



The Baltimore Beacon

The Redemptorists of the Baltimore Province

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Provincial Ponderings



Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I write this as we have just finished the XXVI Redemptorist General Chapter in Rome. A whirlwind four weeks that saw us elect a new Superior General, Rogério Gomes, from São Paulo, Brazil, elect a new team of General Consultors, set a direction for the Congregation for the next six years, celebrate Liturgy at the tomb of St. Alphonsus in Pagani, and the highlight, an audience with Pope Francis. I share with you his remarks that he made to the 120 Redemptorists who were gathered with him in the Clementine Hall. May they be an inspiration to all the Redemptorist family!

“Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

I greet with joy all the Redemptorist missionaries present in the 85 countries in which the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer operates. I also greet all those on the path of formation, the Redemptorist religious, the whole charismatic family, and the laity associated with the mission. I greet you with affection and I thank the new Superior General, Father Rogério Gomes, for the words he addressed to me.

Celebrating a General Chapter is not a canonical formality. It is living a Pentecost, which has the capacity to make all things new (cf. Rev 21,5). In

the Upper Room the disciples of Jesus had doubts, insecurities, fears, they wanted to remain firm and protected; but the Spirit who blows where he wants (cf. Jn 3: 8) causes them to move, to go out, to go towards the peripheries to bring the kerygma, the beautiful News.

In these days you are addressing five important themes for your Congregation: identity, mission, consecrated life, formation, and governance. These are fundamental themes, connected to each other, to rethink your charism in the light of the signs of the times. This community discernment is rooted in the capacity of each of you to seek the mystery of Christ the Redeemer, which is the reason for your consecration and your service to the men and women who live on the existential peripheries of our history today. It is rooted in the fruitfulness of the Alphonsian charism, as the lymph that nourishes the spiritual life and mission of each one and makes it flourish again. I encourage you to dare, having the Gospel and the Magisterium of the Church, as the only boundaries. Do not be afraid to take new paths, to dialogue with the world (cf. Const. 19), in the light of your rich tradition of moral theology. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty in the service of the most needy and people who don't count.

In your Constitutions there is a very beautiful expression, where it is said that Redemptorists are willing to face every trial to bring Christ's redemption to everyone (cf. n. 20). Availability. We do not take this word for granted! It means giving oneself entirely to the mission, with all one's heart; “*dies impendere pro redemptis,*” right up to the last consequences, with the gaze fixed on Jesus who, “despite being in the condition of God [...], emptied himself by assuming the

condition of a servant, becoming similar to men (Phil 2: 6-7); and he became a good Samaritan, a servant (cf Lk 10,25-37; Jn 13,1-15).

Brothers and sisters, the Church and consecrated life are experiencing a unique historical moment in which they have the possibility of renewing themselves in order to respond with creative fidelity to the mission of Christ. This renewal goes through a process of conversion of the heart and mind, of intense metanoia, and also through a change of structures. Sometimes we need to break the old amphorae (cf. Jn 4:28), inherited from our traditions, which have brought a lot of water but have now fulfilled their function. And breaking our jars, full of affection, cultural customs, stories, is not an easy task, it is painful, but it is necessary if we want to drink the new water that comes from the source of the Holy Spirit, the source of all renewal. Those who remain attached to their own certainties risk falling into sclerocardia, which prevents the action of the Spirit in the human heart. Instead, we must not put obstacles to the renewing action of the Spirit, first of all in our hearts and in our lifestyles. Only in this way can we become missionaries of hope!

Your Constitutions affirm: “The Congregation, always preserving its own charism, must adapt its structures and institutions to the requirements of the apostolic ministry and to those peculiar to each mission” (n. 96). “New wine in new wineskins” (Mk 2:22). “A renewal unable to touch and change the structures and the heart does not lead to a real and lasting change. [...] It requires an openness to imagine forms of prophetic and charismatic following, lived in adequate and perhaps unprecedented patterns.” [1]

In this process of re-imagining and renewing the Congregation, three

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Provincial Ponderings, Continued

fundamental pillars must not be forgotten: the centrality of the mystery of Christ, community life, and prayer. The testimony and teachings of St. Alphonsus continually remind you to “remain in the love” of the Lord. Without him we can do nothing; remaining in him we bear fruit (cf. Jn 15: 1-9). The abandonment of community life and prayer is the door to sterility in consecrated life, the death of the charism and closure towards the brothers. Instead, docility to the Spirit of Christ pushes us to evangelize the poor, according to the announcement of the Redeemer in the synagogue of Nazareth (cf. Lk 4: 14-19), concretized in the congregation by St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori. This mission, carried out by your saints,

martyrs, blessed and venerable, leads Redemptorists from all over the world to give their lives for the Gospel and to write stories of redemption on the pages of our time.

I wish the new General Government, the first body for the animation of the apostolic life of the Congregation, humility, unity, wisdom, and discernment to guide your Institute in this beautiful and challenging moment in our history. The work is of the Lord, we are only servants who have done what we had to do (cf. Lk 17:10). Those who appropriate the leadership function for a personal interest do not serve the Lord who washed the disciples’ feet, but the idols of worldliness and selfishness.

Dear brothers, I entrust your Congregation to the protection of the Mother of Perpetual Help, so that she always accompanies you as she accompanied her Son at the foot of the cross (cf. Jn 19:25). You are not alone, be loved and guarded children. I pray the Lord that you may be faithful and persevering in your mission, never forgetting the poorest and most abandoned you serve, and to whom you announce the Good News of the Redemption. I cordially bless you, the sisters and the lay faithful who share your charism. And I ask you to please pray for me. Thank you!”

*In the Spirit of the Redeemer,
Paul J. Borowski, C.Ss.R.*



Upcoming 2022/2023 Dates

Tuesday, November 29 – Thursday, December 1, 2022: Province Convocation at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ [Thursday, December 1, 2022 will be Provincial Candidates Day]

Monday, February 13 - Wednesday, February 15, 2023: Province Retreat (Southeast Region) at St. Alphonsus Villa; New Smyrna Beach, FL, Anthony Gittins, CSSp, is the retreat director and the theme will be: “Missionary Discipleship.”

Thursday, February 16, 2023: Province Jubilee Celebration (Southeast Region)

Monday, March 13 – Friday, March 17, 2023 and if necessary Monday, March 20 – Friday, March 24, 2023: XVIII Baltimore Provincial Chapter at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

Tuesday, May 30 - Thursday, June 1, 2023: Province Retreat at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch,

NJ, Anthony Gittins, CSSp, is the retreat director and the theme will be: “Missionary Discipleship.”

Saturday, July 15, 2023 at 11 a.m. Province Jubilee Celebration: Mass & Luncheon at Sacred Heart of Jesus; Baltimore, MD.

Tuesday, October 17 - Thursday, October 19, 2023: Province Convocation at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ. Anthony Gittins, CSSp, is the presenter and the theme will be: “Intercultural Living.”

Save the Date

Redemptorist Conversations on Racial Justice

For Confreres and Partners in Ministry

Furthering the program begun last Spring with our new fall series, **Building on Our Roots**

November 8: Redemptorists & the South

Tuesday Evenings on ZOOM, 90 minutes of conversation
Eastern : 8 p.m. - Central: 7 p.m. - Mountain: 6 p.m. - Pacific: 5 p.m.

Presentations by and Discussions with
Dr. Patrick Hayes and Dr. Nicholas Radmacher
RSVP to Francis Gargani, C.Ss.R., for the ZOOM link - francescogcsr@yahoo.com

Upcoming EPC Meetings

Future EPC meetings will begin at
9:30 a.m. via ZOOM until further
notice

- November 16th – 17th
- December 2nd (San Alfonso; Long Branch, NJ)

- January 18th – 19th
- February 8th – 9th

Evangelization Team Parish Mission Schedule:

- Nov. 10-17, 2022: Good Shepherd in Lenexa, Kansas
- Dec. 1-8, 2022: St. Michael in Long Branch, NJ
- Dec. 8-15, 2022: Sacred Heart in South Plainfield, NJ
- Jan. 19-26, 2023: Sacred Heart in New Smyrna Beach, FL
- Feb. 2-9, 2023: St. Vincent de Paul in Holiday, FL
- Feb. 9-16, 2023: St. Martha in Sarasota, FL
- Feb. 23-Mar. 2, 2023: St. Columba in Hopewell Junction, NY
- Mar. 2-9, 2023: St. Mary in Dumont, NJ
- Mar. 23-30, 2023: St. Bede in Williamsburg, VA

Communications Updates

- Daily Audio Podcasts on the readings of the day may be found, in either Spanish or English, at redemptorists.net.

- Weekly Video reflections on the upcoming Sunday readings (Cycle C) may be found on Facebook: facebook.com/RedemptoristsBaltimore or YouTube: youtube.com/BaltRedemptorists. These videos are released each Wednesday.

- Saturday, November 19th: Online video service “Praying with the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.”

Redemptorist Associates Enrolled at Saint Mary, Annapolis, MD



PIM Enrollees pictured with Fr. Patrick Woods, C.Ss.R., (center) and Lucy Burich McNamara, PIM coordinator (far left)

Fr. Patrick Woods, C.Ss.R., was the PIM Coordinator for the day's events.



Ahead of the feast day of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, the parish of Saint Mary's Annapolis celebrated the installation of 16 parishioners as Redemptorist Associates under the coordination of the North American Partners in Mission Program. For the past year and half, the group met via Zoom. The gatherings have been assisting these men and women in deepening their understanding of the charism of the Redemptorists and how they might apply the richness of Redemptorist spirituality in their daily living. The installations (there were two) were done at Sunday Masses and there was a sense of excitement about

what they experienced in the rituals of proclaiming their commitment as associates and in receiving their Redemptorist crosses (pictured below).

Saint Mary's history of being staffed by the Congregation of the Most Holy



Redeemer goes back to 1853. The cornerstone of Saint Mary's Church was blessed by Saint John Neumann in 1858. Blessed Father Seelos served in various roles at Saint Mary's as prefect of students, novice master, rector, and pastor.

We pray for the intercession of Jesus, our Most Holy Redeemer, Our Mother of Perpetual Help, and all our Redemptorist saints and blessed, that our new associates be blessed in their commitment to the life and ministry of our Congregation.

Patrick Woods, C.Ss.R.

"Come and See" Update from September

We first and foremost give thanks to Almighty God and to Mary, Our Mother of Perpetual Help, for all the graces and blessings bestowed upon our "Come and See" weekend. Our thanks to the Redemptorist communities at Immaculate Conception, Bronx, and Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Brooklyn, for their gracious hospitality. A very special note of thanks to Fr. Frank Skelly for assisting us with rooms at OLPH rectory and

Guest House. All together we had 13 attending the "Come and See." There were nine candidates and four vocation directors. The Redemptorist House in the Bronx had only four rooms available. The Redemptorist community in Brooklyn made the Guest House available and five of us were given rooms in the rectory.

These nine men came from all over the United States. They flew in from Los Angeles, from Wyoming, from

Houston, from Indiana, from Ohio, from North Carolina, and they came by train from Boston and Philadelphia. All of them made it, or nearly made it, for our Opening Mass at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 15 in the house chapel at Immaculate Conception where Fr. Joe Ngo presided and preached. Everyone was most grateful and thankful for the spaghetti and meatball dinner that followed. At 6:45 p.m. we gathered in the main Church for Holy Hour where the Service



Participants of the weekend pictured above

was led by seminarian, Andy Jones with Fr. Bob Wojtek as celebrant. With conclusion of Holy Hour, Fr. Peter Linh, Fr. Thomas Pham, and myself drove over to Brooklyn with six candidates. Fr. Chuong Cao remained in the Bronx with the other three.

On Friday, September 16 our six candidates staying in Brooklyn joined the Redemptorist community at 8 a.m. for Morning Prayer and Meditation in the lower church of the Basilica. From there it was back in the cars and driving over to St. John University where we all met by the University chapel. Our seminarians then gave candidates a tour of the campus grounds and an inside look at some of the buildings. We also met with Assistant Dean of Admissions, Mr. Greg Gades, with the hope that next August 2023 many of these men will be applying for admission. After lunch at a nearby restaurant, we all returned for a 3 p.m. meeting with the formation directors, Fr. Bob Wojtek and Fr. Joe Ngo. This offered the opportunity for a question/answer period and for the formators to go over the day-by-day schedule of life at the pre-novitiate house of formation. Mass followed at 4:30 p.m. with Fr. Bob presiding and preaching. It was then on to a tasty barbecue set up in our parking lot by chef Fr. Joe Ngo. Just a wonderful and graced atmosphere

of good food, good sharing, good music, and good fun. After clean-up, it was onto the New York subway system and some sightseeing to St. Patrick's Cathedral and Times Square. At about 10:30 p.m. our Brooklyn caravan

headed back to the Brooklyn Rectory and Guest House.



Participants visited San Alfonso Retreat House

On Saturday, September 17 we all arrived at San Alfonso Retreat House on the beautiful Atlantic Ocean for Retreat Day and overnight. Fr. Royce Thomas, our newly ordained Redemptorist, conducted the Retreat Day and offered conferences in morning and afternoon. The weather was picture perfect so candidates and all had the opportunity to walk the shoreline, the Grotto, and the extended boardwalk that is just a few blocks from San Alfonso. Mass was at 11 a.m. with Fr. Royce presiding and preaching. We would later that afternoon have Evening Prayer at 4:30 p.m.

The night concluded with all of us gathering at 7 p.m. for feedback on the Retreat Day, to share how conferences by Fr. Royce touched us individually and to offer any personal witness about our vocation. It was a very blessed time in the witnessing that was presented.

Sunday morning brought us to Mass at 7:45 a.m. with Fr. Peter Linh presiding and myself preaching. After a great breakfast, it was time for departures and prayers of Thanksgiving for these nine men who answered the call of Jesus to "Come and See."

All I can say is that these four days were filled with light, joy, and praise through prayer and song, with laughter and sharing as we gave witness to one another to the love God has for all of us. As Vocation Directors, Formators, and Retreat Director, we shared with these nine men the love and joy we have experienced and continue to experience as Redemptorists. We prayed with them that as they now return to family and friends, to school and to work, that they continue to meet with their spiritual director, or if necessary, to find a spiritual director. We prayed with them that they find quiet time to sit with the Lord Jesus and with Mary, Our Mother of Perpetual Help. We prayed with them that they "Be Not Afraid" to "put out to deeper water" and allow Jesus to direct them in the path He has chosen for them.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, let us continue to Pray for Vocations! As Fr. Peter and I say: "If you see something, say something!" Jesus and Mother Mary will be glad you did. And maybe, just maybe, your words of encouragement will bring that man to Jesus as a Redemptorist.

Denis Sweeney, C.Ss.R.
Peter Linh, C.Ss.R.

General Chapter



Newly elected Superior General,
Rogério Gomes, C.Ss.R.

CONGRATULATIONS
Newly Elected Superior General & Consultors
CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER

Superior General
Fr. Rogério Gomes, CSsR.

Fr Zdzislaw Stanula, CSsR.
EUROPE
VICAR GENERAL

Br Larry Lujan, CSsR.
NORTH AMERICA

Fr Jairo Diaz, CSsR.
LATIN AMERICA

Fr Ivel Mendanha, CSsR.
ASIA-OCEANIA

Fr Nicolas Ayouba, CSsR.
AFRICA-MADAGASCAR

Fr Paul Báo Vinh, CSsR.
ASIA-OCEANIA



Pope Francis pictured
with Redemptorists at the
General Chapter.

New theme was announced for the
Sexennium at the General Chapter
entitled “Missionaries of Hope in the
Footsteps of the Redeemer.”

Theme for the Sexennium
**Missionaries of Hope
in the footsteps of
the Redeemer**



Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer



Redemptorist Updates



In September, Prince Pedro of Bourbon-Two Sicilies, Duke of Calabria, visited the Shrine of St. John Neumann. Fr. Richard Bennett was the chief escort throughout the Shrine and the Museum. The Prince visited with a colleague, toured for an hour, before attending the 11 a.m. Spanish Mass.

Fr. Gordon Cannoles' 79th Birthday at St. Clement Mission House; Ephrata, PA on Saturday, September 24th.



The Redemptorists
— Baltimore Province —

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