

INFORMATION

GENERAL COUNCIL FIC



Prins Bisschopsingel 22, 6211 JX Maastricht, The Netherlands

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Dear Brothers,

We present to you the fifth issue of IGC in 2014.
In it you will find the following:

- * Reflection: The Beneficiaries of the Vincentian Mission
- * ConCon 2014 - Malawi
- * Orientation Visit to Chile
- * FIC Jubilees December 2014 in Indonesia
- * Working Visit to Malawi
- * Profession Jubilees in The Netherlands
- * First Professions and Silver Jubilees in Ghana
- * Special birthdays in the coming months.

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The Beneficiaries of the Vincentian Mission

(by Fr. Celestino Fernández, CM)

[The third in a series of presentations on Vincentian Spirituality]



The Synod on the new evangelization asks Religious Orders and Congregations to be fully available to go to the geographical, social and cultural frontiers of evangelization. The Synod invites religious to move toward the new *aeropaghi* (situations) of mission.

The *Instrumentum Laboris* of the Synod on the new evangelization also gave importance to a series of new *situations* or new *aeropaghi*

--- where today evangelization is all the more necessary and urgent. It spoke of the vast area of culture, the phenomenon of migration, the media, the global economy, scientific and technological advances and civic life (#52-60).

At the same time, even though we might be aware of the following, it is nevertheless restated that consecrated individuals ought to be in the forefront of the mission: on the periphery with those who are most poor; in those places where the calls of the poor are most urgent; on the frontier where the church confronts new and difficult missionary problems and challenges that are found in the new situations of poverty --- in new *aeropaghi*; in the desert where the gospel is little known, where the church is poor and a minority, where the church is taking her first steps.

It should be clear that the references that we have just made to consecrated individuals are equally valid for all the members of the Vincentian Family and for all the branches of this great family. Thus

applying this to the Vincentian evangelizer a series of questions arises: where do we put the emphasis in the process of evangelization? What are the new aeropaghi that are our concern? Are we in the forefront with regard to the mission or have we become accustomed to a pastoral style that is sacramental and focused on preserving and maintaining the faith? Are we where we should be in relation to our charism and our spirituality?

We can easily see that the previous questions are related to what we refer to as the *beneficiaries* of evangelization, that is, those persons to whom our Vincentian mission is or ought to be directed. If we want to be specific about who are or should be the beneficiaries of the process of Vincentian evangelization, then we could state the following.

- a. The poor, and here we speak about the poor in the fullest sense of the word *poor* and from the perspective of the true reality of *poverty* ... thus we refer to everything from economic poverty to cultural, moral, psychological and social poverty. We must also include the new poverties that, as John Paul II states in his encyclical, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, are always being fabricated by *evil mechanisms* and by the *structures of sin* (#40). So also we reach out to the victims of the intrinsically unjust and inhuman global system which includes those impoverished and ever more vulnerable individuals that have been “produced” by the economic and social crisis and by the realities that guide such an unjust system.
- b. Those who are in need of Christian formation and spiritual attention and who are also poor ... and who because of this need are the most poor. Pope Francis speaks about this in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium*: *The worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail*

to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith. (*Gaudium Evangelii*, #200).

- c. The poor whom no one reaches out to and whom no one wants to provide for. In other words, those persons who are not even viewed as statistics with regard to poverty and misery and social marginalization ... those who have lost their visibility and whom no one is concerned about making visible.

ConCon 2014 - Malawi

On the evening of 19 August 2014, Bro. Martin Dariyo welcomed the Provincial Superiors and members of the General Council in the Bethel community chapel during a prayer service themed "The Sacrifice of a Servant Leader". This was the official beginning of the yearly Congregational Conference which was to last till 29 August. In his opening address, the General Superior outlined the structure of the Conference, placing its focus on the 2012 General Chapter resolutions.

The next three days were devoted to a deepening and sharing on "Servant Leadership", during which we dealt with topics like "The Leadership Style of Jesus", "Servant leader As Gardener" and "Jesus, the Perfect Leader". As leaders of the Congregation this exercise was experienced as inspiring and satisfactory as it drew us closer to the selfless leadership of Jesus Christ himself. This spiritual exercise was actually a follow-up on the Leadership Workshop we had at Denekamp in The Netherlands in August, 2013 and sought to reinforce the learning experiences of the participants. This reflection on Servant Leadership is expected to continue in our provinces.

As with all weekends during our Congregational Conferences, the participants had the opportunity to relax and enjoy some beautiful parts of Malawi. We did this by paying a visit to Lake Malawi, the second deepest lake in Africa and Liwonde National Park, situated 150 km from Blantyre. This outing coincided with the 50th anniversary of Bro. Raphael's birth, and so this was celebrated in a fraternal atmosphere at the Lake House.

Having refreshed our bodies and minds during the weekend, we plunged deep into the business part of our meeting, beginning with the provincial reports. All the Provincial Superiors gave detailed reports of what is alive in their areas of jurisdiction. These include how far each province has tried to implement the General as well as the Provincial Chapter resolutions, their joys, challenges, and income generation efforts. All provinces lamented on the so called dwindling vocations in spite of enormous efforts embarked upon by the brothers to promote vocations.



The rest of this week was devoted to diverse topics including the prevention of sexual abuse of minors, the latest developments in De Beyart, celebration of the 175th anniversary of our Congregation, formation and financial issues. Particularly exciting was the presentation on the new FIC Website and Magazine. These are two initiatives taken by the GC as part of efforts to promote our life around the world. A PowerPoint presentation was made on how to use the new website created by the GC. A copy of the first issue of the new bi-annual FIC Magazine was given to participants. For improvement on the first issue of the magazine a few suggestions were made.

Some concrete resolutions were adopted. Regarding the proposal on promotion of vocations, the whole Congregation is to pray for vocations on the 21st of every month. Booklets on "prayers for vocations" will be prepared by the GC to support this initiative.

The ConCon also agreed on tentative dates of the General Conference 2015 to be hosted by Ghana. It will be held from 2-13 November and will immediately precede the 50th anniversary celebration of the presence of FIC in Ghana.

In between these busy days, we remained committed to our source of unity expressed in our morning prayers that began each day and the Eucharistic celebration that concluded the day's deliberation. Our brotherhood also found expression during our meals and recreation as we did not have problems eating "Nsima" and sharing a glass of wine in the evening.

The ten-day encounter came to a conclusion with the adoption of a number of resolutions or action points to chart the course of our future. In his concluding address, the General Superior, Bro. Martinus Handoko expressed his satisfaction at having completed the discussions on

schedule. He concluded that this Conference was a moment of grace for us as we had the opportunity to have a closer encounter with ourselves, with fellow brothers and more importantly, with God.

A provincial day was held the following day (30th August) in Bethel community during which the fruits of the ConCon were disseminated to the brothers. It also provided a unique forum for each Provincial Superior to brief the brothers of Malawi province on the latest developments in their provinces.

Orientation Visit to Chile

The inspiration to send brothers from other provinces to Chile in answer to some particular needs of the province has become a reality. The four brothers, namely Andrew Makocho, Aloysius Porekuu, Robertus Koencoro Budi and Agustinus Suparno, all arrived in The Netherlands



The brothers holding lighted candles

from their home provinces at different times. By September 20, they were together in Emmaus community. A simple commissioning ceremony was held for the four brothers in which a picturesque PowerPoint presentation of Chile was given. As part of the ceremony brothers Theo and Raphael reminded them of the reason for the visit and asked them to be open to learn the Spanish language and adjust to the Chilean culture. A lighted candle, symbolizing the light of Christ as a guide on their journey, was presented to each of them.



*A visit to Aachen:
Behind them is the Aachen Cathedral*

During the days that followed, the GC members accompanied them on visits to Amsterdam, The Hague and Aachen. They also had the opportunity to visit the communities in Capucijnengang, Prins Bisschopsingel and De Beyart. Lastly, they paid respect to our departed dear brothers at the FIC cemetery-Maastricht.

On 30 September we said goodbye to the brothers as they embarked on their journey to their new "home" in Chile. They were accompanied by Bro. Theo Suwaryanto. Reports reached us on October 1 that they arrived safely and were welcomed by Bro. Diego Izquierdo, the Provincial Superior of Chile. In a speech at their welcome, Bro. Theo, who is also there on a working visit, had this to say:

The main purpose of sending brothers from other provinces to Chile is to create a different atmosphere of our living together as international

Congregation, to make our community living and apostolic work more supportive, and to encourage one another as brothers in one Congregation. Doing mission is not only doing something but also being with others... I am therefore happy that we have met you all in an atmosphere and spirit of brotherhood. Let us maintain the awareness that we are one family as Brothers FIC, and that we are brothers of one another.

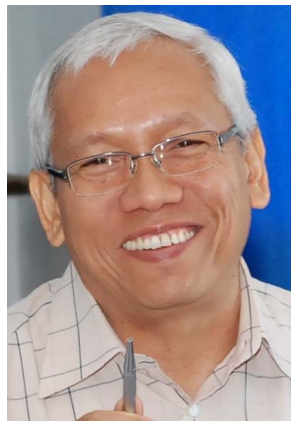
At the end of their orientation visit the stay of each of the visitors will be evaluated and the possibility of each of them being of service to the Chile Province decided.

FIC Jubilees December 2014 in Indonesia

8 December 2014 - 40 years



Ignatius Dalimin



Frans Sugi

Working Visit to Malawi

Immediately after the ConCon 2014 in Malawi I, Bro. Raphael Besigrinee, made a two-week working visit to the province. The main purpose of the visit was to get acquainted with the implementation of the General Chapter and Provincial Chapter resolutions. Working visits are ways through which the General Council offers support to our provinces. This visit was also to witness to the life of the brothers in their communities as well as in their apostolic work.

During this visit I met with some groups of brothers and also individuals. As with other provinces currently, there were more worries than joys in formation work when I met with members of the formation team in Mzedi community. Even though the brothers in charge of the aspirancy program are working very hard, their efforts are yielding very few fruits. Worst still the only candidate in the pre-novitiate also went back home. They are however expecting a candidate to report in September. They certainly have not lost hope as efforts are still being made to pursue the ideals of the Joint Formation Program of Ghana/Malawi.

Very promising is their effort to generate local income. Malawi has a number of impressive Income Generation Activities (IGA) in the province, namely, hostels for students, houses for lecturers and guest houses for renting. These projects are under the responsibility of the IGA committee. These ventures have started yielding positive results. After paying a visit to these facilities in Maryview, I held a meeting with the IGA committee. The committee is positive that the projects under their care have the potential of strengthening the financial ability in the province. As some members are still very young and inexperienced, the committee believes there is room for growth into maturity among them.

For the preparation towards the Oasis gathering, participants admitted that their preparation could have been more thorough and complete than what they have done so far. Heavy schedule of brothers is blamed for this shortfall in preparation. They however resolved to make use of the time left to complete their preparation.

One of the important apostolic endeavours of the brothers in Malawi is in the area of "Education of the Deaf". I paid a visit to two schools for the Deaf: Maryview and Mountainview. Currently, the schools are still being given support by the government in terms of monthly grants to cater for the welfare of the learners, though not adequate and sometimes not regular. Teachers and some supporting staff are paid by the government. Other sources of support come from donors in the form of learning materials. For example in Mountainview the tailoring shop and poultry projects were sponsored by donors from Germany.



A classroom in Mzedi Community Day Secondary School

The support from the Divisional Office of the government is too inadequate to support renovation requirements. The Provincial Council is taking serious measures to renovate them.

The major challenge currently is that all three schools for the Deaf are crying for renovation. My visit to two of the schools show broken doors and louver blades, rusted window and door seals, rotten roofing boards, broken beds and so on.

In Malawi province there are currently 16 brothers living in four communities, and I had the opportunity to stay in each of them, where I was privileged to witness to their community living and a little of their apostolic life. I did this by trying to visit the institutions where they work, and in most cases had a chat with the heads of these institutions. In *Mzedi Community Day Secondary School*, the brothers can boast of 7 or 8 teachers, four teachers' houses, well furnished classrooms (except the 4th year class), staff common room, a small library, toilet facilities and good source of drinking water. Bro. Thomas Edison is offering support with accounts keeping. They however still lack two or three teachers' bungalows, furniture for form 4 class, computers, books, etc. There is good relationship between FIC and the school. The aim of the school is still being pursued, namely targeting poor students. The agreement of a quota of 15 students from FIC still holds. Government still posts and pays teachers and gives monthly grants, though not regular. Since most students are from poor backgrounds and cannot afford to pay all fees, Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), a non-governmental organization, is supporting the very poor girls with bursaries.

Mitengo Technical College: Currently the school is offering three courses: Electrical Installation, Building and Carpentry/Joinery. Since the school was established it has been preparing students for two kinds of examination: Malawi National Examination and Trade Test. Certificates obtained from these are recognized by the government.

The challenge here is that the Carpentry department is experiencing low intake of students and at one point, the PC wanted to close down this department. The brothers are also exploring a new initiative offered by Technical, Industrial, Vocational Entrepreneurship and Training Authority (TIVETA), a non-governmental support system for Technical schools.

I wrapped up my working visit in Bethel community when I held a meeting with the Provincial Council to confirm a few issues and report my conclusions. Among these issues was the use of FIC land by the Catholic University in Maryview. The agreement between FIC and the Archdiocese of Blantyre on the land use is yet to be validated.

Looking back, I can only feel very grateful to the brothers and other people I met for the personal fulfillment I experienced during my visitation. The nature of the brothers' apostolate in Malawi has not only encouraged me, but it has also energized me to think about my work as a mission given to me by God and the need to do every assignment as if I have been sent. I am grateful to God for this rich experience.

Bro. Raphael Besigrinee

Profession Jubilees in The Netherlands



The six jubilarians

For some years now the brothers in De Beyart are used to starting their jubilee celebrations on the eve of 15th August. The communities outside De Beyart are usually invited to join this celebration.

This year six brothers celebrated their religious profession jubilees: Bro. Roelof van Grinsven (75), Bro. Aloysius van den Broek (70), Bros. Kees Buitenhof and Mat Paulssen (60) and two young ones: Bros. Kees Gordijn and Ton Kropman (50). In The Netherlands when you celebrate 50 years in religious life, you are one of the young ones! One of the

jubilarians, Bro. Lucianus Tieleman, passed away a few weeks before his 70th jubilee. We remembered him during this celebration by placing a burning candle on the altar. In this way he was with us in thoughts and prayers.

The evening celebration on the 14th August started with a prayer service in De Beyart chapel for only the brothers, associated members and some members of a group called "Friends of the Congregation". The prayer service, which was prepared by the local council of the brothers living in De Beyart, provided us an inspiring moment of reflection. Afterwards all present had the opportunity to warmly congratulate the jubilarians. We were then invited to a special room prepared for us to share the evening meal together as brothers, something that happens only twice a year. In the restaurant of this care home it rarely happens that brothers eat together as one group. So on such occasions we enjoy each other's company in a special way. A Chinese/Indonesian rice meal was prepared in the Dutch taste, but our fellow brothers from Indonesia enjoyed it as well, looking at the way they helped themselves.

On 15 August, the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary we started with a Eucharistic celebration to give thanks to God for our fellow brothers who were for so many years faithful to their call to be brothers for God and people. Bro. Nico Coolen was our main celebrant and the homily was given by Bro. Frans Turkenburg.

After the Holy Eucharist the guests took their turn to congratulate the jubilarians after which we went to the Kras, the guest hall for further festivities. All present were offered coffee or tea with a nice cake and later on a nice glass of sparkling wine. General Superior Bro. Martinus Handoko, addressed the six jubilarians in a short speech, followed by a few other people. Gifts were also presented to the jubilarians. The celebration was crowned with a delicious dinner in De Beyart restaurant.

Bro. Wim Luiten

First Professions and Silver Jubilees in Ghana

Professions and Jubilees are significant events in the lives of the FIC brothers. In Ghana, four brothers marked these events on the 13th September 2014, in the IN-SERVICE TRAINING CENTRE CHAPEL, Wa.

Two brothers, namely Godfrey Naa-Tampah and Fabian P. Kuupille marked 25 years of their religious profession, while brothers Alexander Koomson and Linus Delle made their first profession of vows.

The Provincial Superior, Bro. Seregius Dery, on behalf of the General Superior, received the vows of the newly professed brothers, in the presence of most of the brothers in the province. The Eucharistic celebration which had the theme: *Lord Make Me a Servant of Your Love*, was presided over by the vicar general of the Diocese of Wa, and attended by family members, relatives and friends of the celebrants, a good number of priests, religious and the laity.

The newly professed brothers have already gone to their new communities. Bro.



Linus has been sent to Bole (annexed to Damongo community). He will take up teaching apostolate at St. Kizito Technical Institute at Bole. Bro. Alexander on his part is posted to St. Vincent De Paul Community in Tamale.

From Left to Right: Bro. Alexander, Bro. Linus, Bro. Seregius (Provincial Superior), Bro. Godfrey and Bro. Fabian

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS



November 2014

- 07 Frans School (70) - Maastricht-Emmaus
- 10 Noud Fonken (80) - Maastricht-Rooden Leeuw
- 13 Nico Brunott (85) - Maastricht-Overkant
- 21 Remy Nyukorong (50) - Maastricht-Emmaus
- 27 Roland Heeren (80) - Maastricht-Ludovicus

December 2014

- 02 Marcelo Sandoval Muñoz (50) - Talca-San Luis
- 03 Gé van Vugt (75) - Talca-San Antonio
- 11 Redemptus Lastiya (75) - Salatiga
- 19 Jos van Eijden (70) - Akeleistraat 104
2565 PA Den Haag, The Netherlands
- 24 Berchmans Nyotoharjo (75) - Ambarawa
- 25 Thomas Edison (50) - Limbe-Formation House

January 2015

- 07 Lo Koeleman (75) Maastricht-Prins Bisschopsingel
- 25 Yohanes Wiryasumarta (75) Semarang-Dr.Sutomo