



SFS-WORLD

Newsletter from the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales

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450th anniversary of St. Francis de Sales' birth – II

As we move towards the celebration of our 20th General Chapter, it seems the appropriate time to allow some questions to guide us in discernment and in prayer, in light of our patron's life and teachings.

I am sure you would agree with me that some good Salesian questions to place before us at this momentous event for our institute are these: Where is the Holy Spirit guiding us? What are the signs of the Spirit indicating the way He wants us to follow? How do we listen to the voice of the Spirit in the midst of a world of violence, migrations and refugees, injustices and sufferings? What are our Salesian attitudes in the context of religious pluralism, social differences and environmental concerns? How can we be an efficacious presence of Salesian gentleness and humility, optimism and hope?



An essential part of the dynamism of our life as De Sales Oblates is to discern the will of God and to be committed to it once it becomes clear. This is why, in the prayer for the General Chapter, we beseech God that the members of the General Chapter may take the decisions “in accordance with your holy will and the desire of your divine heart”.

That constant dynamic of remaining open to the guidance of the Spirit requires at least two things: the capacity and openness to **listen**, and the Salesian virtue of true **humility**. St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, invites the members of the community to “have among yourselves the same attitudes that is also yours in Christ Jesus”, who “emptied himself”, coming in human likeness (Phil 2:5-7). Such an attitude of being able to let go, to become ‘empty’, should be part of the process of preparation for a General Chapter.

At the same time, we are moving toward the General Chapter in an ecclesial context in which Pope Francis tirelessly reminds us to embody the attitude of service, having the “smell of the sheep”, going forth towards those marginalized by today's society, fostering the whole church to be missionary.

In their mission statement, our confreres in India express that same missionary spirit, at the very moment they are starting a new phase in their history, becoming a Region: “Remembering St. Francis de Sales' call to his mission to the Chablais as a young priest and attentive to ‘the signs of the times’, we make ourselves available for whatever specific apostolate will serve the particular needs of the local Churches in which we find ourselves”.



Towards General Chapter 2018 – Book of the Proposals and Prayer

Recently Fr. Barry Strong, as the president of the Preparatory Commission, finished the revised edition of the Book of Proposals for the 20th General Chapter. That material is now being translated from English into French, German and Portuguese.

It is foreseen that by March 31, 2018 the Book of the Proposals will be sent to all the participants of the General Chapter in the different languages.

The Prayer for the General Chapter has been sent out and has been already translated into some languages. I know that there are communities already using the text of that prayer. I would like to invite those who have not yet started to use that prayer to join us and pray it, so that we may be prepared to listen to the Holy Spirit and the members of the Chapter may take decisions in accordance with the holy will of God.

Novices and First Profession: Parakou - Benin

On August 4, 2017 a total of 10 postulants started novitiate in Benin (*pictured at right*); four of them are from Benin, belonging to the French Province: Thierry Sènan Aholou, Richard Gbedji, Benjamin Hodonou and Larios Soglo. The other six are from the Southern African Region: Innocenz Kinda, Florian Thomas, Vivian Afrikaner, Pelagius Dindungo, Chrisly Masango and Andile Dlepu.



On August 6, 2017 the following four novices of the French Province made their First Profession of Religious Vows: Marcellin S. AIDODE, Calliste Rousseau HOUSSOU, Cyprien Messié and Félix Vidjannagni. (*Please see pictures right and below*)



Priestly Ordination in Annecy



On September 30, 2017 our confrere **Olivier Fleau, OSFS** of the French Province, a graduate of St. Michel School in Annecy, was ordained a priest at the Sainte-Bernadette Parish in Annecy by the bishop, Monseigneur Yves BOIVINEAU.

On October 1st the newly ordained Priest celebrated his First Solemn Mass at “L’Ermitage St. Germain”, where St. Francis de Sales desired to finish his life on earth. Father Olivier Fleau says it was for him a “very awe inspiring” experience celebrating his First Mass at that very historical and Salesian place. Congratulations!



Italian Province: provincial chapter and new provincial



In the beginning of September, the members of the Italian Province gathered in provincial chapter. **Father Ennio Di Giampasquale, OSFS** (*pictured at left*) was elected as the new provincial, replacing Fr. Giovanni Cannone, who finished his third term, to whom we express our gratitude for his service in that leadership position.

The elected members of the Provincial Council are: Giovanni Cannone, Vincenzo Fantasia and Alessandro Agostini. Father Giovanni Bortignon was appointed by the provincial as the fourth councilor. All were ratified by the Superior General and his council.

With the General and his council discussions about the future of the province will continue. At this moment the focus is to clarify issues of the province in order to be able to take adequate decisions.

A parish in Cape Town, South Africa



Albeit with limited personnel, the Southern African Region is officially starting our presence in the archdiocese of Cape Town, South Africa. Fr. Carlo Adams, OSFS (*pictured at left*) has been appointed parish priest of Resurrection Parish, Table View, with Fr. Christopher Ovies, OSFS (*pictured at right*) as his Assistant. They are starting their ministry there on 6 October 2017.



This is a step beyond our traditional dioceses of Keimos and Keetmanshoop, where we have been since the beginning. May the Holy Spirit guide and inspire our two confreres in the new archdiocese in witnessing and spreading Salesian spirituality.

Perpetual Profession and Deacon Ordinations in Ecuador

Erik Edgardo Jorge Aké, OSFS (from Mexico) made his Perpetual Profession on August 17, 2017, in Manta, Ecuador. Fr. Bill Auth, OSFS, from the Toledo/Detroit Province, serving since many years in Mexico, came to attend the celebrations. Besides other Oblate confreres, several Oblate Sisters also attended the celebrations. Oblate Sisters have been so helpful to us not only with the support of our pastoral ministries, but also in promoting vocations for our institute, both in Ecuador and Colombia. It was through them that several members of our South American and Caribbean Province came in contact with us.

On August 19, 2017 **Erik Aké, OSFS** and **Luc Dallo, OSFS** (Haitian) were ordained to the Diaconate in Manta, Ecuador.

Congratulations to both of you! May our Lord bless and guide you!



*Pictured at left:
the celebration of the
Perpetual Profession
of Erik.*

*At right:
(from the left) Fr.
Leocledes Dalla
Nora, provincial,
Deacon Erik E J Aké,
Deacon Luc Dallo,
and Fr. Bill Auth.*



New Priesthood Ordinations of the SACP

The South American and Caribbean Province is preparing for the following celebrations of its Haitian members:

- On November 12, 2017, Deacon **Herold Xavier, OSFS** will be ordained in Jaboticaba, Brazil.
- On December 9, 2017, Deacon **Jean David Chery, OSFS** will be ordained in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
- On December 16, 2017, Deacon **Charles Wilner, OSFS** will be ordained at his mother parish, in Ranuutte, Haiti.

Join us in celebrating the new Indian Region!

October is the month of the celebration of the Feast of our Blessed founder, Louis Brisson, which we celebrate on the 12th. We also honor all our founders, those who started our institute and those who started new foundations in different countries of the world.

This year, in October in India, a special celebration will take place around the event of the Indian Mission becoming the Indian Region. By the time this newsletter comes out I will be in India visiting the confreres and will continue to discuss issues related to our presence and mission as the Indian Region.

I would like to remind all of us about the timetable for the events before us, as part of the celebrations of the Indian Mission becoming the Indian Region, after 27 years since we started our presence in that country:

- Saturday, October 14: 9:00 AM – Installation of the Regional Superior, celebration of our Founders' Day and the 200th anniversary of Fr. Brisson's birth; proclamation of the change of status and perpetual profession.

- Sunday, October 15: 8:30 AM – Priestly Ordination of Deacon Artemius Myrthong. In the evening, felicitations to the Regional Superior and the newly ordained priest.
- Monday, October 16: Regional Chapter – Discussion and approval of the regional plans (pastoral, formation, financial), election of three Regional Councilors and of two delegates for the General Chapter, among the topics.
- Tuesday and Wednesday, October 17-18: Meeting of the General Council.

Regional Superior for Indian Region: after consultation among the perpetually professed confreres, and with the consent of the members of the General Council, I am appointing **Father Baiju Puthussery, OSFS** as the Regional Superior of the Indian Region for the coming four years, from October 2017 to October 2021.

See below our current three formation houses in India:



Salespuram, Kerala:
Minor Seminary



Brisson Nilayam, Andra Pradesh:
Novitiate



Samarpanaram,
Bangalore:
Philosophy and Theology

Donation to the CMF

Our confreres of the Dutch Community have once again confirmed their love and generosity to our missions. Recently, in the month of August, they made a donation to the Chablais Mission Fund of the amount of 150.000 €. That donation was added to the part of the funds which CMF is holding in Europe.

I am sure I am speaking on behalf of all of us, especially those in the mission sites, as I express my wholehearted gratitude to Fr. Kees Jongeneelen and all the Oblate members of the Dutch Community for the donation. May our good God continue to bless you!

Grant him, O Lord, Eternal Life



Fr. Wilhelmus Johannes Tijssen OSFS, originally from the Netherlands, was a member of the Southern African Region. He passed away on September 1, 2017, at the age of 75, 55 years of Profession and 49 of Ordination. A few months after his priesthood ordination in the Netherlands, Fr. Wim went to South Africa, where he spent his entire priestly life. He was preparing to celebrate his golden jubilee of ordination in May 2018. He began his pastoral ministry in South Africa in September 1968 at Keimoes. After that, he served in Vredendal, in Onseepkans, in Nababeep and, in the last 24 years, he worked in Rietpoort. The Regional Superior, Fr. Fransiskus Swartbooi, says: “We are truly entering a new era since, on the South African side of our Region, he was the last OSFS missionary from Holland and overseas”.

We pray, O Lord, grant him eternal life, and may perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all our confreres and faithfully departed, rest in peace! Amen.

On this October 12

I wish each of you a HAPPY FEAST of our Blessed Louis Brisson and HAPPY FOUNDERS’ DAY!

Fr. Aldino Kiesel,osfs
Superior General