bernard HYM as Superior of the District of Mauritius for 3 years from 1<sup>st</sup> November 1998;
- on 21 October 1998 nominated Fr Fr Seamus FOLEY as Superior of the International Group of Malawi for 3 years from 21<sup>st</sup> October 1998;
- on 21 November nominated Fr Barnabé SAKULENGA as Provincial Superior of the Province of Angola, for 3 years from 18<sup>th</sup> November 1998.

## Services at the Generalate - Secretary General and Bursar General

On 07 October 1998 the General Council nominated Fr **Robert ELLISON**, of the District of Gambia, as the **General Secretary of the Congregation** for a mandate of three years, with effect from 1st September 1999.

On 28 October 1998 the Superior General, having consulted the Major Superiors of all Circumscriptions of the Congregation and with the agreement of his Council, appointed Fr **André LOOS** of the Province of France as **General Bursar of the Congregation** for the duration of the term of office of the present General Council, from 1st January 1999.

### The New General Bursar, Fr André Loos

Fr André Loos succeeds Fr Abel Dias as General Bursar. Born in Hagenthal-le-Bas, France, in 1938, he was ordained in 1967. After studying Canon Law in Strasbourg, he went to Congo-Brazzaville in 1970 and taught at Séminaire Libermann. In 1986 he joined the staff at Séminaire Français, Rome, as professor and bursar. In 1989 he went to the Procure des Missions, Paris, where he worked until he was appointed Bursar General.



### Modification to Spiritan Rule of Life - SRL 105

On 30 Oct. the Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies for Apostolic Life approved a modification to the Spiritan Rule of Life - SRL 105.

The revised Constitution 105 now reads: **It is the Superior of the Circumscription with the consent of his council, in collaboration with the formation team and with the approval of the General Council, who decides the orientations of formation.**

The Maynooth Chapter also voted for some other minor changes to SRL but these do not require the approval of the Holy See. All will be published in the booklet containing the texts of the Chapter which you will receive shortly.

### Messages to the Generalate through our Fax (06/35 45 06 76) - Confidentiality

A fax machine is a public facility and so it is not possible to guarantee confidentiality. Our present fax machine cannot be programmed to receive confidential messages.

Confreres who wish to communicate confidentially with a member of the Council, should opt either for our confidential e-mail address ([spiritus@glauco.it](mailto:spiritus@glauco.it)) or else telephone in advance to inform the Council member that a confidential message is being sent to him on the fax machine, giving the approximate time of mailing.

### Spiritan Life

"*Spiritan Life*", which was re-launched two years ago, only managed to produce one edition on "*The Missionary in the Parish*" when it ran into further problems, largely stemming

from the fact that the editorial committee members were at a distance from each other and communication proved extremely difficult. In response to the recent General Chapter, the committee has been re-constituted and it is hoped that the next edition on "*Spiritan Apostolic Community Life Today*" will appear early next year.

### The 1999 Spiritan ORDO

The one-page Spiritan Ordo has been sent to all the Superiors to be copied to all confreres.

### New Spiritan Publications

**The Spiritan Story of Puerto Rico, 1931-1998**, Fr Henry Koren, Spiritus Press, Bethel Park, 1998.

**Liberation and Nigeria, *The theology of Liberation from Nigerian Perspective***, Fr Ikechukwu A. Orjinta, SNAAP Press Ltd., Enugu, 1998.

**Missão Em Angola (1989/1994)**, P Tony Neves, 2ª Edição, Tilgrafica, S.A., BRAGA, 1997.

### Correspondence: New / Change of address

Fr Brian McLaughlin,  
Iligan Diocese,  
C/o Luga-it Post Office,  
9025 Luga-it, Misamis Oriental,  
PHILIPPINES.

Tel: 0063 (63) 221 9826  
Fax: 0063 (63) 221 9825  
e-mail: [csspphil@iligan.com](mailto:csspphil@iligan.com)

Fr Alain Durand,  
Supérieur Principal,  
La cure,  
26 rue de l'église,  
97435 SAINT GILLES LES  
HAUTS,  
La Réunion.

Tel et fax: 02 62 22 75 66  
GSM: 02 62 85 10 90

Fr Jean-Paul Hoch,  
Spiritan Community,  
C/o Diocesan Offices,  
156-1 Chungcheng Road,  
HSINCHU (300),  
Taiwan, R.O.C

T. & Fx (direct): 00886.3.52.41.075  
e-mail [spiritan@ms25.hinet.net](mailto:spiritan@ms25.hinet.net)

### Our Dead

27 Sept. : Fr Josef KOLASNY..... (Poland), 65  
28 Sept. : Fr Julien GAYET..... (France), 85  
29 Sept. : Fr William MAGUIRE..... (USA), 75  
30 Sept. : Fr Charles FENNER..... (USA), 69  
08 Oct. : Fr Jean-Claude AUDET..... (Canada), 66  
13 Oct. : Fr Alphonse GEMMERLE..... (France), 91  
14 Oct. : Br Georges JALBERT..... (Canada), 83  
19 Oct. : Fr Pierre CAMELAN..... (France), 87  
20 Oct. : Br Faustin KERNAPLEN..... (France), 87  
23 Oct. : Fr Patrick Joseph SHEEHAN..... (Ireland), 80  
25 Oct. : Fr Paul HAVETTE..... (France), 79  
25 Oct. : Mgr François MORVAN..... (France), 76  
31 Oct. : Fr Dermot Patrick EGAN..... (Ireland), 80  
07 Nov. : Fr Paul JEHEL..... (France), 62  
09 Nov. : Fr Michael DALY..... (Ireland), 67  
12 Nov. : Fr Hubert BECKERS..... (Belgium), 77  
15 Nov. : Fr Sean Joseph RYAN..... (Ireland), 60