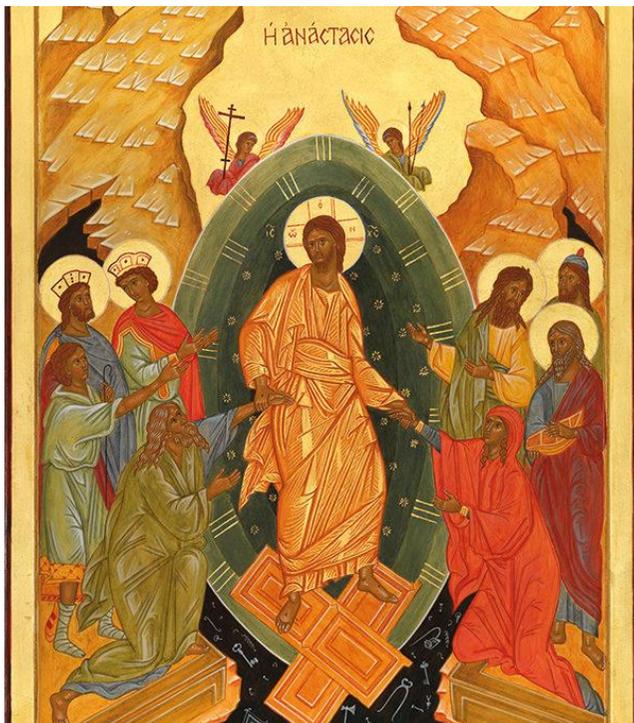


Familia Comboniana

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBONI MISSIONARIES OF THE HEART OF JESUS

806

April 2022



HAPPY EASTER

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL NOTES

66th Consulta

Provincial elections

Taking into account the fact that the General Chapter will take place almost a year late and, in a period, different from traditional practice, the GC considered some implications of these changes for the elective process of the provincials and delegation superiors. The discernment made now allows us to confirm that there is no change in the calendar of mandates of superiors and that the electoral process will not begin until July. At the end of the May Consulta, the electoral lists will be formulated and made available to the provincials for the straw ballot and subsequent voting, to be carried out starting in July. The discernment of the GC continues on the possibility of using telematic means at least for surveys, and this will be discussed with the provincials and delegation superiors during the videoconference scheduled for April 25.

The Journey towards the Chapter

Work of the Precapitular Commission

The precapitular commission met in Rome from January 28 to February 25 for the preparatory work for the upcoming General Chapter. The facilitator, Fr Gonzalo Fernández, cmf, joined the nine members of the Commission for three days. The summary of the work done was presented in the form of a discernment tool that collects what emerged from the reports made at different levels: personal, provincial, continental, secretariats and general administration.

On 11 April the General Council will hold a videoconference with the commission to evaluate the progress of the preparations and take some decisions that could not be reached in February. Prominent among these are the decisions relating to the participation of observers and guests which is influenced by legislation on personal distancing in closed environments linked to the Covid-19 epidemic, which will probably be modified at the end of March. As early as March 1, the rules relating to the mandatory quarantine of all travellers entering Italy have been suspended.

A further online meeting will take place, with all the capitulars, on 25 April in order to finalise the last necessary steps and provide the necessary instructions for the journey and other topics (such as the

presence of observers). The GC thanks the commission for its work, which will be of great help during the Chapter.

Meeting of the General Administrations of the Comboni Family

The General Administrations of the Comboni Family will meet from 22 to 24 April at the birthplace of St. Daniel Comboni, guests of the community of Limone sul Garda. It will be the last meeting of this GC at the Comboni Family level. The GC thanks God and the members of the Comboni Family for the collaboration and the sense of family that has been created and lived during these years.

Episcopal consecration of Mons. Carlassare

After the dialogue held with the competent Vatican departments, the decision was reached that the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Christian Carlassare could take place in Rumbek on March 25, under the auspices of the Solemnity of the Annunciation. On behalf of the GA, Fr Tesfaye Tadesse, Bro Alberto Lamana and Fr Fernando Galarza will participate in the ceremony.

Beatification of Venerable Fr Giuseppe Ambrosoli

The eagerly awaited beatification ceremony of our Venerable brother Fr Giuseppe Ambrosoli will take place on November 20, 2022, the Feast of Christ the King, in Kalongo. The mobilization of the various communities involved in this event has already begun: the Christian communities of the Archdiocese of Gulu and Como and the parish of Ronago. In matters directly concerning us, the Postulator General (Fr Arnaldo Baritussio) has asked Fr Cosimo De Iaco to help with the complex preparations that are needed in Uganda. The GC hopes that the whole Institute will be involved in this event through its prayers so that it may bear fruits of conversion and gratitude to God for the gift of Fr Ambrosoli.

Journeys of the General Council

These are the journeys abroad of the General Council:

- Fr Tesfaye Tadesse: from 16 March to 21 April, - to Ethiopia (Gumuz) and the Provincial Assembly, and to South Sudan for the consecration of Mons. Carlassare and to South Africa for the canonical visit to the province.
- Bro Alberto Lamana: - to South Sudan for the consecration of Mons. Carlassare from 20 March to 1 April.

- Fr Pietro Ciuciulla: - to Spain from 14 to 23 March and to Eritrea from 28 March to 9 April for the Assembly of Bursars.
- Fr Jeremias dos Santos Martins: - to South Africa for the canonical visit from 2 to 20 April.

We also note some commitments due to the absence from Rome of the members of the General Council:

- Bro Alberto Lamana: - to Verona for the meeting of the Brothers from 28 April to 1 May.
- Fr. Alcides Costa: - to Padova for a meeting with the families and benefactors of the community from 2 to 4 April.

Perpetual professions

Sc. Abreham Woldetinsae H. (ET)	Gilgel Beles (ETH)	18.03.2022
Sc. Manuel Novais Quembo (MO)	Waterval (RSA)	25.03.2022
Sc. Moisés Zacarias Daniel (MO)	Matola (MO)	27.03.2022

Ordinations

Fr. Oduor Kevin Otieno (KE)	Kibuye (KE)	26.02.2022
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Holy Redeemer Guild

April	01 – 15 CN	16 – 30 EC
May	01 – 15 ET	16 – 31 I

Prayer intentions

April – We pray that we may remember, even today, that the risen and glorious Christ is the deep source of our hope, certain we will never lack his help to bring to completion the mission entrusted to us. *Lord hear us.*

May – We pray that the unequal access to the resources of the planet may be corrected and that we may know how to take care of the common home given to us in trust for future generations. *Lord hear us.*

Meaningful celebrations

APRIL

25 Saint Peter of San José
de Betancur, religious

DCA (Centramerica,
Costa Rica, Guatemala
El Salvador, Nicaragua)

Comboni liturgical calendar

MAY

Last Saturday of the month

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart memorial

Meaningful celebrations

MAY

2 Saint Athanasius, bishop and doctor of the Church Egypt

Specialisations

Fr. Teddy Keyari Njaya successfully discussed his thesis entitled “Governance practices and sustainability of water projects in Turkana County, Kenya”, for the conferral of the Master’s Degree in Human and Social Sciences, at the Department of Public Policy and Administration of Kenyatta University (Kenya).

Publications

Pedro Pablo Hernández mccj, *Fábulas etíopes de la tradición guyi*, Ed. Mundo Negro, Madrid 2022. The collection of these 25 fables, accompanied by illustrations by Francis Marín, is closely linked to the pastoral work of Fr Pedro Pablo, Mexican, in his twenty years of missionary life in constant contact with the tribal leaders, the leaders, the elders and the people of the Guyi people, in southwestern Ethiopia. It is the first time - the author specifies - that these stories have been put in writing and translated into Castilian; it is an opportunity to recognize the human values they present and the wisdom they transmit.

Enzo Santângelo mccj and Carmelo Casile mccj, *Daniel e a Missão do Reino no deserto*, ed. Alô Mundo, São Paulo 2022. Alongside St. Daniel Comboni's travels to Africa, the book presents numerous figures of saints who by means of the desert (geographic or theological) have tried to make this world fraternal and habitable.

ASIA

Opening of the community of St. Francis Xavier in Limay

On 15 March 2022, the Asian Delegation opened a new community in the diocese of Balanga (Bataan), about 100 km from Manila. The new community, dedicated to St Francis Xavier, will serve in the quasi-parish of St Martin de Porres and St Daniel Comboni, entrusted to the

Comboni Missionaries on January 1, 2022, by the bishop of Balanga, Mons Ruperto Cruz Santos. This move towards Bataan comes after the Delegation Assembly of 2021, taking into account a long-expressed desire to have a pastoral and evangelization commitment in the Philippines, decided on the new opening.

The decree of constitution was delivered to the superior of the new community during the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr David Costa Domingues, Delegate of Asia. Representatives of the two communities of Manila and the chancellor of the diocese were present. The Christian community of the quasi-parish actively participated in the Mass, celebrated in honour of St. Daniel Comboni, on the 191st anniversary of his birth.

After the Mass, all those present took part in the blessing of the house and then joined in the lunch, expressing their joy and gratitude to the Lord for this new beginning: the Christian community of the "quasi" parish is also happy for the presence of the Comboni Missionaries in the area. because now they will be able to attend Mass every day. The new community will be involved both in pastoral and missionary service and in missionary animation activities.

EGSD

Inauguration of an exhibition on the life and work of Fr Vantini

On 23 March 2022 the archaeologist Francesco Tiradritti (of the Poliziano Institute of Mediterranean Studies) presented the exhibition "Fr. Giovanni Vantini: his life, his work, his legacy" in the Conference Room of the Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST) in Khartoum, dedicated to the Comboni missionary Fr. Vantini, orientalist and pedagogist.

Numerous illustrious personalities were present including H. E. the Italian Ambassador to Sudan, Gianluigi Vassallo, the Apostolic Nuncio to Sudan, Mons. Luis Miguel Muñoz Cardaba, Mrs Lucy Tamlyn, Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of the United States, Mr George Papagiannis, National Representative of UNESCO in Sudan, Mr Ikhlas Abdellatief Ahmed of the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums of Khartoum, Mr Nour Al-Din Al-Regeig, Commissioner for Cultural Heritage of the African Union of Architects, and Mr Mahmoud Al-Tayeb, an archaeologist from the University of Warsaw.

The archaeologist Mrs Intisar Soghayroun, former Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, sent a video from Istanbul with her personal memories of Fr. Vantini and the architect Giuseppe Fanfoni,

the last living member of the expeditions to Sonqi Tino, organized from 1967 to 1970 by La Sapienza University of Rome, joined the online event.

Fr Jorge Naranjo, Director of the CCST, presented the scientific value of Fr Vantini's work and his profile as a man of faith, inseparable aspects of his personality. He also introduced four Computer Science degree projects in which students applied technology to cultural heritage. These projects are the result of the training carried out by the Institute of Cultural Heritage Sciences (of the Italian National Research Council), as part of the project "A new Sudan through culture, technology and innovation", funded by the Embassy of Italy in Sudan. In conclusion, Prof. Tiradritti invited the public to take a copy of the book prepared for the occasion and to visit the exhibition which will remain open on the premises of the CCST until 23 April.

ESPAÑA

VI Meeting of the Comboni Family

The VI Meeting of the Comboni Family in Spain was held on 19 and 20 March 2022, characterized by the joy of being able to meet again and reaffirm the missionary dream of following our vocation as a family (Comboni men and women, religious, lay and secular).

The Comboni house in Madrid welcomed the 30 people belonging to the various Comboni and lay communities in Spain. The Seculars were unable to attend. We had the special participation of Fr Pietro Ciuciulla, Assistant General, the heads of the three branches of the Family and Alberto de la Portilla, Coordinator of the Central Committee of the CLM. The central point of the meeting was to accompany, with reflection and prayer, the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Comboni Missionary Sisters. Sr. Prado Fernández presented the story of the first Comboni sisters who followed St. Daniel on his first journeys, marked by the cross as victims of the Mahdia. The Mahdia revolt destroyed the first Comboni works in Sudan and marked the vocation of the Comboni Sisters from the very beginning. Fr Pietro emphasized that the charism grows and is renewed when it is shared with others who recreate it in the particular nature of every Christian lifestyle.

In the final part of the meeting, the heads of the three branches present shared the current situation of their organizations, with their different challenges and hopes.

ETHIOPIA

Perpetual Vows

On March 18, 2022, Sc. Abreham Woldetinsae Haile Mariam made his perpetual vows during a Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie. Subsequently, Abreham was ordained a deacon, with a celebration in the Latin rite, presided over by the Eparch of Bahr Dar-Dessie, Bishop Lesanu Christos Matheos.

Both celebrations took place at the Gilgel Beles mission, which still enjoys some freedom, while the nearby Gublak mission had to be evacuated and is, in fact, occupied by guerrillas.

Many people from the city and its surroundings attended the two ceremonies despite restrictions on movement and the strict observance of the fast. The people, with his presence, wanted to show their gratitude to the new deacon Abreham for the rapid learning of the Gumuz language and their affection for his initiatives and the work he did during his missionary service in this area. (*Fr Sisto Agostini, mccj*)

KENYA

Priestly Ordination

Saturday 26 February 2022 was a great day for the Comboni Missionaries in Kenya as one of their confreres, the deacon Oduor Kevin Otieno, was ordained a priest along with another diocesan deacon. The celebration took place at the Archdiocese of Kisumu, where Kevin comes from.

The Archbishop-elect, Maurice Muhatia Makumba, who officially took office as the third archbishop of Kisumu on 19 March 2022, after thanking the parents for allowing their children to work in the vineyard of the Lord, recommended the new priests remain faithful to the ministry they had received. The whole family of Fr Kevin and many confreres from Turkana, Pokot and Nairobi took part in the beautiful ceremony. The provincial superior, Fr Austine Radol, thanked the faithful of the parish from which Fr Kevin comes and all those who participated in the preparations for the celebration.

Kevin Oduor has been assigned to the Province of Kenya and will work in the parish of Kariobangi in Nairobi. We continue to pray for him as he begins his ministry. (*Fr David K. Ahiro, mccj*)

MOÇAMBIQUE

Carapira Mission damaged by Cyclone Gombe

The storm of rains and strong gusts of wind, this time called "Gombe", hit the Mozambican provinces of Nampula and Zambezia hard in the early hours of last 11 March. The Comboni Missionaries of Carapira witnessed the serious damage caused by Gombe to the homes and fields of the population in general and of the mission itself.

"The situation is very complicated, they say. The cyclone destroyed 90% of the houses. The roof of the Carapira church was also blown away. We know of ten dead and three seriously injured. There will certainly be others. We don't have news from many communities yet. We are organizing ourselves to help those affected. On Friday we hosted more than 150 people in the Carapira catechetical centre. Many people arrive with nothing. We are trying to provide clothes and food". According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), it is estimated that 115,000 people may have been affected by Cyclone Gombe. A new tragedy for those who have not yet forgotten the cyclones Idai and Kenneth, which three years ago also devastated the central and northern regions of Mozambique. In a statement, the IOM said that six reception centres have already been activated in Nampula.

NAP

Fr Joseph Bragotti celebrates sixty years in the mission

On St. Patrick's Day, 60 years ago, Fr Joseph Bragotti was ordained a Comboni missionary priest. Since then, he has lived every day on a mission.

So today, 17 March 2022, friends and confreres had the joy of celebrating the 60th anniversary of his ordination. More than 20 people gathered around him at the Eastgate Springs Retirement Community, where he now resides.

While his "adventurous" mission days have greatly diminished, Fr Joe is still active in serving God. Now that he lives in the retirement home, his friends have the opportunity to care for him and, at the same time, continue to learn from him and make their faith grow.

In his missionary experience during his more active years, Fr Joe served as a formator in the NAP, was kidnapped by rebels in Uganda and, at the age of 70, had to learn a new language in order to go on a mission to Guatemala. But Fr. Joe is, first of all, a missionary: he loves people and serves as one of the many shepherds of God.

However, he is also a good storyteller: he comes alive when he talks about his family in Italy or shares stories from his Ugandan period! Happy anniversary Fr. Joe. We are lucky to know you and be a part of your amazing life.

POLSKA

Welcoming Refugees

I believe that everyone in the whole world is following the war in Ukraine, which broke out on February 24th. In Poland, all of society, including the Catholic Church, is actively involved in helping refugees. The Comboni communities of Krakow and Warsaw have also been committed to welcoming refugees from the very beginning. Their number changes every day because while some arrive, others leave for Western Europe; some have been in our homes since the conflict began. There are about 30 people right now, women and children; the youngest is only one year old and the oldest woman is 82.

After the arrival of these guests, the routine of our day has changed and every day is different. We give them board and lodging. However, they often need other types of assistance, such as the legalisation of documents, help in finding a job or an independent apartment, etc. Some of them believe that the war will end soon and therefore they do not even intend to regularize their stay; they are sad, sometimes even desperate. There are also some who have nowhere to return to because their homes no longer exist. Many try to contact their compatriots who already worked in Poland before the war, over a million people.

The refugees have often been forced to flee quickly, without having time to take essential goods, so the first thing we try to do for them is to supply them with warm clothes, personal hygiene products and even toys for the children. The situation of young children is particularly delicate. Some of them have viral illnesses due to travel, changes in food and habits, and may even need to be vaccinated, as some doctors say. We try to help the mothers of these children by organizing makeshift medical facilities.

The government is launching a permanent program of assistance to refugees for their integration into Polish society. Contact between us and Ukrainian guests is sometimes not easy due to the language. Some of them speak Ukrainian, others Russian, especially those who come from the eastern part of Ukraine. However, we face up to this challenge because we too have gone through a similar process of learning a

foreign language. After all, we too are Slavs: the vision of the world, religious, linguistic or cultural diversity is really a challenge and not a barrier, which we overcome every day. We believe we are fulfilling our missionary charism here and now, fulfilling the desire of St. Daniel Comboni, who lived for the most needy, who are now those who flee from the hell of war. We ask everyone to offer a prayer for an end to the war and for peace in Ukraine. (*Fr. Tomasz Marek, mccj*)

SOUTH AFRICA

Perpetual vows and ordination to the diaconate

On Friday 25 March 2022, a bright sunny day, all roads seemed to lead to Waterval, a small town and parish in the vast diocese of Witbank and the equally vast province of Mpumalanga. The point of attraction was our young Mozambican brother, Sc. Manuel Novais Quembo, 33, who on this day made his perpetual vows and received ordination to the diaconate.

At nine o'clock, some parishioners, a dozen Comboni missionaries, some local priests and religious and four members of Manuel's family filled the small parish church. Fr. Jude Eugene Burgers, provincial superior, presided over the celebration assisted by Fr. John Baptist Keraryo Opargiw, vice provincial superior and by Fr. Anthony Mkhari, the local superior.

Fr Jude welcomed everyone and, in particular, expressed gratitude for the presence of the members of Manuel's family, who also came from Mozambique, at a time when they were still in mourning for the loss of their mother. This fact led the entire assembly to come together in solidarity with Manuel and his family.

In his short speech, Fr Jude invited all of us Combonis present to renew and revitalize our religious consecration to God by accompanying in prayer the total donation of Manuel to God for the mission. In fact, every time a Comboni religious profession is celebrated, the charism of our Founder is animated, strengthened and inflamed to enrich the whole Church.

After the first phase, Manuel, now a full member of the Institute, was accompanied by his godparents to a designated place in the huge tent prepared for the solemn Mass, during which the diaconal ordination was to take place.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Mons Thaddeus Khumalo, Bishop of the Diocese of Witbank, who thanked the Comboni Missionaries, pioneers in this area of South Africa, for the good

missionary service they have rendered down the years to the people of Witbank.

He encouraged the new deacon to declare his firm "yes" to the Lord and to prepare himself for the way of the cross in the footsteps of Christ and as a Comboni; he also challenged the young people of Waterval to listen to the voice of the Lord calling them and, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, to courageously give their assent to serve the Lord in the Church as missionaries, priests and religious. In fact, in its more than 50 years of existence, the parish of Waterval has yet to produce its first priest and, in the current situation of the Catholic Church in this "Rainbow Nation", this really seems to merit priority. However, inspired by the Gospel of today, we dare to renew our faith in the truth that "with God nothing is impossible"! (*Fr. John Baptist Keraryo Opargiw, mccj*)

SOUTH SUDAN

Episcopal Ordination of Mons. Christian Carlassare

In a beautiful and moving ceremony that lasted more than four hours, Mons. Christian Carlassare was consecrated Bishop of the diocese of Rumbek in South Sudan on 25 March 2022, the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord. The celebration was presided over by H.E. Card. Gabriel Zubeir Wako, Archbishop Emeritus of Khartoum (Sudan). In his homily, the cardinal said to the new bishop: "Your mission is the continuation of the mission of the apostles which today is the mission of the Church and which becomes your mission as a bishop 'to make disciples of Jesus Christ'". Immediately afterwards he thanked him for his return to Rumbek, despite the aggression suffered, and for having accepted to be bishop of the poor and to live among the poor.

The celebration was attended by all the bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Sudan and South Sudan, priests, men and women religious, lay representatives of all the parishes of the diocese of Rumbek, representatives of other dioceses and a delegation of priests and laity from Italy, including Fr. Fabio Baldan, provincial superior of Italy. Mons. Christian was accompanied by his mother Marcellina, his father Pierantonio and his sister Paola. There was also a large group of Comboni Fathers and Comboni Sisters, including Superior General Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie, Sr. Maria Martinelli provincial superior of the Comboni sisters and Fr. Louis Okot, provincial superior of South Sudan.

The ceremony was animated by five choirs and liturgical dance groups. After the ceremony, a lunch was offered and, in the afternoon, a show

was performed, at the end of which Msgr. Carlassare received gifts from everyone.

The day before, 24 March, as bishop-elect, Mons. Carlassare had made the profession of faith and taken the oath of fidelity to the Pope and to the Church, in the presence of the Pope's representative, the Apostolic Nuncio Mons. Hubertus Matheus María van Megan, Papal Nuncio to Kenya and South Sudan. Bishop Christian recalled that March 24 is the Day of Missionary Martyrs who gave their lives in the service of the Gospel and the people of God and that it was very significant for him to make the profession of faith and take the oath on that day.

Mons. Carlassare returned to Rumbek on 23 March, eleven months after being attacked and wounded in the legs by gunshots, on 26 April 2021. With enormous joy, a large crowd of people gave him a hero's welcome at the airport. Lakes State Governor Rin Tueny Mabor welcomed him and thanked him for returning to Rumbek despite the attack he suffered and offered his full support.

Mons. Carlassare, together with those who came with him and accompanied by many Catholics, went in procession to the cathedral. People came out of their homes and shops to greet him and thank him for returning. In his message, Mons. Carlassare made an appeal for reconciliation and peace. He asked people to repeat five times "we are all one in Christ", the motto and purpose of his episcopate: to unite all in Christ, as St. Paul says, "all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). He concluded by saying they should not look for him so much in the cathedral as in their communities where he will visit them, including the "cattle camps". Everyone in the diocese disapproved of the attack he suffered and offered him their solidarity, sympathy and total support.

UGANDA

Kasaala Parish celebrates its Platinum Jubilee

With joy and gratitude to the Lord, the Comboni family and the Christians of the Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish, Kasaala, celebrated their Platinum Jubilee on 25 March 2022. The parish, founded by the white fathers in 1945, was handed over to the Comboni missionaries in 1964.

Since then, several confreres have worked in this parish which has produced many vocations, including that of the principal celebrant, today Cardinal Antoine Kambanda of Kigali, Rwanda, who studied in the schools of the Comboni Missionaries.

To boot, most of the priests and religious of the diocese of Kasana Luwero come from this parish. Also present at the celebration were the Archbishop of Kampala, Mons. Paul Ssemogerere, the provincial superior of the Comboni Missionaries, Fr. Kiwanuka Achilles Kasozi, and various confreres of the Province.

In his homily, the cardinal praised the example of the Comboni Missionaries who, like Mary, abandoned their plans to let God's will be fulfilled in them and challenged young people to embrace the same call, to give themselves for the good of the Gospel and in acts of charity strengthened by faith. God wants us to be his hands, he said, the hands he uses to save the poor and all those who suffer. In the same celebration, he gave Confirmation to 377 children and young people and united a couple in marriage.

To mark this event, the parish has erected some "monuments": a prayer garden with a large crucifix and the stations of the cross, a grotto of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph; a number of trees were also planted.

IN PACE CHRISTI

Fr. Francesco Cazzaniga (30.03.1925 – 12.03.2022)

Francesco Cazzaniga was born on 30 March 1925 in Mariano Comense, in the province of Como, in the archdiocese of Milan. After a few years in the diocesan seminary of Milan, he decided to join the Comboni Missionaries because he wanted to be a pastor of souls rather than go and teach in a seminary. He made his novitiate in Venegono; he took his first vows on 7 October 1943 and perpetual vows five years later, on 24 September 1948. On 16 April 1949, he was ordained a priest and immediately assigned to the mission of Sudan, which was to be his province for the next 62 years.

After studying Arabic at the Colonial Course in London and then in Zahle, Lebanon, for a year, he arrived in Khartoum, where he worked as a teacher at Comboni College (CCK) from 1950 to 1965, with a two-year break (1957-1959), during which he returned to London for major degrees in religious studies and Islam.

In 1965 he was assigned to El Obeid, firstly to work in the Comboni school as director and then to help in pastoral ministry in the parishes of Kadugli and at the cathedral. From 1969 to 1975 he was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Apostolic Vicariate of El Obeid (before Fr Paulino Lukudu Loro, who would later become the first bishop of El Obeid as a diocese). It seems that Fr Francesco refused to be appointed bishop of El Obeid.

The confreres remember him as one who did not like being the centre of attention and who carried out his tasks to the best of his ability. In the early seventies, he financially supported some young people from Kadugli by having them study in Nahoud; from that group of young people, some vocations to the priesthood were born.

In 1975, Fr Francesco was sent to Ethiopia to specialize in nursing for lepers. He thus spent two years in Awasa, Sidamo (Ethiopia). Upon his return, he resumed his work in the parish of Kadugli, again contacting the people suffering from leprosy and working alongside local health workers in the distribution of medicine.

With the exception of another two years at the CCK Chapel of the Holy Family, he carried out his mission entirely between El Obeid and Kadugli until 1993. Fr Francesco is remembered for his precious work in the formation of catechists in the Nuba mountains and in the places where the Catholic presence needed to be strengthened.

In 1993 he was assigned to Port Sudan, where he spent the remaining 18 years of his service in the province, mainly teaching religion in Comboni and other schools.

Fr Benito Buzzacarin, who spent twelve years with him, remembers his precision and dedication in teaching and his generosity in giving extra lessons to Shahada Sudaniya candidates. He also paid particular attention to the teaching of religion to Eritrean students. He is fondly remembered by both former students and teachers who greatly admired him.

He was a gentle and quiet sort of person: "I never once heard him raise his voice," recalls Fr Benito. The younger confreres, such as Fr Natal António Manganhe, greatly appreciated his wisdom and his tireless dedication to his work despite his advanced age, as well as his willingness to help young missionaries to "clean up" the Arabic of their Sunday homilies; he is also remembered for his good command of the language.

Father Luigi Cignolini recalls that Father Francesco taught until the day he left Port Sudan at the age of 86. His only complaint, towards the end, concerned the difficulties he had in hearing: for this reason, he asked his students to write down their questions. During his time in Port Sudan, he raised funds for Comboni primary schools with the "Adopt a school" program.

In 2012 he returned to Italy, first in the Rebbio community and then in Milan. He passed away on Saturday 12 March, of heart complications related to diabetes.

Fr Francesco will be remembered as "a Comboni missionary for the Sudanese people", intelligent, humble, unpretentious, organized and deeply human. Those who knew him met a man at peace with everyone because he was at peace with himself (*Fr Diego Dalle Carbonare, mccj*).

LET US PRAY FOR OUR BELOVED DEAD

THE FATHERS: Kongolo Nyi Bongo, of Fr David Nyinga (PE), Nguyen Dinh Can (John Canxio), of the Sc. Nguyen Van Tien Peter (A).

THE BROTHER: Armando, of Fr Gennaro Campochiaro (I).

THE COMBONI MISSIONARY SISTER: Sr. Antonia Lucia Mammi, Sr. Ifigenia Johannes Hailu.