



ORA ET LABORA

CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARIES OF MARIANHILL

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September 24, 2008

Circular letter 04/2008

Dear Confreres,

Greetings of love and peace !

From June 24th – 25th this year, I was privileged to be facilitator at the Provincial chapter of the Salesians of Don Bosco (men) from Zimbabwe, Malawi, Namibia and Zambia. In reflecting about *the challenge of living together in unity and diversity* with the over 60 Salesians, I realized more than ever before that it is a grace and blessing to live and work with people I would otherwise have never known had it not been for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The centre of this “set-up” is therefore Jesus himself and we have to revert to him whenever we hit a snag in this reality that he has graciously enabled us to live in. He is the reason we are here, after all. I also realized at this gathering that our challenges as Missionaries of Mariannahill, the Province of Zambia in particular, are not exclusive to us.

Because Jesus is both Son of God and Son of Man, we in our turn receive divine adoption from him. It comes from the grace he possesses as head of the body whose members we are. This divine adoption makes us one in Christ.

The Body and blood of Christ we partake of everyday is a source of grace to us. By this grace, we are given a share in the divine life of Jesus. Jesus dwells in us and we in Jesus, the head of our body. May our receiving of the Holy Communion everyday be a reminder to us of our common oneness in Jesus and may we draw strength from him, present in the Eucharist, to enjoy the reality he has put us in i.e. living together as a family of God with people who are different in many ways, gifts, mentalities, temperaments etc. May Jesus who transcended even the bond of blood to welcome and accept others as his mother, sisters and brothers (cf Mt. 12:47-50) show us they way to live with others, different from us.

A few items from the Province of Zambia :

1. Jubilee Celebrations and official opening of Abbot Francis Hall

I would like to sincerely thank all of you Confreres who participated in the Jubilee Celebrations of Frs. Macarius Haeusler (25 years Priesthood), Gaspard Parent (40 years

Profession) and Ivo Burkhardt, in absentia (40 years Profession) at Chunga Parish on Sunday, September 14, 2008. Special thanks to our Confreres at Chunga and their parishioners for the beautiful celebration. At this same celebration, the Parish Hall, named “Abbot Francis Pfanner Hall” was blessed and officially opened. The Member of Parliament (MP) for Matero, Mrs. Faustina Sinyangwe, a Catholic herself, was Guest of Honour. We are pursuing her, hoping she honours the promise she made for Chunga Parish. Many thanks and Congratulations to our Jubilarians !

2. Death of our Republican President

Following the death of our Republican President, Dr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, SC, on August 19th who was put to rest after a 21-day mourning period on September 3rd, 2008, we are going to have Presidential Bye-Elections on October 30th. I encourage you dear Confreres to exercise your democratic right and ensure that you vote, and vote wisely. May our beloved late President, much appreciated internationally and at home for his fight against corruption and improving the economy, rest in God’s eternal peace !

3. District meetings

I encourage you all dear Confreres to please meet in your Districts during the course of the month of October (next month). Our Conference in January this year gave the Districts two tasks, 1) the **revision of the Provincial Directory** and 2) study of our **spirituality and identity**. I suggest we focus on 1 for these October meetings. May I ask the conveners, Fr. Matthew Mwamba (Kasama District), Fr. Patrick Nkole (Lusaka), Deacon Abidon Kabwe (Engelmar District) and Frt. Christopher Mashilipa (Merrivale District) to please call and preside over these meetings. Come with your copy of the Provincial Directory and your suggestions or remarks for discussion by the meeting.

4. Fr. Isaac M. Mwandwe – Further Studies

Fr. Isaac Mwandwe will next month, October, go to the Zambia Catholic University in Kalulushi and take up Developmental studies (3 - year Degree course). He and Fr. Paul Mulenga (studying education at the same university) will form a small CMM community in a rented flat next to the university. Both Confreres will be part of the CMM Community at Chambishi Parish and will be residing and working there from Friday evenings till Sunday evenings. Fr. Patrick Nkole will be Acting Parish Priest at Chunga, assisted by Fr. Steven Chikwanda until further notice.

5. Fr. John Chishimba

Fr. John Chishimba has been transferred back to Zambia from Germany by the General Government. He arrives in Zambia on September 25th, 2008. Fr. John’s appointment will be announced later.

6. 3 new Confreres arrived

The 3 new Confreres, Raul Augustinho from Mozambique, Mandla Raphael Mchunu from South Africa (both from the Province of Mariannhill) and Lloyd Derengi from Zimbabwe (Bulawayo Province) arrived at the end of July. All 3 are full members of the Province of Zambia and are currently busy in School. Raul is at St. Dominic’s Seminary

in the 1st year of Theology, while Mandla and Lloyd are at St. Bonaventure College in the 1st year of Philosophy. Welcome to you dear Confreres; you are one with us !

7. Back from holidays overseas

Frs. Macarius Haeusler and Gaspard Parent both came back from their home leave in Switzerland and Canada, respectively, on August 14th, 2008. Welcome back and best wishes for the work ahead !

8. 3 students from Merrivale to study Theology in Zambia

Frts. Michael Kani, George Desai and Richard Mwamba, presently winding up their Philosophical studies at St. Joseph's Theological Institute in Cedara, will over the next four years be studying Theology at St. Dominic's Major Seminary here in Zambia.

9. Deacons John Patrick Ochume Ong'or and Charles Malamba - apostolates

Deacon John Patrick Ochume Ong'or has moved to Chambishi Parish in Ndola Diocese, after completing a two - month course in Bemba Language at the White Fathers' FENZA Centre here in Lusaka. Deacon Charles Malamba is at the Provincialate, helping at Engelmar House and apostolates around, while recovering from chicken pocks. He is on medication right now and making good progress.

10. Br. Roy Kafula

Frt. Roy Kafula has asked to be a Brother, changing from a Frater or student for Priesthood. He is now a Brother. He will be in Mungwi Parish and be engaged in the different apostolates there, while discerning his new Religious Status.

11. Policy on pastoral work for students

Theology students at St. Dominic's Seminary – will be engaged, as from the 2nd Year of Theology, in pastoral work over the weekends, in conjunction with the Seminary, which will assign them (in consultation with the Local Superior at our Theology Students' house in Woodlands). This takes effect next year.

After Theological studies, before Priestly ordination – a period of at least 6 months of pastoral experience, upon completion of Theological studies, will precede Priestly Ordination. This has already taken effect this year.

12. Condolences

Our 2 Zambian Confreres in the Region of East Africa, Frs. Ivo Chaebwa and Christopher Kafula, had to come to Zambia on the same flight in the first week of August to mourn their beloved mother and father, respectively, who died in a space of 3 days. May the deceased rest in the hands of the Lord and may our Confreres find consolation in their faith ! Our deepest Condolences to you both !

13. Council of the Congregation (CoC 2008) in Rome

As you are aware, there will be a meeting of the Council of the Congregation in Rome from October 6th to 19th, 2008. I will attend this important meeting and I recommend it to your prayers. I will leave on Saturday, October 4th, returning at the end of the month.

During my absence, the Vice – Provincial, **Fr. Alex Chandalala**, will be in charge of the affairs of the Province. You can reach Fr. Alex on :

Cell phone : **+260 977 661130**

E-mail : alexchandalala@yahoo.com

I wish you God's blessings in your work; and remember to pray for us at the CoC.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

Fr. Patrick Chongo CMM
Provincial Superior