

Familia Comboniana

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBONI MISSIONARIES OF THE HEART OF JESUS

780

December 2019



**WE WISH YOU
A HOLY CHRISTMAS**

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Appointment

The Council of the District of the Curia has re-appointed Fr. Marek Tomasz as representative *ad nutum* of the Vicar General to the communities of Poland.

Correction

In the November issue of *Familia Comboniana*, in the article sent to us from South Sudan entitled *Celebrations in Juba*, the purchase of the steamer *Redemptor* was erroneously attributed to Mons. Franz Xavier Geyer. Fr. Arnaldo Baritussio, Postulator General, has rightly pointed out that the boat was purchased – and with much effort – by the Servant of God Mgr. Antonio Roveggio. We apologise for the mistake.

Perpetual professions

Bro. Kasusi Libongo Gregoire (CN) Kinshasa (RDC) 17/11/2019
Bro. Kasusi Apele Antoine (CN) Kinshasa (RDC) 17/11/2019

Publications

Kasereka Amini Wasingya, *Christological Controversies between Islam and Christianity from the Paschal Mystery perspective*, Cairo (Egypt) 2019. The book has also been translated into Arabic and French. As the author indicates, in the Christological controversy between Islam and Christianity, seen under the profile of the Paschal mystery, all the events of Christ open the door to the possibility of building up a true religion founded on human and divine values: love, justice, peace, truth and unity. Though not in agreement with this viewpoint, the author of the preface which we read at the end of the book, considers this text to be the basis for a serious, objective and productive commitment on the part of both faiths, to restore and protect the rights of religious minorities throughout the world.

Kasereka Amini Wasingya, *Jésus, La lumière de ma vie, Livret de poche pour tout jeune*, Nairobi (Kenya), August 2019. The author, a young, recently ordained Comboni Missionary, tells us of the joy he felt on the day of his ordination at discovering the true light of his life: Jesus. The booklet is an account of a personal experience which merits – Fr. Kasereka states – being shared with other young men so that it may bring about in them the desire for this experience of belonging

in the light of Christ and may cause a change in their lives, leading them to “launch out into the deep”.

Proclaim the Joy of the Gospel to all, by *Ettore Marangi* and *Giuseppe Caramazza*, Tangaza University, Nairobi (Kenya) 2019. The result of a long process of interaction between students and lecturers, this book – a collection of articles by different authors – aims to provide the ecclesial communities of East Africa with an aid to understanding of *Evangelii Gaudium* which constitutes, as we read in the introduction, the “manifesto” of the ministry of Pope Francis.

Juan Goicochea C., *Enfants, cette terre est entre vos mains. Manuel pour la Justice, la Paix et l'Intégrité de la Création*, Centre Missionnaire Laudato Si', Kinshasa 2019. This fine manual, with its many colourful images and interesting explanations, is meant to teach children in parishes and schools the meaning of the words contained in the title, and to lead them to discover the footprints of God in Creation, “so that they may know and love our world and enjoy a harmonious relationship with it”.

Actes du Colloque “Ensemble pour la sauvegarde de notre Maison Commune”, Afriquespoir, Kinshasa 2019. The Acts of the Colloquium that was held in August 2018, to launch the activities of the Missionary Centre Laudato Si', Kinshasa. The Centre was opened to work on the protection of the environment and ecological citizenship.

Ercole Ongaro e Fabio Ramin, *Ezequiel Ramin, Testigo de un amore sin límites*, ed. Mundo Negro, Madrid 2019. This is the Spanish translation of the book published in 2000, co-authored by a student of history and a brother of Ezekiel – is in two parts: the first a biography and the second a chronological presentation of all the Ezekiel's letters written between 1972 and the day before his death. These are letters which, despite their brevity and plain language, cause unease in the reader and, rather than providing answers, provoke a whole series of questions. There is a statement by Fr. Ezekiel – Fr. Arnaldo Baritussio writes in the Prologue – that sinks deep into our living flesh and into that of the Church and society: “Let us free people from hunger and disease, making them truly free and so witness to Christ living in us”.

Holy Redeemer Guild

December	01 – 15 PE	16 – 31 U
January	01 – 15 A	16 – 31 BR

Payer intentions

December – For all the children who, like Jesus, are forced to come into this world far from their own countries, that they find a welcome and fraternal support as they grow up. *We pray to the Lord.*

January – That all the inhabitants of the earth may work to guard this common home which God entrusted to us so that future generations may also enjoy it. *We pray to the Lord.*

CONGO

Symposium at Laudato Si' Centre

Under the patronage of the Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo, Archbishop of Kinshasa, the Laudato Si' Missionary Centre organised a Symposium, running from 26 to 28 September, on the theme "Pastoral care and ecological citizenship: the challenge of integral ecological education indicated by the Encyclical Laudato Si'". Just one year after it was opened, it was important for the Centre to reflect upon the work done and the new initiatives to be taken up.

The Symposium had various specific aims among which was a sharing of the strategies and actions of the Centre that would cause the 'ecological citizen to emerge'. The participation of consecrated and lay people, missionaries and members of the faithful of the parish of St John Paul II, gave the encounter a special character as it sought greater synergy among everyone, in view of the protection of our common home. The work concentrated on five themes and the main points that emerged from the debates; possible solutions were identified for the implementation of a pastoral of ecological citizenship. In conclusion, various "recommendations" were made – to the government, the Laudato Si' Centre, religious organisations and civil society – concerning the steps that each one should take in this direction.

ITALIA

Verona: African Film Festival

The Verona African Film festival began in 1981 with the aim, by giving value to its cinematography, of promoting the African continent

and to tackle the themes related to it, rescuing Africa from the image of a place of war and poverty, by which it is so often perceived through the media. This gives rise to a different image that comes directly from those who daily live in and breathe the air of Africa.

The 2019 edition, held from 8 to 16 November, reconfirmed this aspect: the need to change the way people see Africa, to try to approach the worlds of this continent from a different, multiple perspective. Very much to the point, therefore, was the decision to adopt as the logo for launching this edition and for all the material of the festival (posters, leaflets, catalogue), the beautiful self-portrait of the Kenyan sculptor Cyrus Kabiru, wearing his futuristic spectacles made of discarded material. It is interesting to point out how suitable and important this Festival is for the city of Verona. The Festival screenings are planned, first of all in the municipality of Verona, at the Saint Teresa Theatre Cinema. Then, for about a month, it visits 25 different locations in the province including Bardolino, Bovolone, Bussolengo, San Bonifacio, Casteldaziano, San Giovanni Lupatoto, Soave, Villafranca, etc.

The Festival, however, is also important for the fact that it reaches various ambits and contexts of society: it is also scheduled to be shown in both middle and high schools, and each year a third-level institute is selected which views all the competing films and awards a specific prize; films are shown in the prisons, at the Casa Circondariale of Montorio; the Festival is accompanied by selected university students. Six different juries select the winning films: The International Jury Prize; A Prize by the Public in the Hall; the New Generation-Public Students Prize; the High School Special Jury Prize; the Verona University Students' Jury; the Prize "Cinema beyond the wall".

The Festival has four promoters: The Verona Missionary Centre, the Mazziani, the Mlal and Nigrizia Foundation. On the last evening, the organisers thanked Fr. Venanzio Milani, as he's about to leave for Rome, for his tireless work over the past seven years.

For more than five years now, the African Museum and the Festival have worked together to produce an exhibition devoted to contemporary African art. As a result, we find an exhibition at the African Museum entitled **Macho Nne Afro-futuristic Visions by Cyrus Kabiru**. Kabiru is a young visionary artist from Kenya who found his first source of inspiration in recycling and chose the refuse as the raw material for his projects: he gives useless items a second chance by changing their purpose and increasing their value. The exhibition presents the fortunate and famous series **C-Stunners**, spectacles to be worn, sculptures made from discarded material such as screws, wire,

spoons or bottle-tops, bits of obsolete technology or material taken from the urban dumps, creatively selected and given a new context.

The exhibition is accompanied by a full schedule of appointments, special events, creativity workshops for adults, workshops for families, animated readings for pre-school children, all of which make it an exhibition not just to be seen but to be lived!

Celebrations for the Centenary of Comboni Service in San Tomìo

During the month of November, various celebrations were held at San Tomìo Rectory, Verona, to commemorate the centenary of Comboni presence there, without interruption, from 1919 until today.

The Eucharistic celebrations highlighted our ties with the diocese. The following were asked to preside at the special Masses: the Director of the Diocesan Missions Centre and the Migrants Pastoral Office; the coordinating Dean for the city-centre parishes; the Parish priest of San Nicolò, the parish to which we belong; the Dean of Consecrated Life with a large group of men and women religious. On Saturday 23, the Eucharist was presided over by the bishop of the diocese Mons. Giuseppe Zenti; on Saturday 30, the final day, Father Tesfaye, our Father General, presided.

Furthermore, Bishop Zenti and our GC each wrote a letter to the Institute and the diocese respectively, in which they underline the meaning and positive value of the pastoral service of the Comboni Missionaries who, at San Tomìo, promote three important values: the Eucharist (Mass and adoration), Reconciliation (Confessions) and the Mission.

MOZAMBICO

Two important anniversaries

On Sunday, 20 October, with the participation of the Archbishop of Nampula, Mons. Inácio Saúre, a number of priests, Brothers, Sisters and lay-people, there was the solemn opening of the Golden Jubilee marking fifty years since the foundation of the Anchilo Catechetical Centre, and the sixtieth anniversary of the magazine *Vida Nova*.

The Paul VI Catechetical Centre was opened in 1969, by decree of the Bishop of Nampula diocese, Mons. Manuel Vieira Pinto, in order to set in motion a pastoral incarnated in the people and characterised by the active participation of the laity.

At first, in order to coordinate the activities of the Centre, the formation of an international team composed of Comboni Missionaries,

the Boa Nova Missionary Society, the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary, the Victoriane Sisters, the Servants of Our Lady of Fatima Sisters and the Comboni Missionary Sisters. After a few years, the management of the centre was entrusted to the Comboni Fathers with the collaboration of the Comboni Sisters.

Fr. Graziano Castellari was the first director of the Centre and indicated its objectives in these words: “the formation of lay-people so that they may assume responsibility for the growth of this Church and discover the particular forms of a Church that is rooted in its own culture and its own people. The Centre works in three fields: catechists, inculturation and liturgy. Each of these options is one long chapter. Catechists, as subjects in their own right of evangelisation and not just delegates. The study of the particular culture and the preparation of new missionaries so that they may love and respect that culture, like a new Bethlehem where Christ continues to become incarnate. To entrust to the Christians the Word of God and the Sunday celebration”. The Centre also led the way in the translation of liturgical and catechetical texts into the Macua language, as well as dictionaries and grammars that were published thanks to the tenacity and competence of Fr. Gino Centis who worked in the Centre for more than thirty years.

During these past fifty years, many Comboni confreres and Sisters gave the best of themselves at this Centre so that the lay people being trained could collaborate actively in the growth of the local Church. At the moment, the Centre is being directed by Fr. Massimo Robol, Bro. José Neto and Fr. Pinho, a diocesan priest.

That same day, the sixtieth anniversary of the Christian formation magazine *Vida Nova*, whose pages witnessed to the comings and goings of many Comboni Missionaries and Sisters. The magazine is now in the hands of Fr. António Bonato and Fr. Cantifula, a diocesan priest.

To mark these anniversaries, a plaque in memory of our beloved Fathers Graziano Castellari and Gino Centis was unveiled. The closure of the Jubilee will take place in October of next year and, in the meantime, various cultural and liturgical events will be organised.

SPAIN

European Mission Secretariat

The coordinators of the European Comboni circumscription Mission Secretariat held their annual meeting of the European Council for the Mission (EMC) from 18 to 21 November 2019 at Granada. Fr. Giorgio

Padovan (Italy), Fr. Franz Weber (DSP), Fr. Javier Alvarado Ayala (LP), Fr. José Luis Román Medina and Fr. José Rafael Pérez Moreno (Spain) attended the meeting. The representatives of Poland, Portugal and the General Administration (Rome) were unable to attend.

“We examined the progress we are making in the mission sector of the various circumscriptions”, said the EMC secretary Fr. Padovan. “We took a close look at the activities, meetings and journeys that we are carrying out together: for example, migration and the degree of coordination, justice and peace and the commission at European level, the Limone symposiums and the European workshops held in Verona in July on the theme of interculturality and mission. We have noticed how this journey and methodology enriches us and opens us up, while helping us to grow as a missionary presence in Europe.

In our plans for next year we include the Limone Symposium (2-5 June 2020) on the theme of ‘Integral ecology: a challenge for the mission’, the progress of the Significant Comboni Project of Human Promotion (CPHP) in Camarate (Portugal), and the Comboni Social Forum on social ministry in the month of July, 2020, in Rome.

On the third day of the meeting we visited with interest the Comboni projects regarding migration (Amani), the foundation ‘School of Solidarity’, the Comboni-run parish of Our Lady of Ransom and the community of the Comboni Sisters. It is a very important fact that we are able to meet together and share, from both a local and global perspective, against the background of Europe and the world. Our heartfelt thanks to the community of Granada for their pleasant and welcoming hospitality”.

The next meeting will be in Lisbon from 16 to 19 November 2020.

SUD SUDAN

Visit of Fr. Tesfaye and Fr. Alcides to the Province

The time has flown since we last received Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse and Fr. Alcides Costa in Juba for the celebration of the Centenary of the Faith in the Archdiocese and an official visit to the country. The schedule was packed with events and meetings.

On Saturday 2 November, Fr. Tesfaye presided at Mass at Bro. Augusto Lopeta Memorial Secondary School, where the Brothers of St. Martin de Porres renewed their religious vows, as the school is run by them. After the Mass, Fr. Tesfaye and Fr. Alcides visited the Good Shepherd Peace Centre, a short distance from the school and managed by the Religious Association of South Sudan.

A Mass was later celebrated in commemoration of the dead, attended by the Comboni Family and some Institutes founded by Mons. Sisto Mazzoldi (Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Brothers of St. Martin de Porres, Apostles of Jesus), at Rejaf cemetery where some of our confreres are also buried.

On Sunday, 3 November, our guests visited the United Nations Camp which protects the Nuer civilians – around 30.000 of them – and took part in two celebrations. Fr. Tesfaye and Fr. Alcides later visited the communities of Tali, Yirol and Mapuordit. Finally, they reached Rumbek where they boarded a return flight to Juba. The roads were greatly damaged and dangerous, especially when, after they left Yirol, they found a section of the road flooded and the vehicles got stuck in the water. They had to do part of their journey on foot. The confreres welcomed them with joy and sympathy. Fr. Tesfaye and Fr. Alcides listened to them and expressed their solidarity with them. They visited the community of pre-postulancy in Moroyok, Juba. Then the Wau community whose parish is dedicated to Saint Daniel Comboni, the cathedral, the St. Daniel Comboni Diocesan Hospital, the Catholic Health Training Institute and other Institutions.

On Sunday 17, they celebrated two Masses: one at the cathedral and one at our parish. During the last days of their visit, Fr. Tesfaye and Fr. Alcides were able to meet Sr. Luigia Coccia, Superior General of the Comboni Missionary Sisters, and Sr. Eulalia Capdevila, General Councillor, and to discuss the areas of collaboration and communion guided by our common charism. They also met Archbishop Paulino Lukudu Loro and visited various places in Juba, such as the Catholic University and the St. Paul Major Diocesan Seminary, where they celebrated Mass with the seminarians and staff.

It was truly a marvellous visit and very much appreciated by the confreres, thankful for the closeness and encouragement of Fr. Tesfaye and Fr. Alcides. Unfortunately, they could not visit every community, due to the physical nature of the country.

Centenary of the faith: closing ceremony

On 1 November, the Church in South Sudan, especially in the Archdiocese of Juba, celebrated a memorable event, the closing of the Centenary of the Faith, with a solemn ceremony that took place on the location of the first parish with its All Saints church in Rejaf.

The Eucharistic celebration began around 10.30 in the morning with the participation of more than 15,000 pilgrims from the whole of the archdiocese and other places. The event was sponsored by Archbishop

op Paulino Lukudu Loro and his auxiliary bishop Mons. Santo Loku Pio. Among the notable guests were Cardinal Gabriel Zubeir Wako, Bishop Emeritus of Khartoum and main celebrant, all the bishops of the Sudan Episcopal Conference, Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse, Superior General, accompanied by his Assistant General Fr. Alcides Costa, who had come from Rome on a pastoral visit to the province.

Other participants were the President of the Republic of South Sudan, General Salva Kiir Mayardit, and various government ministers, governors, commissioners and other civil authorities. There was also a delegation from the parish of Cerro Veronese, the birthplace of Fr. Angelo Vinco (A Mazza priest and one of the first missionaries to South Sudan), a representative each of the diocese of Verona and the Mazza Institute.

The more impressive parts of the beautiful liturgy were the homily by Cardinal Zubeir, the liturgical dances, the hymns sung by the extraordinary choir and the long procession of the faithful at the offertory. The whole gathering was permeated by the great hope of a new era for the Church in South Sudan and the prospects for peace and reconciliation among the South Sudan peoples.

At the end of the celebration, various bishops addressed the faithful and the President of the Republic himself greeted those present and once again promised to guide the process of peace among the various tribes and factions in the country. Everyone returned home full of joy and praising God for this time of grace for all the people of South Sudan.

UGANDA

Ongoing Formation for the scholastics

From 11 to 15 November, at the Namugongo novitiate, a meeting was held for the ongoing formation of four scholastics who are at present on missionary service in the province: Constanz Opiyo, in Ngetta, Elias Orishaba, in Alenga, Isaac Amoko, in Matany, and Nicholas Onyait, in Kasaala.

The meeting began with a day of personal prayer and meditation. The following days were directed by Fr. Sylvester Hategek'Imana, the novice master. In his reflection on the theme "Bearing witness", Fr. Sylvester emphasised the meaning of the theme: to experience an event personally and bear witness to it. Being witnesses today means being aware of our consecration, knowing deeply the salvific event

and confirming its authenticity so as to bear witness to the truth of the Risen Christ.

The final day was directed by the Provincial Superior. Using guideline questions, the scholastics shared their experience of missionary service in their different communities.

IN PACE CHRISTI

Fr. Lino Bartolomeo Cordero (18.05.1935 – 14.11.2019)

“Human and understanding, Fr. Lino was esteemed by all for the joy he spread around him”.

A novice at Gozzano (NO), from 1955 to 1957, competent in electrical work, together with another novice, Giordano Barani, who was a painter, he created a new sort of crib two years in succession. It was both beautiful as well as being moving and very didactic. His work on this sort of crib continued also during the years of his scholasticate in Venegono Superiore (VA).

Having received a Licentiate in Theology at the PIF in Venegono Inferiore (VA), during the early years of his priesthood, Fr. Lino engaged in various activities in vocations promotion and teaching in Barolo (CN) until the end of 1967, when he left for Brazil. After spending a year in the Seminary of Ibirapu, in Espírito Santo State, he was sent to the south of the state as Rector of the Jerônimo Monteiro Seminary (ES), still under construction, where he worked for four years.

With the Second Vatican Council, even the formation of seminarians went through an identity crisis. Fr. Lino Cordero, Rector, and Fr. Enzo Santangelo, Vocations promoter, decided to try a less clerical formation of their charges: the name “Comboni Seminary” was changed to “Comboni College”, something the Provincial disagreed with.

The change of name brought with it a new formation method. Fr. Lino loved the young seminarians in a friendly way and was loved by them in turn since, with love, he taught them self-discipline. He never punished any of them. He never resorted to his authority as rector to impose rules or precepts. He was considered a democratic Rector since he only took decisions regarding the running of the seminary after consulting the seminarians. He sought to form them by inculcating in them a spirit of mutual respect, self-discipline and responsibility. After four years of work, he was sent from the Comboni College of Jerônimo Monteiro to São Gabriel da Palha, in the north of the country, to head the Comboni Seminary and assist with the pastoral work of the parish.

He afterwards became parish priest of Ibirapu, also in the State of Spirito Santo and, after six years of pastoral work, was called to São Paulo as head of the management of the CAM and the magazine *Sem Fronteiras*, which aimed at forming the missionary conscience of the Church in Brazil.

From 1989 to 1995, Fr. Lino was based at Duque de Caxias, RJ, as part of the community for Afro pastoral, with many pastoral activities both within and beyond the parish.

In 2000, he became parish priest of *Sagrada Família* in Taguatinga (in the Federal District). Unlike the diocesan priests who followed a traditional pastoral, the Combonis endeavoured to form small communities, mainly in the peripheral areas of Riacho Fundo II, where the population was increasing daily. In a few years it reached forty thousand.

In 2005, Fr. Lino left the parish of Taguatinga and accepted the post of Provincial Bursar and Rector of the Shrine of *Cruz e Reconciliação* in São Paulo, up to the year 2011.

Tired out due to his many activities, in the month of June 2011 he was transferred to Milan for treatment at the Fr. Ambrosoli Centre. Still active and optimistic, he took on the job of local bursar of the Milan house and afterwards that of Vice-Superior of that community. It was there that, on 14 November 2019, weakened by a metastasis, he was visited by "Sister Death", who placed him in the arms of the Father of Life. (*Fr. Enzo Santangelo, mccj*)

LET US PRAY FOR OUR BELOVED DEAD

THE FATHERS: Cândido Rosalío, of Fr. Barrios Morales Candelario Romeo (PCA); Eustaquio, of Fr. Victor Paruñgao (PCA).

THE BROTHERS: Mariano, of Bro. Marcellino Frison (I); José Uelson, of Fr. Francisco Colombi (BR); Bruno, of Fr. Pasquino Panato (LP).

THE SISTER: Sr Teresina, of Fr. Sebastiano Bianchi (†).

THE COMBONI MISSIONARY SISTERS: Sr. Giovanna Righi, Sr. Pia Francesca Facci, Sr. Brunilde Cacciatori, Sr. M. Orlanda La Marra.

MISSIONARI COMBONIANI - VIA LUIGI LILIO 80 - ROMA
