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## PAPAL AUDIENCE

**The Papal Audience for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
the foundation of the Congregation, 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2003**

*An account of this memorable event was given in two editions of "Spiritan Newsflash" (101 & 102) and on the Generalate website (<http://mission-cssp.pcn.net>). But as there are still a large number of confreres who do not have access to these sources, we decided to publish a shortened version here in this number of "Spiritan News" because it was such an important part of our jubilee celebrations.*

On 26<sup>th</sup> May this year, one day before our 300<sup>th</sup> birthday, Pope John Paul II received in audience all the Spiritans living in Rome to commemorate this great occasion. There were 37 in all: 27 from the Generalate plus 5 visiting confreres, 3 from the French Seminary and 2 from the spiritan parish of Santa Brigida at Palmarola. We were led by a series of guides, up magnificent staircases, through sumptuous corridors and reception halls adorned with priceless paintings and sculptures, saluted by Swiss Guards wherever we went, until finally we arrived at the audience hall where Pope John Paul was already sitting in his chair. The contrast between the rich splendour of what we had just seen and the simplicity of the Pope in appearance and manner was very striking. Pierre Schouver introduced us to him one by one and he greeted us individually.

The Superior General read a short address in French on behalf of the entire Congregation which the Pope listened to attentively. When Pierre mentioned the beatification of our confrere, Jacques Laval, John Paul said (in French) that he remembered it well as it was his first beatification after becoming Pope. Because of his frail state of health, the Pope did not read his own address but gave the Superior General the printed version which is reproduced below. Finally, he gave his apostolic blessing, not just to those of us who were privileged to be there but also to the 3,000 Spiritans throughout the world



*Our General Superior greeting the Pope*

– professed, associates and all our faithful collaborators. As we prepared to leave, he waved us goodbye and said "Bon courage!"; Pierre replied "À vous aussi!". But it was obvious to us all that we had just been in the presence of a man of immense courage.

### ***The message of Pope John Paul II to Spiritans worldwide***

**To Father Pierre Schouver c.s.sp,  
Superior General of the Congregation of the  
Holy Spirit**

1. I am happy to greet you today, dear Father Superior General and the members of the General Council of the Holy Spirit, founded on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1703. An anniversary is always a time for giving thanks for the road that has been traveled and the gifts received. Today, the Church is happy to do this with you, thanking God for all the work accomplished by your Congregation over the last

three centuries, particularly in the evangelisation of Africa, the Caribbean and South America. Celebrating an anniversary also means rounding a cape and pressing on ahead. I repeat to you what I said to the entire Church (cf. *Novo millennio ineunte*, no. 8): "Duc in altum!" "Cast out into the deep!". Be



faithful to the twofold heritage that you have received from your founders: dedication to the poor and the missionary apostolate – the announcing of the Good News of Christ to all peoples. These two orientations



of your lives open up large horizons for you. It means being at one with those whom the world reduces to dependency or pushes to the margins, the poor who make up the vast majority on some continents but who are also to be found in our most developed societies. In this way, you will witness to the closeness of Christ and let them hear the joy of his call.

2. Do not let yourselves be halted by difficulties, which you have not lacked in the past and which will still be with you in the future, but put your trust in the freedom and strength of the Spirit who accompanies and guides the Church. It is the Holy Spirit who builds the Church into a family: help our contemporaries discover this through your community and fraternal living, a strong sign of the evangelical life, by holding unity close to

your hearts and remaining attached to this devotion to the Holy Spirit which has always been a characteristic of your religious family.

3. From the start, your founders wanted to place you under the protection of the Virgin Mary and her Immaculate Heart. I confide you once more to her caring intercession, yourselves and all the members of your Congregation dispersed throughout the world in the service of Christ and his Church. May the trust that Mary had in the Word of God be a light for your own lives. With all my heart, I give you my apostolic blessing.

From the Vatican, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2003.

*Joannes Paulus II*

## Support and coordination for Spiritans living and working in an Islamic context

The world today is giving us endless examples of the difficulties experienced when the Christian tradition meets with the world of Islam: despite some very positive encounters, relations are often marked by misunderstandings and conflicts, resulting at times in extreme violence. Hence the great need for people dedicated to dialogue, peace and reconciliation. Along with many others, Spiritans have a presence in different ways in Muslim areas.

Twenty-two of these confreres, coming from 17 African countries, came together in June 2002 at Banjul in The Gambia. They discussed their experiences and work and deepened their vision of this special type of mission. The proceedings were recorded in some detail in *Spiritan News* no. 143 (September/October, 2002), and *Spiritan Life* no. 14 (December, 2002) reproduced some of the papers given.

The Banjul meeting proposed certain concrete initiatives to support this difficult area of spiritan mission and suggested the appointment of a confrere, working under the General Council, to follow them up. The General Council agreed and has recently named Père René YOU as "*Coordinator for relations with Moslems*". René has had long experience of this type of ministry in Algeria. The outlines of his role, following the suggestions made at Banjul, are described below. As this will only be a part-time engagement, he will not need to live at the Generalate; he will be able to carry it out from wherever he is working, making the maximum use

of the means of communication that are available today. For the moment, René is in France; for the moment, his email address is: you\_rene@yahoo.fr and if there is any change we will inform you.

### A JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE COORDINATOR OF RELATIONS WITH MUSLIMS

#### A. Reflection

**The Coordinator will encourage, facilitate and accompany reflection meetings on Muslim-Christian relationships and dialogue, in circumscriptions, regions and the Congregation as a whole, in so far as the necessary finance is available. He will also pay attention to the follow-up.**

#### B. Formation

**He will work closely with those in charge of spiritan formation at the level of the Congregation and the circumscriptions, so that preparation for Muslim-Christian meeting and dialogue will be integrated into initial and on-going formation.**

He will pay particular attention to the following:

- The development of programmes of initiation into the world of Islam in houses of formation – history, theology, law, morality, mysticism, language etc.;



- The progressive but systematic introduction into the formation programme of questions which arise from the meeting of the Muslim-Christian traditions.
- To list those confreres who have made a special study of Islam and to encourage a wider use of their competencies in communities, circumscriptions and, above all, houses of formation.
- **To draw up a list of places in Arab countries (Muslim or otherwise) where one can follow courses in Arabic or Islamic studies. He will communicate the details to superiors of circumscriptions e.g. conditions regarding admission, programmes, places to stay, diplomas available – all with a view to a better preparation of confreres for Muslim-Christian encounter and dialogue.**

As far as possible, he will keep in contact with confreres already engaged in Muslim-Christian dialogue, offer them encouragement and support and welcome suggestions to improve the service that he can offer.

#### C. Other tasks:

As well as these principal functions, the Coordinator, as far as time allows, could:

- conduct an enquiry on the present state of relationships between Spiritans and the Muslim world;
- take part, or arrange for others to take part, in meetings or symposia organised by non-Spiritans and communicate the results to the Congregation;

- circulate information on encounter and dialogue activities taking place within the Congregation;
- spread knowledge to confreres of publications concerning Islam or Muslim-Christian encounter;
- promote a reflection, with the help of formators and those already involved in this work, on the criteria of discernment regarding confreres who would like to be engaged in milieux which are largely Muslim. These would include such things as mental and affective balance, professional formation, preliminary "stage", immediate preparation for insertion, spiritual and community life etc.

#### D. Material and financial aspects:

- As far as possible, the Coordinator will use the means of communication which are available to him to obviate the need for expensive journeys; e.g. emails, Intranet, existing organs of communication within the Congregation.

- To finance his service, he will look for help outside the Congregation. He will contact organizations which are interested in this type of mission. If necessary, the General Council will make up the deficit.

#### E. Relations with the General Administration

- The Coordinator will give regular reports of his work to the General Council.
- He will work closely with the services of the General Administration, especially those concerned with communications and spiritan formation.

## MEETING OF MAJOR SUPERIORS

Twelve Major Superiors from 6 International Groups (IG), 3 Districts (D), 2 Provinces (P) and 1 Foundation (F) met at the Generalate in Rome from 14-20 September to get to know each other and the Generalate Team.

These were Frs. Albino Vitor Martins de **OLIVEIRA**, (Paraguay I.G.); Andrzej **OWCA**, (Croatia I.G.); Charles **AUBRÉE**, (Martinique D); Gaspar **MUSHI**, (Zambia I.G.); Herbert **CHARLES**, (Trinidad P); John **KINGSTON**, (Mozambique I.G.); Lambert **NDJANA**, (Central Africa P); Loughlin **FLANAGHAN**, (Malawi I.G.); Peter **ADU**, (The Gambia D); Serge **BALLANGER**, (FANO F); Raymond **GONNET**, (Algeria I.G.) and Raymond **ZIMMERMANN** (Mauritius D).

Each Superior gave a presentation on his circumscription and got an outline of the thinking of the General Council. They also had discussions with the General Council on their particular concerns and problems. The Superiors had the

opportunity to visit the various departments of the General Administration. On the day of the outing, the superiors and the generalate community had an opportunity to recapture the spirit of unity and peace of Francis of Assisi by visiting the valley of Rieti.



*From left to Right: V. de Oliveira, L. Flanagan, R. Zimmermann, J. Kingston, P. Adu, H. Charles, G. Mushi, A. Owca, S. Ballanger, L. Ndjana, C. Aubrée and R. Gonnet*

## NEWS ITEMS

### Decisions of the General Council

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council

- nominates Fr. Gaspar **MUSHI** as Superior of the Zambia International Group, for a mandate of three years, with effect from 24<sup>th</sup> June 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. Gabriel **MYOTTE-DUQUET** as Superior of the Province of France for a mandate of three years, with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> July 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. Etienne **LEFÈVRE** as First Provincial Vicar and of Fr. Gilles **PAGÈS** as Second Provincial Vicar of the Province of France for a mandate of three years, with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> July 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. José Manuel Matias **SABENÇA** as Superior of the Province of Portugal, for a mandate of three years, with effect from 18<sup>th</sup> July 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. Teodoro Mendes **TAVARES** as Superior of the District of Amazonia, for a mandate of three years, with effect from 24<sup>th</sup> July 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. Remi **PEETERS** as Superior of the Province of Belgium for a second mandate of three years, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2003.
- transfers Fr. Gaudence **MUSHI**, of the East African Province, from the District of Kenya to the General Administration for the Information Services, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. James **McCLOSKEY** as Superior of the Province of U.S.A. East for a mandate of three years, with effect from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. Wenceslas Pierrot **RABE** as Superior of the Indian Foundation, for a mandate of three years, with effect from 27<sup>th</sup> August 2003.
- nominates Fr. John **KILCRANN** as Co-ordinator for Justice and Peace for a second mandate of three years, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. Patrick **PALMER** as Superior of the Province of Ireland for a second mandate of three years, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003.
- confirms the election of Fr. John **McFADDEN** as Major Superior of the Province of England for a second mandate of three years, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003.
- extends by one year the mandate of Fr. Philippe **ENGEL**, of the Province of France, as bursar of the Generalate community, with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2003.
- extends by six months the mandate of Fr. Jean-Yves **URFIE**, of the Province of France, to the Information Service of the Generalate, with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003.
- nominates Fr. Edward **O'FARRELL** as Secretary for Formation and Education for a second mandate of three years, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2003.

- confirms the election of Fr. Peter **MARZINKOWSKI** as Superior of the Province of Germany, for a second mandate of three years, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2003.
- extends by one year the mandate of Fr. Edward **OKORIE** as Superior of the District of Guyana, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2003.

The Superior General appoints Fr. René **YOU** of the Province of France as Coordinator for relations with the Muslims for a mandate of three years, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2003.

### Services at the Generalate

Fr. Ibeh James Uzoma has replaced Fr. Cyril Anene as Assistant General Bursar. Born at Port-Harcourt, Nigeria in



1966, James Ibeh was ordained priest in 1996. He worked as Bursar at the Spiritan School of philosophy Isieniu from 1996 to 2000 after which he became Bursar of the Onitsha region of the Province of Nigeria, the post he held until his nomination to the Generalate as Assistant General Bursar on 1st September 2003. The community is very grateful to Fr. Cyril Anene for his dedicated and generous service and wish him every blessing for his future apostolate. James Ibeh will be the third member of the Nigerian Province to fulfil this important role.

### OUR DEAD

15 May	Fr. Bernard A. FLYNN .....	Ireland 73
15 May	Fr. Jean KERLOCH .....	France 83
24 May	Fr. Alfred ZIPPET .....	France 77
27 May	Sch. Samuel SQUARE .....	PAC, 33
01 June	Br. Plechelmus RIETMOLE ..	N/Lands 72
01 June	Fr. Mattheus van KOOLWIJK	N/Lands 93
14 June	Fr. Matthias MOORE .....	Ireland 77
15 June	Br. Wilfred AGANGYA .....	WAP 38
20 June	Fr. René COURTE .....	France 88
21 June	Fr. Raymond NICOD .....	France 89
22 June	Fr. Johannes JANSSEN .....	N/Lands 78
06 July	Fr. Jules DARMONT .....	Belgium 76
08 July	Fr. Victor THIEL .....	France 90
09 July	Br. Remaclus WOUTERS .....	N/Lands 91
19 July	Fr. Antero Alves dos REIS .....	Portugal 77
29 July	Br. Joseph MEYER .....	France 79
06 August	Fr. Jean MORIZUR .....	France 83
06 August	Fr. Roland BARQ .....	France 80
18 August	Fr. Albert KANNENGIESER .....	France 71
21 August	Fr. Gabriel FOURNIER ....	Switzerland 65
21 August	Fr. David MARSHALL .....	US/E 83
29 August	Fr. John MUKA .....	US/E 90
31 August	Br. Yves HOURMANT .....	France 89
02 September	Br. Constantin LETERTRE .....	France 87
06 September	Br. Simon CORNETH .....	N/Lands 80
24 September	Fr. Stephen MAHER .....	Ireland 67
25 September	Fr. Antoine RITTER .....	France 65