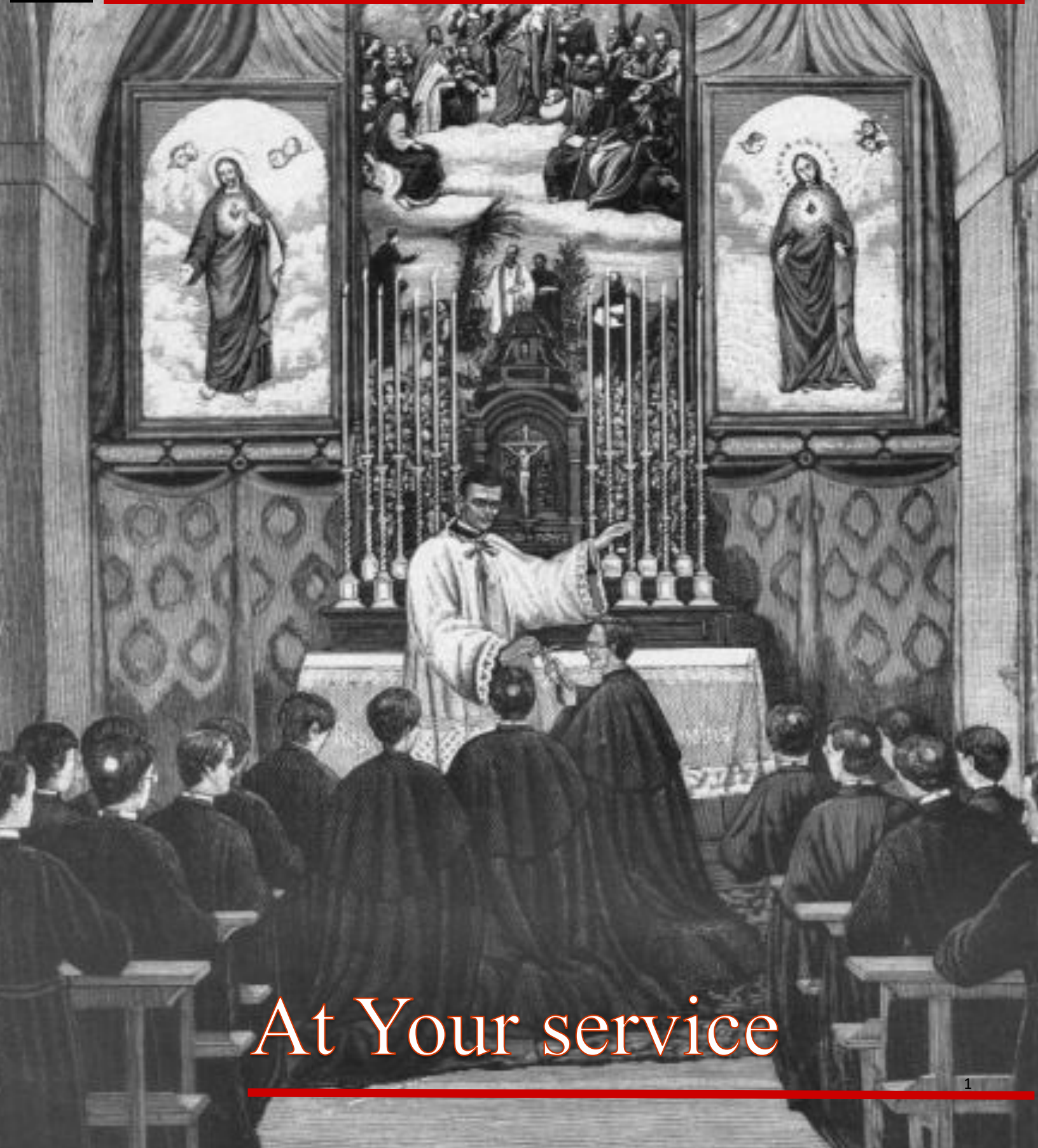


# IL MISSIONARIO



At Your service

## EDITORIAL



**Br. Joseph Ho Trong Hoa, SDS**

As it was very important for our Blessed Father Jordan and for the different generations of Salvatorians before us, so the Salvatorian mission worldwide is still most important today. It is because we Salvatorians are called to be disciples of our time. We are invited to follow the footsteps of the Apostles to go out into the world and to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord until all people everywhere may know and love the Lord Jesus Christ whom He has sent. However, I personally think that what matters most for us Salvatorians is not primarily our presence or the presence of our mission worldwide. Of greater importance is the very presence of the Gospel of the Lord worldwide and how much the Lord is known and loved by the people in the place where we and our apostolates are present.

It is clear that there are many challenges that we encounter daily in our Salvatorian mission. And I think that one of the challenges for us Salvatorians concerns ourselves. Sometimes we are not effective in our Salvatorian mission because of our lack of trust in Divine Providence, our lack of missionary spirit, and our lack of commitment to the missions. It is now the time that we should look back and reflect on the examples of our Blessed Father Jordan and our first Salvatorian missionaries. They were missionaries full of trust in Divine Providence, with a strong missionary spirit, and with full commitment to the missions.

All of these were manifested in our very first Salvatorian mission in Assam. It was their trust in Divine Providence that made them accept a mission previously rejected by many others. It was their strong missionary spirit that made them go out into this remote area having only little to none experience. And it was their commitment to the mission that made them sacrifice themselves for the sake of the Gospel. Therefore, no matter where we are and in which part of the world we are doing our missions, let us put our trust in Divine Providence and let us imitate our Blessed Father Jordan and our first Salvatorian missionaries who displayed a strong missionary spirit and commitment to our Salvatorian missions. By doing this, I believe that we can overcome all the challenges that we encounter daily and be fruitful and effective in our Salvatorian missions.





My name is **Cleric Chimogwa Boniface Philipo SDS**. I come from the Missionary Pro-Province of Tanzania. Both my novitiate and philosophy studies I did in Tanzania at the Jordan University College. Immediately after finishing philosophy, I was sent to Rome for my theology studies. I learned the Italian language and later in the same year I enrolled at the Pontifical University of San Bonaventura (Seraphicum) for my theology studies. After the first year of studies at the Seraphicum, I moved to the Pontifical Gregorian University to continue my studies.

My spiritual life was born from the basic things in life. I remember discovering my vocation from the very day of my baptism because I was touched by the way my parish priest sang during Holy Mass. After receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, my vocation was already more mature: not only the priest's way of singing attracted me but above all the humble services he did. The desire to become a priest never disappeared, because I too wanted to serve the people of God. So I entered the Salesian Seminary of Don-Bosco. At the seminary we celebrated Mass together daily and had monthly spiritual conferences with the boys and girls. This strengthened me spiritually and my desire to become a priest grew. After my advanced studies I joined the Society of the Divine Savior as a Salvatorian!

My name is **Cleric Gabriel da Costa SDS**. I come from a small and distant country called East Timor. I am 32 years old. I started my religious formation in the Philippines nine years ago. In 2017 I finished my philosophy and continued with the novitiate. Then, in 2018 I came to Italy to continue my theological studies and will work as a missionary in one of the Western European countries for a few years. I first met the Salvatorians in 2010 through Fr. Karol, a Polish Salvatorian who worked in Australia and who is currently the bishop of Port Pirie (Australia). I was one of the first candidates from East Timor and the first Salvatorian to come from my country.

I grew up in a very devout Catholic family. My parents taught us to pray together when we were children. As I grew up, I became more interested in church activities, such as serving the altar, praying the rosary every afternoon, participating in the children's choir, etc. All of these activities played an important role in my faith. The reason I want to be a Salvatorian is because of the Salvatorian charism, spirituality and Mission. I realized how rich, deep and meaningful the Salvatorian lifestyle is.



## EASTER CELEBRATION

On April 14th, 2022, the community participated in the Chrism Mass with Pope Francis at St. Peter's Basilica. This year's Easter triduum we celebrated within our religious community. It was a simple yet unique and profound celebration. The community celebrated the Passover of the Lord with great joy.



## PILGRIMAGES

On March 26th, 2022, the community visited the community of the Salvatorian Sisters at Porrino. It was an unforgettable day because each of us was impressed by the missionary experiences the Sisters shared with us.

On April 28th, 2022, the community had a tour inside the catacombs of St. Peter's basilica guided by Mr. Rino.

On May 28th, 2022, the community had a spiritual visit to the shrine of Divine Love led by Salvatorian permanent deacon Ermes Luparia.

On June 29th, 2022, the community made a spiritual visit to St. Peter's Basilica.

On June 30th, 2022, in the morning the community held Holy Mass in one of the underground chapels in St. Peter's Basilica, and in the afternoon the community had a spiritual visit to a Benedictine monastery in Subiaco. It was a special experience for everyone.



## RETREATS

On February 19th, 2022, the community had a monthly recollection and at the same time had a spiritual visit to the religious community of Saint Brigid in Piazza Farnese, Rome. We had the opportunity to see the chapel where Father Jordan and two other priests had made their religious vows as the members of the first grade. Furthermore, we also saw the relics of Saint Brigid. It was a unique experience for almost all of us.

On April 30th, the community had the monthly recollection at the Motherhouse. During this occasion we had a seminar with Father Michael Overmann concerning the theme: Rome and the archive.

From 3th to 6th of July 2022, the community had an annual retreat at the formation house guided by the rector Father Charles Mushitu.



## OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

The first chapter of the new vicariate took place from 11 to 13 of May. It was named Pancratius Pfeiffer mission vicariate.

On 22nd of May 2022, our confrere Ruphin Kabondo received his diaconal ordination at the basilica of St. John Lateran from the Pope's vicar, Cardinal De Donatis. It was a great joy for the Society.

On May 29th, 2022, the community celebrated the *Pasquetta* (Easter Monday) together with the faithful. It was a special day for all of us.

On June 19th, 2022, the community celebrated the solemnity of Corpus Domini. After the Holy Mass together with the faithful we had the Eucharistic procession around our house led by deacon Ruphin.

On June 25th, 2022, the community received the Polish novices. It was a fruitful meeting.

On June 26th, 2022, after the Sunday mass, the community together with the faithful held a devotional procession with Saint Anthony the Abbot and Saint Martin towards Tor de Cenci football field.

On June 28th, 2022, the community received Father Jan Schreurs, a Belgian missionary residing in Congo. It was a fruitful day for all of us.



## UNIVERSITY

In June the students took the summer exams. The exams started on June 7th and ended on June 22nd. This year there were 4 students, namely Joseph, Boniface, Adrian Novelo and Gabriel, who finished their bachelor degree in theology. Adrian Hafner finished his philosophy studies.



## BIRTHDAYS

On March 24th, 2022, the community celebrated Brother Gabriel da Costa's birthday. It was a day full of joy and happiness for the community. We thank God for his presence in the community.

On May 20th, 2022, the community celebrated the birthday of brother Adrian Novelo. It was a celebration full of joy and fraternity.

On June 16, 2022, the community celebrated the birthday of our vice-rector Fr. Exuper.

On June 22nd, 2022, the community celebrated the birthday of Cl. Joseph Trong Hoa. The community feast for all three birthdays of our confreres in this month was celebrated on the 22nd of June. It was a celebration full of joy and fraternity.

On July 1st, 2022, the community celebrated the birthday of our rector Fr. Charles Mushitu. There were many people who came to wish him a happy birth-day, including the generalate.



## FEASTDAY OF BLESSED FRANCIS JORDAN

On July 14th, 2022, the community departed from Rome to Fribourg, Switzerland by bus. It was a long journey.

On July 16th, 2022, the community participated in the Eucharistic celebration at Tafers presided by Auxiliary bishop of Fribourg Alain De Raemy. It was a special occasion for each one of us.

On July 17th, 2022, the community participated in the Mass at Gurtweil, Germany presided by the auxiliary bishop of Freiburg. For many of us, it was a unique occasion.

On July 21st, 2022, the community participated in the Holy Mass of the feast day of Blessed Francis Jordan in Freiburg, Germany presided by His Excelency Stephan Burger, archbishop of Freiburg. It was a special experience for everyone present.





## THE PANCRATIUS PFEIFFER MISSION VICARIATE

In Western Europe, where protestant Christianity originated and Catholicism has been based for most of its history, the process of secularization has been exceedingly profound. Although the vast majority of adults say they are baptized — about 91 % of the population is baptized — today many do not describe themselves as Christians.

Some say they gradually drifted away from religion, having stopped believing in the religious teachings. Nonetheless most adults surveyed still do consider themselves Christians, even if they seldom go to church. Indeed, the survey shows that non-practicing Christians make up the biggest share of the population across the western european region.

Due to this situation of decline of faith in Europe, the number of the young adults joining the priesthood or religious life decreases day after day. This problem has not spared our Society. On the contrary: our western european units have been witnessing a relentless decline of their active members over the last few decades. In recent years we have experienced the closure of many communities because of the lack of members. Italy and Switzerland are the two units who have suffered the most.

How to deal with this reality as community in the spirit of our Founder Blessed Fr. Francis Jordan? The generalate has decided to maintain a minimal presence of Salvatorians in Western Europe. The first step towards the realization of this goal was the establishment of a new unit, profoundly restructuring the salvatorian presence in Switzerland and Italy.

Moreover, the vicariate will leave the door open for others units of Western Europe to join when the need arises.

After a long procedure of consultations and agreements the vicariate was established by our general superior, Rev. Fr. Milton Zonta SDS, on the 11th of February 2022. Due to the ongoing Covid pandemic the foundation of the new vicariate took place during a Zoom meeting. The inaugural meeting of the vicariate was marked by a very good speech given by the superior general. His speech was very rich and that gave the direction of the new vicariate. I would like to highlight some elements in the speech of our Father General because they help us to understand why the new vicariate was formed, what its purpose is and which direction the new vicariate will take.

The superior general started his speech by reminding the members a key point of the vision of our Founder in dealing with present-day problems and challenges. The Founder emphasized on the necessity of looking at the signs of the times. He said “in difficult times, he [the Founder] had to take hard decisions according to the necessity and the calls of the mission at that time . Father General went on to explain that our Founder was absolutely aware that times are constantly changing. Consequently Salvatorians must be ready to change with the world so that they can carry on the work of God. Pope Francis said that “times change; likewise we Christians must change continuously.”

He also explained the aim of the vicariate. Father General said that “we are here with the aim of setting in mo-

tion a process of renewal of the Salvatorian presence in Western Europe. We are called to carry out a process of revitalization of our Salvatorian presence in an evangelical quality, in holiness and generosity. After long time of meditation and reflection the generate decided to form the new vicariate as point of beginning of helping the church in Europe.

The superior general asked the very important question: “What is our role as Salvatorian religious in a changing Europe, how can we help the Church on this continent in the missionary spirit of our Founder?” The first part of the answer to this question was the generalate deciding to form the new vicariate, implementing what the last general chapter had decided. The general superior used the opportunity to clarify the reason behind the formation of the new vicariate. He said that “the creation of the new vicariate is not just a merger of two units or a simple canonical solution to a problem of units unable to move on by themselves. In reality this event means for our Society the beginning of a new apostolic perspective.”

Last but not least the superior general gave some indications concerning the characteristics the new vicariate is to develop. I will only list the main points, as I find these are important even for others provinces and vicariates. We unmistakably live in a time of vocation crisis which has started in Europe and will spread to all parts of the world. The characteristics are as follows:

First. The Salvatorians in the new Vicariate of Europe will certainly have among themselves a greater awareness and visibility of their identity as members of an international apostolic society.

Second. The Salvatorians of the new Vicariate of Europe will not limit themselves to repeating what is done apostolically today, but will find other forms and initiatives of evangelization: for example, closeness to the young, attention to the poorest and migrants, collaboration with lay people.

Third. The Salvatorians of the new Vicariate of Europe, at least at the beginning, will be organized on the basis of a process of integration of the different generations: young people and adults together.

Fourth. The Salvatorians of the new Vicariate of Europe, in line with the crisis of religious life existing on the continent, will no longer be involved in

the maintenance of great works, but will present themselves with fewer tools and means, and more endowed with religious experience.

Fifth. The Salvatorians of the new Vicariate of Europe will necessarily have to turn their energies to apostolic cooperation with the laity.

Seventh. The Salvatorians of the new Vicariate of Europe will have the privilege and responsibility of taking care of the Salvatorian historic sites linked to Blessed Fr. Francis Jordan. They will have the important task of keeping alive the memory of our Founder, in particular in Gurtweil, Rome, Fribourg and Tafers which were the decisive places of his vocational and foundational journey. This will be an essential service of the new Vicariate to the Society in helping Salvatorians around the world to better understand the signifi-



*Simultaneous translation in Italian or German was provided during the full length of the Chapter*

cance of these sources of our identity and mission.

The superior general appointed Rev. Fr. Piet Cuijpers SDS as the superior of the new vicariate and two assistants Rev. Fr. Daniel Cicirella SDS and Rev. Fr. David Stempak SDS. The new vicariate had its first vicariate chapter from Wednesday the 11th of May up to Friday the 13th in the same month of 2022.

Expectations for the new vicariate from the Swiss confreres were the desire to maintain the salvatorian house in Freiburg and the desire to maintain the publication of the salvatorian calendar, which dates back to the time of Father Jordan. Together with Italy, where the new vicariate also includes the confreres who are currently in formation at Tor de’Cenci, it will be possible to plan in the long term a rebirth of the aforementioned units, which have long been lacking in vocations. I wish to conclude with the invitation to pray for the new vicariate in order that all the plans and projects that were made for the future of Europe may be fulfilled according to the will of God. May God bless this new vicariate and bless our Society.

**Cl. Herbert Julius Mpwage SDS**





## Ordination to the diaconate

The Salvatorian community at Tor de'Cenci was re-established as a formation house in 2017, when the first formators and the first students arrived. The aim of this community is to form Salvatorians in the heart of Christianity, in the Eternal City, in order to ensure the future of our salvatorian presence in Western Europe.

Our confrere Ruphin Kabondo Wa Kabondo SDS was one of the first students to arrive in Tor de' Cenci. Thus it was a great step forward for Ruphin and for the whole community, when on the evening of May 22, 202 he received the ordination to the diaconate. We can safely assume it was only the first in a series of future ordinations.

It was a great joy for all the members of the Salvatorian Family and for all the friends and benefactors present in the Archbasilica of the Most Holy Savior and of Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist in the Lateran. The main celebrant was His Eminence Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, Vicar General of His Holiness for the Diocese of Rome. Together with our confrere 14 new deacons were ordained.

In his homily, the Cardinal Vicar stressed that the deacon is "first of all a man conquered by Love", "the man 'inhabited by God'", "the man of

amazement", and also "the man of humility". These are the main characteristics of the man chosen by God within the Church for this service.

After the presentation of the candidates, their prostration and the singing of the Litany of the Saints, with the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination, his Eminence ordained the candidates in front of a full Basilica, for the first time after these years of Covid related restrictions.

The day ended with a small agape, together with the members of the Generalate, friends and benefactors, in the festive hall of our community at Tor de'Cenci.



*Ruphin (first one on the right) together with six other ordinandi*

**Cl. Adrian Hafner SDS**



## Wonderful experience at Porrino



On March the 26th we had a wonderful retreat with the Salatorian sisters at Porrino. We left early in the morning and arrived about an hour later.

On the day of our retreat we were blessed with beautiful, sunny weather. Some Sisters were waiting for us in front of their house to welcome us. After a short time of greeting one another, we started our program for the day of the retreat. In the first hours we had the Holy Mass and adoration. Everything was celebrated in a solemn mood. During the Holy Mass and adoration we offered together with the Sisters several prayers for ourselves and for the world. The celebrants were Fr. Charles, the rector of our community, and Fr. Piet, our spiritual director.

After the celebration we had a short break for coffee and to chat with the Sisters. The Salvatorian Sisters were so friendly to us. Next we had a conference together with the Sisters in a comfortable and warm room. The Sisters were all present to share with us their experiences, especially about their missionary activities in Albania. We were so amazed about all the stories that they shared with us, although the

Sisters were not spared from hardships in the poor country where they worked. Some of the elderly sisters shared about the difficult beginning of the Albanian mission. Their lives are an inspiration for us young Salvatorians to imitate alongside the example of our Founder Blessed Fr. Jordan.



Before concluding our retreat we had lunch together with the community of the Sisters. There was a family from Ukraine who had fled from the war and is now staying with the Sisters. By happy coincidence the mother of the Ukrainian family celebrated her birthday during our visit, so we sang together and shared the cake (photo above).

At the end of the day we took a picture together as a community of the Salvatorian Sisters and Brothers, and as the sons and daughters of our beloved Founder Blessed Fr. Jordan. We were so thankful to our almighty God and the Sisters that welcomed us and gave us a chance to share with them about our experiences in this beautiful place. We hope that one day we will come back here to further strengthen our relations as members of the Salvatorian family.



*Conference with the Sisters*

**Cl. Anthony Dung Nguyen SDS**



## The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Consecrated Life

Consecrated life is a specific and distinct state of the Christian life. It is a special vocation in which many of the faithful are called, chosen, and totally consecrated to God. Consecrated persons, through the profession of the evangelical counsels, seek to live a life of prayer and sacrifice, conforming to Christ in chastity, poverty, obedience and fraternal communion in the community.

The Church teaches that consecrated life is a special vocation and a "more intimate" consecration, which is rooted in Baptism and consists of total dedication to God. In this life, under the motion of the Holy Spirit, the faithful intend to follow Christ more closely, giving oneself to God who is loved above all things and to signify and proclaim in the Church the glory of the world to come. John Paul II began his Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* saying that "Consecrated life is a gift of God the Father to his Church through the Holy Spirit." Based on this teaching of the Church one can already see the special state of the consecrated life and the important role of the Holy Spirit in this life. In the consecrated life the Holy Spirit has a pre-eminent, indeed central and irreplaceable place.

The Holy Spirit is known by many different names and titles depending on the effects of which He is the principle. In Scripture, the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the Breath of God. The *ruah*-breath is not something disembodied, it is rather the animation of a body. If the world of Greek culture thinks in categories of substance, the Jewish thinks in dynamic concepts such as force, energy, principle of action. The spirit-breath is what acts and causes action and, if it is the

Breath of God, it animates and causes action to fulfill God's plan. It is always an energy of life. In the life of the Church, the Holy Spirit is the principle of unity and peace in the spiritual life of the Church. It is through the Holy Spirit that the Church is one, holy, Catholic and apostolic. In the Holy Spirit, the Church has been sustained through the ages. Without the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, the Church could not live and fulfill the mission entrusted by the Risen Jesus, of going out to make disciples of all peoples. In the Christian life the Holy Spirit is God, Beginning, and End of Sanctification. He is God's gift to the faithful and their Christian life is lived in His grace. In fact, one cannot live without the action of the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit is the One who gives us life and makes us children of God.

The Holy Spirit is the source and giver of all holiness. If we open the doors of our heart to let the Spirit enter our life, then He will transform us with the fire of purification so that we can become holy as the Lord God is holy. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church and the principle of the Christian life. And just as his presence is inevitable in the life of the Church and of every faithful, so also in the vocation to consecrated life. Meaning to say that the Holy Spirit plays an important role and his presence is inevitable in the life of every consecrated person.

First of all, the Holy Spirit as the Love of God is the principle of the vocation to consecrated life. It is He who works in God's call to the chosen people and arouses their response. In the life of the evangelical counsels of consecrated persons, the Spirit arouses in their hearts the desire to give themselves radically for



Christ on the path of celibacy and consecrated virginity. He not only gives the strength to renounce earthly goods and their benefits, but also forms in their hearts the spirit of poverty, instilling the desire to seek a heavenly treasure, to go beyond goods. The Holy Spirit also gives the necessary light for the judgment of faith, to recognize the mysterious will of God in the will of the superiors, and to recognize in the exercise of obedience a humble cooperation,



*Profession of perpetual vows of Adrian Novelo, Lazarus and Boniface at the parish in Dragona*

expended but generous to carry out the plan of salvation. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit also gives them unity and peace to sustain a community life full of charity and fraternity.

The Holy Spirit plays an important role not only in the call to consecrated life but also in living the charism of the institute. In fact, we can observe the special action of the Holy Spirit in consecrated life first and foremost in the charism of every institute that is born from a free intervention of the Holy Spirit in the founder or foundress and in their followers. It is the Holy Spirit who gave the charism to every founder or foundress at the moment of foundation. He has called the people chosen to live this foundational charism in different means inspired by God and makes them faithful to the charism of their founder or foundress. The Holy Spirit also gives them the strength and courage to carry out their charism in their community and in the world.

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit plays an important role in the mission of consecrated persons in the world. It is clear that consecrated life is a mission and those who are called for this life are consecrated for the

mission. John Paul II says in his Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* that "those whom God calls to follow him are also consecrated and sent into the world to imitate his example and to continue his mission. Fundamentally, this is true of every disciple.

In a special way, however, it is true of those who, in the manner that characterizes the consecrated life, are called to follow Christ "more closely", and to make him the "all" of their lives. The task of devoting *themselves wholly to "mission"* is therefore included in



*Festive celebration on the occasion of the arrival of the relic of Fr. Jordan in our community*

their call; indeed, by the action of the Holy Spirit who is at the origin of every vocation and charism, consecrated life itself is a mission, as was the whole of Jesus' life."

In fact, if the Holy Spirit is the principle of the vocation to consecrated life, he is also the principal agent in all the activities of the mission of consecrated persons in the world.

It is clear that no one can deny the important role and the inevitable presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, in the Christian life of the faithful, and also in the consecrated life specifically in the vocation of consecrated persons, in their living the foundational charism, in their community life and in their mission in the Church and in the world.

## Salvatorian apostolate

### Between past and future

“Who can say what the Society is? What is a Salvatorian? Where is our identity? Does the Society have a face that can be recognized?”<sup>1</sup> In the circular letter *A call to action* (1971) Fr. Donald Skwor asked some rather controversial questions. Even though the letter was written more than 50 years ago, in my opinion the concerns about which Fr. Skwor worried remain relevant to this day. What is our specific Salvatorian apostolate, meaning to say, what are the distinctive characteristics of the Salvatorian mission within the Church? How to interpret the spiritual heritage of Blessed Fr Jordan in the present post-conciliar era? In this article I would like to briefly present Fr. Skwor's response, linking it with the guidelines given by the current Superior General on the occasion of the foundation of the new vicariate for Western Europe.



Fr. Donald Skwor (SDS.org)

#### Biographical-historical notes

Fr Donald Skwor, born in Wisconsin (United States) in 1928, was Superior General from 1969 until 1975. It was the time when the strong impact of the Second Vatican Council was felt, for example through the call addressed to religious groups to go back to their origins. Reading his articles I get the impression that Fr Skwor was the right man on the right place. In the introduction of one of his articles he wrote that he had "a fifteen year old itch that can't find relief"; the itch being his decade long quest aimed at "surfacing [the] specific purpose" of the Society of the Divine Saviour<sup>2</sup>. In fact, after the 1971 article *A call to action*, Fr Skwor published numerous other articles and books elaborating his vision on Salvatorian spirituality and apostolate. The main source for this short article was *A Triage on Salvatorian Identity* (2001).

**“I DO NOT THINK IT IS  
ENOUGH TO SAY THAT OUR  
APOSTOLATE IS UNIVERSAL.”  
(FR. SKWOR)**

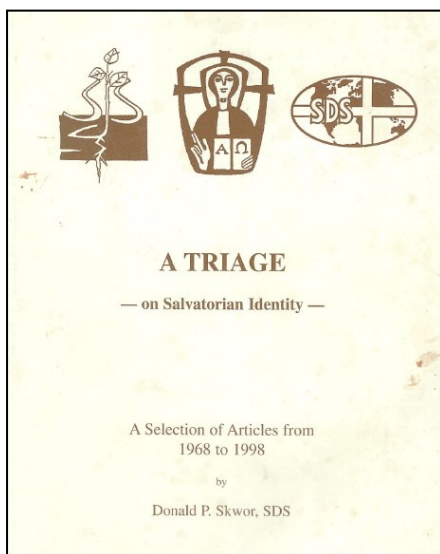
#### The vision of Fr. Skwor

Already during the first years of the Society, Blessed Fr. Jordan experienced difficulties in communicating and making visible the *raison d'être*<sup>3</sup> of his Apostolic Teaching Society. Furthermore, the juridical requirements of the ecclesial authorities forced him several times to change his course. Consequently, the difficulty of defining the specificity of the Salvatorian apostolate persisted for a long time. On this regard Fr. Skwor wrote: “I do not think it is enough to say that our apostolate is universal. I don't think it's enough to say that we have a distinct spirit of kindness that ordinary people like. I don't think it is enough to say that our work is unlimited as ‘all the means and ways that the charity of Christ inspires.’” (p.5) According to Fr. Skwor, a re-foundation of the Society would be necessary, because he was convinced “that we are walking towards the final gradual dissolution as a group if we fail to re-establish our identity.” (p.10)

To avoid this bleak fate, Fr. Skwor tried to answer the following question: What is the specific apostolate of our Society? Or, in other words: How do our activities differ from those of other religious groups? Fr. Skwor stated that Fr Jordan's original goal was undoubtedly



the formation of the People of God. The change in the structure of the Society made it more difficult to work out the methods the Founder had in mind. Therefore, the concrete apostolates became formal education (school, seminary) and missionary foundations. The final product was a duplication of the apostolates of the secular clergy, adding however the communitarian dimension (p.7-8). In fact, it sometimes happens that the faithful are no longer able to see the difference between a Salvatorian religious and a diocesan priest. For example, in a certain Salvatorian parish I was told the faithful came to the conclusion that a Salvatorian sings the *Kyrie* while a diocesan priest recites it.



Book cover "A Triage on Salvatorian Identity"

According to Fr. Skwor it is necessary to specify the original idea of the Founder. His idea of Christian formation was to teach theology at the *common* level, in order that the majority of God's people can actually understand it. The particular emphasis would be put on the youth, but parents and adults must also be involved to make evangelization more durable (p.8). The New Evangelization of the world "requires us to be specialists in the field of popular / applied theology in centers established for this purpose" (p.9). In a circular letter from 1974, Fr. Skwor stated that the Founder's intention was to find a new method of evangelization that would be more effective in today's world. Therefore we "must become specialists in the methodology of evangelization" (p.46-47). A concrete example could be the apostolate carried out at the sanctuary of Scherpenheuvel in Belgium up to a few years ago.

## A new beginning

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 the vicariate for Western Europe was founded, aiming at a renewed impulse of Salvatorian missionary activity in the profoundly secularized countries of Europe. In his speech for this occasion, the Superior General listed some general orientations. For example, Fr. Milton affirmed that the "Salvatorians of the new Vicariate of Europe will not limit themselves to repeating what is done apostolically today, but will find other forms and initiatives of evangelization". Furthermore, the members of the new vicariate "will no longer be involved in the maintenance of great institutions, (...) aware of being 'the little flock'". Even without going into detail it is clear that the resemblance to Fr. Skwor's vision is striking. In fact, in both documents – Fr. Skwor's and Fr. Milton's – a solid foundation appears for the future of the Salvatorian apostolate in Europe. Without forgetting though to take care of the "Salvatorian historical sites linked to Blessed Francis Jordan".

In conclusion, I believe that the question of the methodology of evangelization – as conceived by Fr. Skwor – will arise more than ever as one of the main challenges. Talking about the preferential option for the poor and the marginalized is easy; it is more difficult to actually do it. It will take creativity and perseverance to carry out an apostolate of "closeness to the youth", or to "be missionaries in the digital field" (idem). Are we willing to step out of our comfort zone? Will we be able to carry the weight of misunderstanding and derision by indifferent or hostile people towards the Church? Whatever will be our answer, we can build it on the solid foundations of our Founder and of the charism of our Society. According to me the foundation of the new vicariate for Western Europe is to be perceived as a *kairós* – an appropriate time – to rekindle the fire of authentic faith in the peoples of the so-called "old continent".

### Footnotes:

- (1) SKWOR, D. *A Triage on Salvatorian Identity*, 2001, p.5
- (2) SKWOR, D. *A Trilogy on Salvatorian Identity*, Rome, 1994, p.9-10.
- (3) *Raison d'être* is a French expression that literally means the reason why something exists. It can also be understood as a 'purpose' or 'specific intent'.

Cl. Stefaan Peetermans SDS

## Historical events

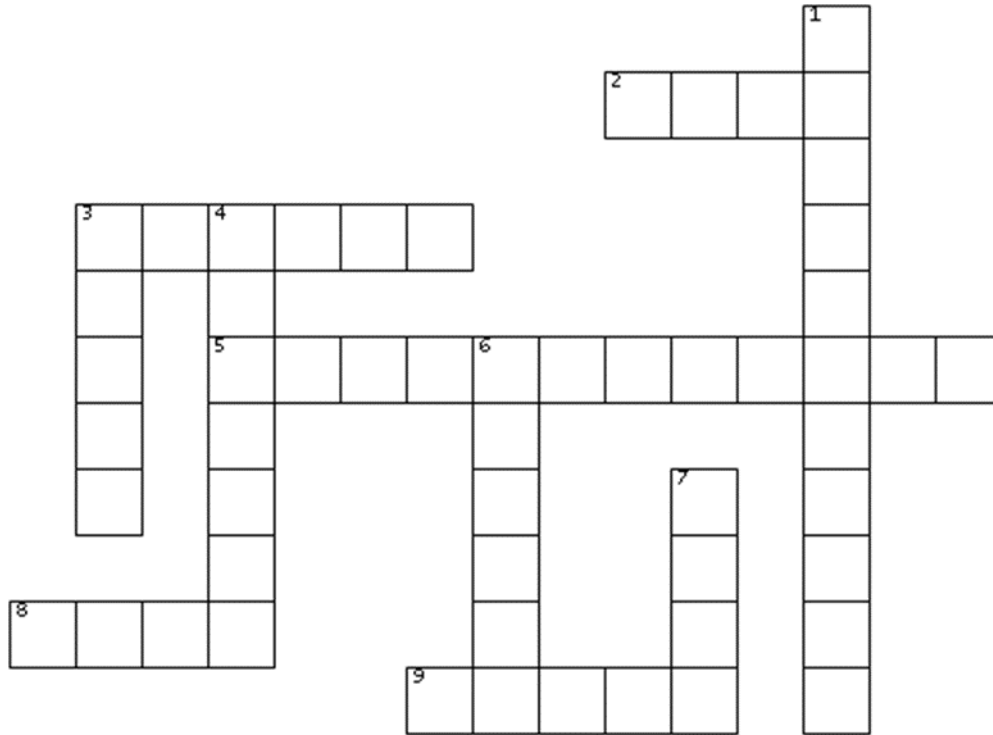


- ⇒ 1) **15/05/2021** –The Beatification of our Founder Blessed Fr. Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan at the Lateran Basilica in Rome. (See picture above.)
- ⇒ 2) **1896/07/03** - Chapter Talk before Departure for America  
“I would like to give you two admonitions for the trip. Keep them always before your eyes during your future work:  
1) Always work in holy obedience. Work with and in the will of your superior, which is also your will. 2) Work *in caritate*, with charity.  
a) in love among the confreres. You should cling firmly to the bond of mutual love and solidarity.  
b) in love and patience for the salvation of souls. Only in this way will you achieve much and acquire an immortal crown for yourself”.
- ⇒ 3) **July 21, 1878** - Priestly Ordination of the Salvatorian Founder Blessed Fr. Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan.
- ⇒ 4) **June 16, 1848** - The birth year of the Blessed Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan and therefore the birthday of the Blessed Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan.
- ⇒ 5) **July 2, 1902** - Address to the Sisters - Feast of the Visitation. Speech to the Salvatorian Sisters; Feast of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary. Taken from the Archives of the Salvatorian Postulation. (Acker 5-7 (APS-J 104)
- ⇒ 6) **June 27, 1892** - Sending of the missionaries to North America  
“... This is why we have peace in our hearts, even if our separation is great. Furthermore, it comforts and rejoices us to remember that you are leaving us to spread the glory of God, the veneration of Mary and to save souls.  
Oh yes! *Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem!* “How beautiful are the feet of those who announce peace!” Bring peace! If you are at peace with God, with your spiritual father, and with your brothers, then you can bring it to others, otherwise you will not bring peace but its opposite ...”

**Cl. Boniface Chimogwa, SDS**



**BASIC THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING**



**ACROSS**

- 2. FROM CONCEPTION TO DEATH
- 3. HOUSE OF GOD (ECCLESIA)
- 5. EASTER
- 8. SUCCESSOR OF SAINT PETER
- 9. KRISTOKOS

**DOWN**

- 1. JOSEPH RATZINGER
- 3. SIGN OF SALVATION
- 4. WAR 2022
- 6. WAR 2022
- 7. ETERNAL CITY



**Cl. Nicholaus Paschal, SDS**



**Community Mater Salvatoris  
Tor de'Cenci, Rome**