



Wednesday, June 21, 2023

n. 15

# 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

## Commission work

The Commissions' texts on the orientations for the next six years follow one another. They are discussed and amended at the plenary meeting. Some texts are in their first version (V1), most in their second version (V2). Work intensifies on Wednesday. We're feeling a little tired, but morale remains high. Everyone is working hard... It's all about the Kingdom.

Please continue to pray for a successful conclusion to this 34th General Chapter.

«Lord God, source of all life, we come to entrust our congregation and all its activities to you. May we experience your love and presence in our lives, in the lives of our brothers and sisters in the Church and in the world. Help us to realize that your Kingdom is near, and to hasten to become true artisans of it».

### **Governance and community organization (V2)**

«To become a Vice-Province, the question is not just «How many are there?» or «How much money do they have?» The main criterion for autonomy becomes the ability to develop charisma.» - Father Jean-Paul Musangania, CIFA Kinshasa (DR Congo).

«Formation, preparation for mission, interdependence... all these factors mean that our relationship with the Province of Europe will remain good, if not become even better.» - Father Georges Houssou, Superior of the Vicariate of West Africa.

### **Accompanying God's people (V1)**

«We accompany, but we also let ourselves be accompanied by the people of God, wherever we are.» - Father Marcelo Marciel, former Assistant General  
«In view of the congregation's investment in parishes, pilgrimages and welcome centers... these places must say something to the congregation as a whole. They are places of creativity that seek out people, not just to let them come to us. Parish involvement is a good

thing, but it's not enough to express what's at stake for our missionary drive. - Father Dominique Greiner, editor-in-chief of «La Croix», Paris.

### **Mobilizing works (V2)**

At this stage, 9 mobilizing works have been proposed. The Chapter insists on the importance of an evaluation of what has been undertaken, and on a finer definition of mobilizing works in line with the Congregation's charism and mission.

### **Missionary character of the Congregation (V2)**

Two topics in particular were discussed: the CAFI experience and the encouragement of meetings between African and Asian religious.

### **Economic affairs (V2)**

The economy at the service of charism and mission.

### **Youth and Vocations (V3)**

### **Education (V2)**

## Father Alberto's Listening Points



«In these documents on accompanying the people of God, a «missionary verb» recurs in connection with all Assumption activities: «to accompany».

Father d'Alzon was an evangelizer, he wanted to make himself all things to all people: «I cannot repeat too often, my dear brothers, that we must make ourselves all things to all people. And that's why we have to do our utmost to connect with the people. And that's why it seems to me that we must make every effort to help the people. It was through the evangelization of the poor that the evangelization of the world began. In this respect, let us be faithful to our vocation». (Spiritual Writings 163, 3)

# Discovering the CIFA (International Assumptionist Formation Communities)



## 5 questions to Father Dominic Kamau Muturi Formator at the CIFA Nairobi, First Assistant of the Vice- Provincial of East Africa

### Who are you?

My name is Dominic Kamau Muturi. I am 42 years old. I was born in Murang'a County, in the diocese of Murang'a, Kenya, into a family of farmers that also deals with small livestock. In 2006, I did my novitiate at Kizito House in Arusha, Tanzania. And I studied theology at Tangaza College in Nairobi. I was ordained a priest on August 14, 2017. After a six-year experience in parishes in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, I was appointed formator at Austin House in Arusha, Tanzania and since 2022 I have been a formator at the CIFA Nairobi.

### What is CIFA Nairobi?

The CIFA of Nairobi, founded in 2014, is today a house of formation that welcomes 21 (16 brothers doing theology, 2 studying English in preparation for theology and 3 brothers doing specialized studies) young

religious from eight countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Madagascar, Congo (DRC), Burkina, Nigeria and Cameroon, with a team of three formators: two Congolese and me, a Kenyan. At the beginning of the next school year, a formator from Madagascar will join us.

### For you, what is the strength of a CIFA?

It brings together religious from different countries, different cultures, who discover that they have the same goal, the coming of the Kingdom and the construction of a new world. By adapting to another environment, by gradually detaching themselves from their own, they learn to overcome nationalism and cultural barriers. They open up to other realities, become more flexible, and learn to live together. Little by little, they enter a new culture, that of the Kingdom where there is «neither Jew nor Greek» but brothers who seek Christ together.

### Did you have any special formation?

I did not take any specialized training after philosophy and theology studies. Community experience in formation houses, at Austin House in Arusha and here in Nairobi, and experience in cultures other than my own prepared me for this responsibility. I am currently taking online training in management where I am learning to be attentive to the inner resources of each religious and the differences that can become wealth.

### A joy?

That of seeing brothers adapt in new environment, adopt other brothers, grow up and get ready for the building of a new world where Christ is King.



## Testimony of Father Joachim Mpozembizi Ssentongo

Parish priest at Saint Charles Lwanga parish in Kyabakadde, Uganda, responsible for vocational ministry and school chaplain. He is 35 years old. He is the youngest of the capitulants. He has lived at the CIFA in Kinshasa.

The CIFA is a school where Assumptionist religious experience and learn to live the fundamental Assumptionist virtues of loving and being loved.

The CIFA is a necessity for the Assumption today. It is a school adapted to learning our missionary character as Assumptionists of our time. The CIFA allows religious to get to know each other as members of the same family and to learn not only to live together but also to work together for the mission of the Church and the Congregation.

I am a pure and proud product of the CIFA. It has enabled me to learn languages: French and Lingala, to adapt to other cultures, to experience Christ's Church outside my comfort zone. I call on all Assumptionist religious to love the CIFA, and I encourage our major superiors to promote the CIFA, giving young religious in initial formation the chance to discover and benefit from this immense Assumptionist richness.

# Initiatives you should know about

## A course on living interculturality and a session.

In 2023, a team of Assumptionist religious and lay people, at the initiative of the European University of the Assumption (UEA) and Fr. Benoît Bigard, launched a MOOC (online course) on a platform to tackle the reality of interculturality in the Congregation.

Led by Fr. Vincent Leclercq (General Secretary for Formation), the team spent two years preparing a dozen modules to be followed in groups with a facilitator.

In addition, a three-day session, from October 6 to 8, open to all, will be held at the Petites Soeurs de l'Assomption, rue Viollet, Paris. The title of the session is: «Comprendre l'autre, ça s'apprend» («Understanding others, it can be learned»).

A tribute to Father Bruno Chenu will take place on Saturday October 7, with a concert of Negro Spirituals.

Information: [robert.migliorini@assomption.org](mailto:robert.migliorini@assomption.org)



## African Integration Journeys (V.I.A)



Launched in 2009 by the Assumptionists in West Africa, the African Integration Journeys aim to transmit to African youth the ideal of a plural Africa, integrated and united on religious, cultural and political levels. These trips are called «African integration» trips because their approach is intercultural, interreligious, educational and pan-African. The main objectives of these trips are :

- Promote the integration of peoples and cultures
- Develop a culture of encounter and dialogue among young people
- Sensitize young people to the virtues of diversity and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, based on the paradigm of a plural humanity where diversity and intercultural dialogue are mutually reinforcing;
- Strengthen the pan-African vision of youth in the face of terrorism, fundamentalism and religious extremism.
- Strengthen young people's capacities for peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution through the promotion of intercultural and inter-religious education.

For further information: [sagadoujeanpaul@gmail.com](mailto:sagadoujeanpaul@gmail.com)

Yesterday, the Holy See published the «Instrumentum Laboris» of the Synod for a Synodal Church next October. It will undoubtedly accompany these final days of Chapter on issues such as governance, formation, climate change, migrants, collaboration with the laity, abuses, how to proclaim and live the Gospel...

«In a synodal assembly, Christ makes himself present and acts (...) Those who gather in Christ's name listen to his Word, listen to one another, discern in docility to the Spirit, proclaim what they have heard and recognized as light for the Church's journey.»

«What is the attitude with which we approach the world? Do we recognize the good in it and, at the same time, commit ourselves to prophetically denouncing everything that undermines the dignity of people, human communities and Creation?»

# First impressions

As the Chapter enters its final days, some of the capitulants share their first impressions with us



**Father Roger Kasereka**  
Syayipuma, parish priest in Goma  
(DR Congo)

«I've been taking part in General Chapters since 2005. For me, the General Chapter is a «kairos» (a favorable time) to give thanks to the Lord for our vocation and our mission to live and work together for ART in following Christ. It's a «kairos» to evaluate the action of God's Spirit in our lives, and to dream and discern together under the impulse of the same Spirit the calls of the world to better live our charism as a gift to the universal Church, a gift shared with the laity in the wake of Fr. d'Alzon.»

**Father Ephrem Kapitula,**  
First Assistant of the  
Province of Africa

«At my third General Chapter, I had a unique, special experience: the huge number of "primo-capitulants", the central place of prayer, the colors of moderation! The new General Council reflects the colors of the Assumption: an African General and a Madagascan Assistant, a true sign of internationality and interculturality - a sign of «change», the presence of an accompanist, Father Alberto Toutin (Superior General of the Picpus Fathers). Ephrem, a.a. Despite the size of the challenges, the climate is good, synodal, a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. We have moved on from the «Convictions - Findings - Orientations» method to that of «Proximity and signs of the Kingdom - Urgencies of the Kingdom - Making the Kingdom happen». Isn't this a true dynamic of synodality advocated by Pope Francis to «germinate dreams, arouse prophecies and visions, make hopes blossom...».



**Program**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21ST**

**Morning**

- Formation Commission
- Justice and Peace Commission
- Voting on texts (Governance and community organization, Youth and vocations, Economic affairs, Education, Communication and the digital continent, Abuse...)

**Afternoon**

- Lay-religious alliance
- Mission d'Orient
- Speech by Cardinal J.-M. Aveline

**Evening**

Work in Commissions

## TO FOLLOW THE WORK OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER

- Congregation website [www.assumptio.org](http://www.assumptio.org) updated by Father Marcelo Marciel: <marcelomarcie1@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](mailto:bernardholzeraa@gmail.com)) or on Facebook.



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