



Tuesday, June 13, 2023

n° 9

JOURNAL OF THE CHAPTER

The Kingdom of God is at hand.

Living and proclaiming the hope of the Gospel.

34TH GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE ASSUMPTIONISTS - JUNE 01-25, 2023

Tuesday June 13 begins with the results of the consultative vote for the General Treasurer on Monday June 12. The morning continues with a presentation of the work of the Justice and Peace Commission and a meeting with the Bayard Board of Directors.

In the afternoon, the Chapter begins by electing the Econome General, Secretary General and Procurator General. It then continued its work in Commissions (see the «Chapter Diary» of June 13).



Presentation of the work of the Justice and Peace Commission

The Justice and Peace Commission presented its first text to the Chapter, focusing on integral ecology as a sign of the Kingdom. It's a call to reflect on the root causes of the problems affecting our planet, a call to each and every one of us for a «daily conversion» that already begins in every community.

The text will be reworked to take account of the assembly's comments and suggestions.

Meeting with Bayard's Management Board, a mobilizing work

In the second half of the morning, the Chapter welcomes the Bayard Board of Directors: Pascal Ruffenach (Chairman), Florence Guémy, Jean-Marie Montel and Father André Antoni, AA, who joined Bayard in 1988 as a journalist, after having been Provincial of France, as a member of the Board until today.

They presented to the Chapter the raison d'être and mission of this «spiritual enterprise» or «œuvre entreprise», which celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. They use a «mook» to present Bayard in 80 words. They share the company's challenges: thinking in the long term, climate issues, digital issues, current events in the world and the Church.



Discussions with Chapter members focused on Bayard's international development and collaboration with communities in different countries.

(*) In September, a book will bring together contributions from a history symposium on the history of Bayard, which took place in March 2023.

Election of General Officers

General Treasurer



Yesterday afternoon, June 13, Father Alex Castro was elected General Treasurer. As he is not a member of the Chapter, the Superior General called him in Sturbridge (USA) to ask if he would accept his election.

Father Alex Castro was born in Manila (Philippines) on August 26, 1971.

He was a student of the Religious of the Assumption at the San Simon Technical School in Pampanga.

He went on to study languages, history and religious education at Ateneo de Manila University.

He made his novitiate at Saint Anne and Saint Patrick parish in Sturbridge (USA) and took his first vows on August 28, 2004.

Brother Alex Castro was one of the founders of the first Assumptionist community in the Philippines in January 2006. In 2009, he completed his theology studies at the University of Saint Thomas (UST) in Manila.

He was ordained a priest on November 12, 2011 by Bishop Luis Antonio Tagle at Our Lady of Pentecost parish in Manila (Philippines). Following his ordination, he was appointed to the United States.

From 2012 to 2014, he was assistant novice master at Augustine House in Worcester.

In 2014, he transferred to the Assumptionist Center in Brighton. There, he held various positions as Bursar of the US Delegation and Director of the Resident Program, as well as Chaplain of the Filipino Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Boston.

In 2017, he was appointed Provincial Treasurer and, in 2018, pastor and director of the Shrine of Saint Anne and Saint Patrick Parish in Fiskdale.

Secretary and Procurator General

Following the election of the General Treasurer, Father Michel was re-elected Secretary and Procurator General.

Father Michel Kubler was born on January 21, 1955 in Villé (Bas-Rhin, France).

He completed his secondary education at the Alumnat Sainte-Odile in Scherwiller and the Collège épiscopal Saint-Étienne in Strasbourg (Bas-Rhin). After completing an undergraduate degree in Mathematics-Physics at the Université Louis-Pasteur, he entered the Assumptionist novitiate in Strasbourg (1975). At the same time, he began studying theology, first in Strasbourg and then in Lyon, culminating in a doctoral thesis in theology, defended in 1988 at the Catholic University of Lyon, on the theme of «Christology and communication».

He was ordained priest on June 3, 1989 in Écully (Rhône) by Cardinal Albert Decourtray.

As his religious training progressed, Michel Kubler took on a variety of ministries: social work with Turkish families in Strasbourg (1974-1977), teaching mathematics at the Sibut minor seminary in the Central African Republic (1977-1979), and leading the national youth pilgrimage to Lourdes. From 1985 to 1988, he directed the Valpré welcome center in Écully (Rhône).

In September 1989, Father Michel Kubler was appointed to Bayard Presse. He joined the daily «La Croix» in November 1989, as a journalist in the Religion Department. From July 1997 to December 2009, he was the newspaper's religious editor-in-chief, succeeding Father Bruno Chenu.

In September 2010, he was appointed to Bucharest. Until June 2017, he is the director of the «Saint Pierre - Saint André» Center. Since 2010, he has been a member of the Groupe de Dombes.

During the 33rd General Chapter of 2017, he was elected Secretary General and Procurator General of the Congregation.



The Mission of the Procurator General

The mission conferred by the Rule of Life

In accord with the Superior General, the Procurator General is the channel of communication with the Pope and the Roman Congregations; he takes whatever steps are useful for the welfare of a religious, a Province or the Congregation (RL #132).

Principal activities

- Prepare, present, follow the dossiers presented to the Holy See or to the Superior General (assure that a dossier is complete; draw up a summary of the dossier; draw up the official document; communicate with the persons concerned);
- Respond to consultations made by the Superior General or by the vice/ Provincials (e-mail, letters, telephone);

- Study the electoral laws of the vice/ Provincials;
- Prepare the reports for the Ordinary General Council, the Plenary General Council, the General Chapter;
- Perform required transactions at the Vatican.
- Be an effective support for Provincials who seek advice or information.

A time to say thank you

After this round of elections, the new Superior General, Father Ngoa Ya Tshihemba, proposed that Chapter members take some time to say thank you to Father Benoît Grière, who is ending his term as Superior General.

Five thanks among many:

«I say thank you to Father Benoît for his love of the Assumption through his life, his letters so that we can live the love of Augustine, of Father d'Alzon. He took the risk of coming to see us in war-torn North Kivu.»

«I had never seen a Superior General cry. I saw him in the Andean Province and it marked me and my story. Not as a sign of weakness, but as a sign of fatherhood, so that his children might be saints, as Father d'Alzon wanted them to be. Thank you.»

«May the Lord keep you simple. Thank you for your letters of great depth to be exploited.»



«I want to thank him for his simplicity, humility and availability. Every time I wrote to him, he wrote back. I find humanity in him: he's always available to listen. To accompany us and give us advice.»

«I don't know how much insomnia he had because of our infidelities. In the name of my brothers who have made it difficult for him, I ask his forgiveness.»

Procedures for a text or motion proposed by a committee

1) Texts and motions prepared by a Committee shall first be presented to the General Assembly to be explained, interpreted, commented upon and clarified...

2) The Members shall then be allowed sufficient time to study the text. They may submit amendments to the Committee, individually or by group, but always in writing.

3) The Committee shall examine these proposals and amend its text accordingly. It shall then submit a copy of the amended text to each of the members as soon as possible.

4) In General Assembly the Committee shall justify its attitude and response to each proposed amendment.

The author of a rejected amendment may ask the Assembly to vote on the matter by show of hands.

5) Then discussion unfolds on the new text. Other amendments can then be presented, explained, discussed. Each one, after a straw vote by show of hands, is remanded to the Committee. After revising and amending its text, the Committee returns it to each of the members.

6) The text, so revised, comes back for the renewed discussion of the General Assembly. Only those amendments confirmed by at least ten members shall then be accepted. Once discussion is brought to a close, the text is voted on, according to the rules indicated in RL #115.

A typical day at the Chapter

In this second week of work

7h30-8h00 = Breakfast

8h-8h30 = Prayer + Lauds

9:30am - 10:30am = Plenary Assembly

10h30-11h = Break

11h-12h45 = Plenary session

13h = Lunch

15h - 16h30 = Plenary Assembly

16h30-17h = Break

17h - 18h30 = Plenary Assembly or Commission

19h = Eucharist and Vespers

20h = Dinner

Personal or Commission work

(The Coordination Commission meets every evening)



“Lord God, let our Congregation remain a place where the Gospel is proclaimed in season and out of season, awakening in us and around us the joy and the hope that your Spirit alone offers to humanity.

Prayer for the 34th General Chapter

Election of Superior General - Reactions



«After the election of Father Ngoa Ya Tshihemba, a religious from North Kivu, as Superior General of the Assumptionists, we feel not only a privilege from God, but also a call to greater co-responsibility

to support him. We have the impression that the planets are aligning to confirm the expectations formulated since the beginning of the General Chapter.

Already, Kivu has been at the center of several debates, including the flowering of vocations to the Assumption, the precarious security situation that would make Kivu a «laboratory for its mission», and the initiatives of the Lay-Religious Alliance in the midst of this abyss where the cause of God and man is strongly threatened.

These are prophetic signs for the Assumption and for us in Kivu: the Spirit speaks to us and challenges us to be not only empathetic to the cries of our contemporaries, but also bold in the initiatives we undertake. The election of Father Ngoa as Superior General is not a coincidence, but a logical follow-up that calls the Congregation to take a deeper look at its orientations for the next six years.» Eric Kihundo, lay Assumptionist, Goma (DR Congo) (participated in the first week of the General Chapter)



«To all our capitulants, our congratulations on the election of the new Supreme Moderator of our Congregation. May the Holy Spirit continue to assist you in the rest of your work. Our prayer for you is that you will be attentive to his calls while remaining docile to him.

To the new Superior General, may he trust in the One who is calling him to this new mission within our religious family, may he be assured of our prayers, and may he be courageous. As for his direct predecessor, our warmest congratulations on a mission well accomplished over 12 years. May the Holy Spirit bless him and his two councils.

Adveniat Regnum Tuum. For the Vicariate of Kinshasa, Vincent Kambere, AA.



«Congratulations to Father Ngoa. I just read it on Facebook. May God bless the AA Congregation and Father Ngoa's tenure.» John Recabar, Academic Director of Assumption Language College (ALC), Manila, Philippines



«I am delighted that Brother Ngoa has been elected the new Superior General of our Congregation. It's certainly a landmark event in your history, and we'll be measuring all its repercussions later on. May the Spirit manifest himself here and raise his breath in the sails. I would also like to thank Father Benoît for the work he has carried out over the past twelve years in a context of powerful changes and major challenges. I pray for him as his life takes a new direction.

I hope you will now write pages full of hope, during this second part of your Chapter. May the Gospel continue to inspire you!» Jean-Michel Couturier, Assumptionist layman, Lyon (France)



Father Bordeyne

program

JUNE 14

Morning

- Producing theologians for the Church today» by Father Philippe Bordeyne (*)
- Presentation of Vows / Approval of texts + Various papers

Afternoon

- Discussions with the Assistants + Consultative vote
- Presentation of the text from the «Youth and Vocation» commission

(*) Moral theologian, dean of the Theologicum at the Catho de Paris from 2006 to 2011, rector of the Institut Catholique de Paris from 2011 to 2021, expert at the synods on the family (2015) and on youth (2018), president of the John Paul II Institute for the Sciences of Marriage and the Family.

TO FOLLOW THE WORK OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER

- Congregation website www.assumptio.org updated by Father Marcelo Marciel: <marcelomarciel1@gmail.com>
- Facebook pages: Assumption General Chapter
- Youtube : Augustiniani ab Assumptione

- Take part in the «Readers' Mail» in this «Chapter Diary» by asking questions, reacting to the work of the capitulants (bernardholzeraa@gmail.com) or on Facebook.

MEDIA COVERAGE

La Croix» newspaper, June 12, 2023

Vatican News dispatch:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/fr/eglise/news/2023-06/le-pere-ngo-ya-tshihemba-nouveau-superieur-des-assomptionnistes.html>

Cathobel, website of the Belgian Bishops' Conference

<https://www.cathobel.be/.../les-assomptionnistes-ont-elu.../>

Zenith, June 13, 2023

<https://fr.zenit.org/2023/06/13/augustins-de-lassomption-p-ngo-ya-tshihemba-elu-superieur-general/>



«Journal of the Chapter»

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