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News

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VOL. 68 NO. 4 - NOVEMBER 2020

**CELEBRATING
THE XM JUBILEE YEAR
AND HELPING TO
“MAKE THE WORLD ONE FAMILY”**

*Archbishop of Jakarta, Ignatius
Cardinal Suharyo ordains six
new Xaverian Missionaries in
Indonesia*



NEWSLETTER OF THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES USA

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WORLDCATHOLIC.US News Magazine



Official publication of the United States Province of the Xaverian Missionaries

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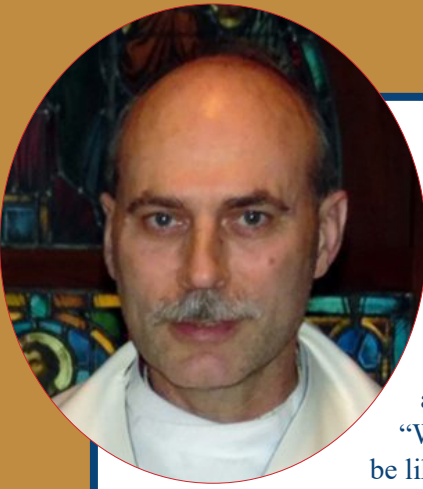
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“WE WANTED TO BE LIKE THEM”

Dear Mission Friends,

A striking story tells about one remote area in western Sudan where missionaries, especially priests, Brothers and Sisters, had labored for many years with few visible results. Then lay missionaries — married and single — came to that area and soon many Sudanese people become Catholics. A Sudanese elder explained: “When we saw the priests and Sisters living separately and alone we didn’t want to be like them. But when we saw Catholic families — men, women and children — living happily together, we wanted to be like them. In our family-oriented African society, married missionary couples with children have a powerful and unique witness and credibility.”

Due to the pandemic we celebrated the Mission Month of October and World Mission Sunday “low key” this year. In his message, Pope Francis invited us to respond to the Lord’s invitation with “*Here am I, send me!*” to proclaim the Word which is Life, because it’s the Risen Lord himself, to sisters and brothers the world over who don’t know Him. To be Church means to be missionaries who proclaim by word and example the Crucified and Risen Lord to others. The Church is missionary by its nature and must reach out to all of humanity.

That is exactly what we see in the following story.

Luis was a young boy growing up in a tiny village in Mexico. He wasn’t sure what being a Catholic Christian meant until a lay missionary came to his town. Luis started attending the children’s program, received his First Communion, and continued to learn more and more about his Faith. The lay missionary also gave Luis his first rosary.

Excited by his newfound Faith, Luis wanted his parents to join him in receiving Holy Communion. But because they had never been married in the Church, they could not. Luis persisted until one day his parents did get married in the Church where family and friends came to celebrate the event.

Then one day, the lay missionary announced to the children that there was going to be a men’s retreat. Luis immediately ran home to tell his father, Miguel.

Miguel was reluctant to go. Luis, though, was persistent. He told his father, “Papi, I know you won’t let Jesus down.” Miguel answered, “Of course not.” And that is how Miguel made the promise to his little boy.

Ten days before the retreat, Luis, Miguel’s only son, died. Miguel was devastated, but he remembered the promise he had made to his little boy.

He went to the retreat and began to fall in love with his Catholic Faith. So, inspired by the memory of his son and his own deepening faith, Miguel decided to become a lay Catholic missionary himself in order to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to other families in rural Mexico.

God richly blessed him and his family. Miguel believes that Luis helps him from heaven to be faithful every day.

Saint Augustine once asked himself: “*What does love look like?*” He found the answer when he said: “*Love has feet to go to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of others.*”

To be Church means to make of humanity one family.

God’s choicest blessings on you and your loved ones!

~Fr. Mark Marangone SX and the Xaverian Missionaries

Gratitude makes sense of my past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for the future.



FATHER MICHAEL DAVITTI, SX

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.” Lk.4:18-19



On Sept. 27th 2020 I had the joy to celebrate my Golden Jubilee as a priest. Looking back at the years past, I am overwhelmed by gratitude for my rich, intense and unique missionary life. Thirteen years were spent in Sierra Leone, 10 years commuting, as a lecturer, between Gbarnga (Liberia) and Parma (Italy), then 11 Years in Chicago Chinatown, as Pastor, and three years in Manila and from 2014 up till now in Wayne, NJ, as Director of the Commission on Christian-Buddhist Dialogue.

Pondering over these years, I came to realize that an invisible “golden thread” is uniting them, and I can truly say, “Everything is Providence”: everything has been directed and planned for my greater happiness.

In Africa I learned that along with knowledge there are other things equally important: music, dance, rhythm, color, smell, touch, friendship etc.

Asia taught me that love, hate, joy are all a state of the mind. Whoever can control the mind has the remote control of happiness.

In the words of Jesus: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your mind, with all your strength, and with all your heart.”*

I can now echo the words of David:

“Go and say to My servant David: Thus says the Lord: Do you intend to build a house for Me in which I will dwell? Now therefore, you will say to My servant David: Thus says the Lord of Hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following after the sheep, to be ruler over My people

Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all of your enemies before you. The Lord declares to you that He will instead bring about a house for you.”

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord. He said, “Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house that You have brought me this far?”

“For You, O Lord of Hosts, have revealed a word to Your servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house.’ Therefore, Your servant has found the courage to pray this prayer to You. You are God, and Your words are true. You have spoken this good message to Your servant. Now, be resolved and bless Your servant, and with Your blessing, the house of Your servant will be blessed forever.” 2 Sam.7: 18-29

I consider the years spent at Chinatown, the “harvest time” of my life, enriched by so many new experiences. When meeting people, I would introduce myself as “the Happy Pastor of Chinatown,” because at that time I could almost physically touch God’s presence. On leaving, I had the weekly Parish bulletins bound together. While perusing them, I had a detailed vision of my Ministry of those years, I could realize how *“I drank from wells that I had not dug and collected where I had not sown”*; I was harvesting what other people had sown in tears without visible results.

I felt a new strength that came, unexpectedly, from inside me, that gave me the energy needed to press on. It was as if, at the center of my being, there were a source of fresh, gushing-forth water, which flowed silently reaching the heart of the parishioners, transforming them.

Leaving the parish, I felt a sense of vigor, a certainty never felt before: the faithfulness of the Lord, which I had touched with my hands at the time, was the cause of my serenity for my future: God, who was with me in the past, would have stayed with me also in the future.

I will treasure these years at St. Therese's as a most precious gift: they have been the most fruitful time of my priestly ministry. It was God's doing. I have been walking on a holy ground like Jacob who exclaims: *"How awesome is this place! Truly, the Lord is here!" Gen. 28:17*

The dedication of parishioners and their friendship have given me encouragement. I promised them that I would remember each one of them in my prayers. I exhorted them to remember how: *"The fidelity of the Lord, which we experienced in the past, is the strongest foundation for the hope we have."*

After a short stay in the Philippines, I was assigned to Wayne Community as Director of the Commission for Dialogue between Christian and Buddhists, while helping out ministering to various Parishes in the area. The various experiences of the past are now a providential preparation to this task, enabling me build bridges of friendship between these two religions.

In the words of St. Paul I can now say:

"For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

*I have fought a good fight,
I have finished my course,
and I have kept the faith.*

From now on a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the Day of His appearing." 2 Tim. 4:6-8

Fr. Michael Davitti SX



Photos: Opposite page: Fr. Michael celebrates his Jubilee Mass.
This page from top: Fr. Michael at a reunion with St. Therese parishioners.
Fr. Michael in the Philippines.
Fr. Michael giving a seminar in Wayne, NJ

A BLESSING AMID THE PANDEMIC



Our six confreres: Antonius Sutatno, Erik Tjeunfin, Evansius Abi, Handrianus Masri, Yeremias Yanuarius Parung, and Ignatius Washington Hendra Kusuma were ordained to the priesthood on August 21st, 2020 by the Archbishop of Jakarta, Ignatius Cardinal Suharyo at Saint Matthew Parish of Bintaro.

It was a historic ordination as it is the most numerous ordination of Xaverians to the priesthood in Indonesia and it took place during the Xaverian Jubilee Year and at the eve of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Xaverian presence in the archipelago. Moreover, the ordination was carried out in a particular context marked by the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

Because of this particular situation, only a limited and selected number of participants aged between 18 and

59 were allowed to enter the church. Those coming outside from Jakarta were requested to undergo a PCR test showing that they were COVID-19 free and everyone was required to comply with the health protocols.

In his message to the newly ordained priests, the Cardinal expressed the hope that the current context in which the ordination is carried out will help them to appreciate the grace that has been bestowed on them so as their presence and ministry will be a sign of blessing for the salvation of many and the glory of God.

Quoting the Letter to the Hebrews 2:17, Cardinal Ignatius called on to the newly ordained priests to ever grow in the perfection of love, holiness and in the fullness of Christian life. He then thanked the Xaverian Congregation which has always availed its members to work in the Archdiocese of Jakarta.

He ended his message calling on

the young people to ask themselves what God wants them to choose as vocation in life. The ordination was live streamed for the confreres and the other parishioners, relatives, Xaverian friends and benefactors who could not attend it.

We wish a meaningful and fruitful ministry to the newly ordained priests in their future missions in Indonesia (Fr. Antonius Sutatno), in Sierra Leone (Fr. Erik Tjeunfin), in Burundi (Fr. Evansius Abi), in the Philippines (Fr. Handrianus Masri), in Colombia (Fr. Yeremias Yanuarius Parung), and in Cameroun-Tchad (Fr. Ignatius Washington Hendra Kusuma).

"The Lord couldn't have been more generous to us!" (Testament Letter, 1)

Fr. Valentin Shukuru SX

"Get on your way!": Tangier - Morocco

It has been 3 years since the last General Chapter (XVII) pronounced on some new initiatives, among them, that of Morocco: "Tangier-Morocco: the proposal is viewed favorably by this Chapter, insofar as it is aimed at a first announcement presence in a Muslim context. He entrusts the discernment to the Delegation of Spain, which will, in turn, involve the Regions of the United Kingdom and Italy, so that it is a choral response and the fruit of a timely repositioning of the Circumscriptions of Europe. The discernment will be done in dialogue with the General Direction."

On the afternoon of October 1, feast of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus and patroness of the missions, – a fortunate coincidence - we celebrated our communal Eucharist in which all the members of the Spanish Delegation were present to send Fr. Rolando Ruiz Durán on his departure to Morocco. At dawn on the 2nd, he took the flight to Casablanca (Morocco). A day later, Fr. Juan Antonio Flores Osuna joined him from Mexico.

It has been, as I say, a happy coincidence that we were able to celebrate this fraternal sending Eucharist on the same day that the whole Church reminds us of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, patron saint of missionaries. The Gospel of that day reminded us of the sending the 72 disciples on mission (Luke 10: 1-12).

"Get on your way!" This Gospel text reminds us, almost in an imperative way. Before Abraham left his land and "went out without knowing where he was going" (Hebrews 11, 8), trusting in the Word and supported by a faithful promise. And the Word of God the next day, the feast of the Holy Guardian Angels, completes this sentence: "I am going to send an angel ahead of you to take care of you on the way and take you to the place that I have prepared for you" (Exodus 23, 20).

There are risks in these times marked by the global uncertainty that is affecting us all and that we want to live with the trust placed in the Lord with the certainty that he always walks ahead and precedes us.

After his priestly ordination, scheduled for mid-November in his land, our brother François Saleh Moll, a Xaverian from Chad, will join Rolando and Juan Antonio in this new presence that we entrust to the Lord who sends us and invites us to continue to go forth.

Fr. Carlos Collantes Díez SX



First Xaverians missioning in Morocco



Tangier, Morocco, by Raul Cacho Oses on Unsplash



Arriving at the airport in Morocco

A Seed of Peace in Kamenge

"You shall confirm this word through the example of a holy life, with the fruitful exercise of love, with the spirit of sacrifice... and also with the heroism of martyrdom if you are called to this too."

(G. M. Conforti, 16th Address to departing missionaries, 13 March 1927)

Six years have now passed since the afternoon of 7 September, 2014, when our sisters, Olga Raschiatti, Lucia Pulici, and Bernardetta Boggian, were brutally killed in their home in Kamenge, a suburb of Bujumbura, Burundi. To this day, we are still waiting to know the full truth about their death.

Olga, Lucia, and Bernardetta were selected victims of a hidden verdict in which their personal behavior seems to have had no influence. However, their life consecrated to God and the people, and their choice to live in an unprotected way among the people, made them targets for those who wage war against God and goodness.

They were not living in particularly risky situations, contrary to what one might think; on the contrary, they lived a tranquil daily life marked by "the fruitful exercise of charity," of which St. Guido Conforti writes above. This was a life made up of hospitality and small gestures that appeared simple and their acts were performed low key with much love and fidelity.

Remembering them after some time, especially during the Xaverian Jubilee Year (2020-2021), is to draw on that heritage left to us by the multitude of witnesses who are part of the history of the Xaverian Family: "their testimony speaks to us with the eloquence of facts, of the totality of missionary consecration." (from *iQuaderni de iSaveriani* 114, p.18)

Our three sisters, beginning with the placing of their lives in God's hands on the day of their religious profession, have spent their whole lives in the service of the little

ones. For them, martyrdom was the final act of this total gift to God, the most beautiful and effective synthesis between apostolic and religious life. (Cf. C 18)

Remembering this is to celebrate the power of goodness, the life that remains and is reborn despite everything; to remember the sacrifice of their life in the name of the Gospel is to proclaim faith in Jesus, which allows us to face certain situations even when fear assails.

The endurance of goodness is more relentless than the aggressive violence of evil, which is powerless if we don't give in. Death did not have the last word. From their sacrifice came a strength which is hope and resurrection also for us today, immersed in the new challenges in which our respective missionary families find themselves.

Now, in Kamenge, the sisters' house has become a place of prayer open to all. Ever since Olga, Lucia, and Bernardetta were snatched from life and people, a group of individuals continued every day to visit their chapel, to gather in prayer with the desire to keep alive the memory and the presence of the God of Peace.

It is like a miracle to see that a place marked by death can become a source of life and hope; that a tomb can be transformed into a space in which to experience resurrection, reconciliation, and dialogue.

Let us ponder and make our own the words of Bernardetta: "Providence has given me the gift of meeting with different peoples and cultures, of seeing breathtaking views. I met wonderful people, Christians, and believers of other religions: faces that parade before me, making me relive the amazement of having encountered the seeds of the Gospel already present. The Africa I met strengthened my trust in God. I was struck by the cordial welcome, the joy of sharing what little there is with the guest, the joy of meeting without keeping track of time. It is necessary to nurture in us a gaze of sympathy, respect, appreciation of the values of the cultures, of the traditions of the peoples we meet. This attitude helps to find more easily the appropriate language and gestures to communicate the Gospel ... [and] perceive the presence of a Kingdom of love that is being built, that grows like a mustard seed, of a Jesus who is present and given for all."

With gratitude, we remember Bernardetta, Olga, and Lucia. We believe that their life given up through the shedding of blood continues, together with that of many martyrs, to be the seed of new Christians and an example for all of us of how we love to the end, handing over "Everything."

Sister Elena Conforto, MMX





Sister Olga Raschietti, MMX



Sister Lucia Pulici, MMX



Sister Bernardetta Boggian, MMX



Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness

Good News in Japan

SISTER MARIA DE GIORGI MMX, WHO FOR MANY YEARS HAS BEEN WORKING IN THE FIELD OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AT THE SHINMEIZAN CENTER (JAPAN), HAS BEEN APPOINTED BY POPE FRANCIS AS CONSULTOR OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE. WE STAND WITH MARIA WISHING HER A FRUITFUL SERVICE TO THE CHURCH AND TO THE MISSION AND A RENEWED COMMITMENT IN HER FIELD OF WORK.

~Xaverian Missionaries of Mary

PHOTO:

MARIA DE GIORGI MMX WITH SOME PARTICIPANTS IN THE DHARMA AND LOGOS CONFERENCE, HELD IN ROME ON 15 MAY 2018, ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR ECUMENISM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE OF THE ITALIAN BISHOPS CONFERENCE.



World Mission News

“Making of the World One Family...”



VATICAN - AMIDST THE PANDEMIC, MISSION CONTINUES

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides)- At the beginning of the “Mission Month” of October, on the feast of St. Therese of Lisieux, Patroness of the missions, Tanzanian Archbishop and Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Protase Rugambwa, observed: “The missionaries are there, alongside those who suffer, all the more with the impact of the global crisis. We are called today to announce and give the love of God above all where there is suffering, misery, despair.”

In the difficulties caused by the pandemic around the world, generosity does not stop. In every continent, the commitment to raise awareness continued for the special collection of October 18 which constitutes the Universal Solidarity Fund that the Pontifical Mission Societies collect every year to carry out their work in support of the local Churches. In 2020, the contribution was also expressed through the special Emergency Fund set up by the Pope at the Pontifical Mission Societies, to help the communities affected by COVID-19.

In Africa meetings and moments of prayer and formation were held, without forgetting the proclamation of the Word through the visit that so many missionaries and religious make to isolated villages.

In the Americas, where Mission Day has a fruitful and ancient tradition, the commitment of the PMS is considerable in the production of material for animation, both printed and shared on the web. With the intensification of the campaign on social media, the awareness of parishes, movements and associations has grown.

In Asia, local communities, touched by the virus, show a resilience rooted in faith: “Like the apostles on a boat, on a stormy sea: we say to the Lord: we are dying. In this pandemic we experience the loving presence of Christ and we raise praise to him, so that he does not abandon us”, says Fr. Peter Susaimanickam, a priest of the diocese of Thanjavur, in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. “This is the heart of the announcement we address to everyone in the missionary month”.

In Oceania, the proclamation of the Gospel crosses the “maritime continent” and special missionary initiatives involve and see in particular young people as protagonists.

In Europe, the National Directions of the PMS have prepared paper and digital material to help Christian communities also live the personal dimension of mission: “Here I am, send me!”

The words of the Pope echo throughout the world: “The celebration of World Mission Day is also an occasion for reaffirming how prayer, reflection and the material help of your offerings are so many opportunities to participate actively in the mission of Jesus in his Church so Christ may be known and loved by all. We thank you for the gift of the missionary vocation. Forgive our betrayals to the charism received, and strengthen in us the desire and zeal to live the mission ad gentes, with a passionate family spirit.

USA NEWS

A new biography has recently been published about Fr. Francis Signorelli at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine. We wanted to share with you the expression of the gift of his missionary priesthood over many years all over the world. If you would like a copy let us know. We are asking for a minimum donation of ten dollars to help fund the work of the Fatima Shrine. Email holliston@xaverianmissionaries.org or call 508.429.2144.

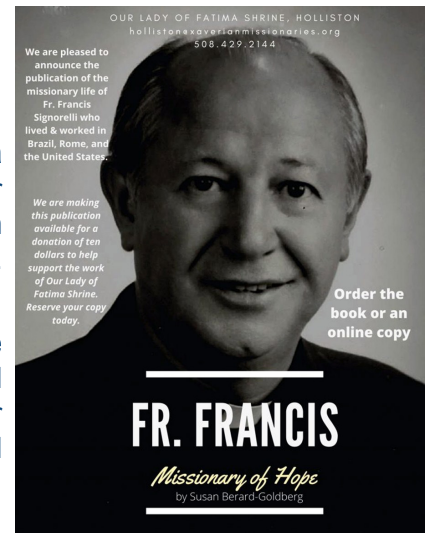
It is with great regret that the annual Festival of Lights at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine in Holliston will be cancelled this year due to the pandemic. This includes our annual Christmas Concert. Our Mass and Confession schedule will remain as usual. The Masses for Christmas will be at 8:00pm on December 24th and 11:00am on December 25th. People interested in attending these two Masses will have to call the office to register attendance. Space is limited due to the social distancing. Call 508.429.2144.

Our Confrere Pietro Rossini SX is collaborating with the Sant'Egidio Community of Boston in collecting and distributing clothing for the homeless. If you can help with this, contact Pietro at butros92@gmail.com.

~Fr. Rocco Puopolo, SX

Souls, beyond words! Br. Diego Acosta SX, has joined with us for a year to learn English. He is on his way to study and work in Asia. Here we see him here spending time with his first teacher. Sometimes, you could only wonder what each understood from the other but be sure that they had a terrific time! To be kind, welcoming, and nurturing, you need an open and kind heart. With deep gratitude to all who supported us through our On-line Auction and Fall Raffle!

~Fr. Alex Rodriguez, SX



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The holidays will soon be upon us and hopefully the new year will bring a vaccine. Let us remember our responsibility to keep each other safe during this time and our Christian commitment to share our resources and gifts with those in need. The only thing that should be contagious is kindness and the only thing we should spread is Christ's love.

~ Fr. Mark Marangone, SX

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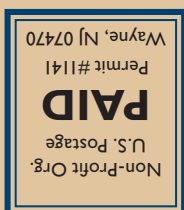




**THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES WISH YOU
A BLESSED CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!**

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