



# 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

## Ready for the marathon of the commissions

*“Lord God, give all of us, religious and lay Assumptionists, a strong faith and renewed creativity so that we do not desert your will and your calls, while the world often claims to be able to move forward without You.”*

Prayer for the 34th General Chapter

Yesterday was marked by an exchange of views on the importance today of the formation - the «production» - of theologians for the Church and the world, especially for a Congregation that includes the doctrinal dimension in its charism, and by the start of the marathon of the Commissions. Their work will shape the Congregation's priorities for the next 6 years, as well as the program of its general government. The latter will be completed before the end of the week. Thy Kingdom come!

## Meeting with Mgr Philippe Bordeyne

Yesterday, the capitulants welcomed Mgr. Philippe Bordeyne. 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), he is currently the president of the St. John Paul II Pontifical Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. The subject of his talk: «Producing theologians today for the Church».

### 1. The challenges of time and competition

11. The long-term nature of research

and the challenge of acceleration and communication

12. Competition with other church services

13. An opportunity to live theology responsibly

### 2. Living interculturality in a global Church

21. A theology that practices receiving the Gospel with the gift of cultures

22. An alliance to be found between narratives, debates and critical thinking

23. Theologians “walking on two legs”

### 3. Living out the diversity and synergy of ministries

31. Synodal path: God's people organized into different ministries

32. Bishops and theologians: issues of power, language and collaboration

33. The grace of religious life lived in a charism of communication

«In a changing world, there is an urgent need for theological work. But it's not just a question of training theologians. We also need to enable them to exercise this ministry over the long term! Doing theology takes time. The Assumption must protect its theologians. And we're fortunate to have a congregation that's involved in the media and journalism: to make theology communicable.» Father Dominique Greiner AA



## Discussion on Assistants and indicative vote

In the afternoon, the capitulants discussed with the new Superior General the profile of the Assistants, the criteria for their choice and their number. The capitulants decided to give the Superior General 4 Assistants. They then proceeded to an indicative vote, putting 4 names on a ballot paper.

The list of names obtained allows further discernment. The vote on the Assistants will take place later this week.



## Orientations - Commission working method

«Are we where we should be? Are we as we should be?»

**1. Proximity and signs of the Kingdom**  
(welcoming elements that are already there!)

Example 1: The Assumption fraternity (with lay people and the Assumption family)

Example 2: The path in covenant with the laity

**2. Kingdom emergencies**

Example 1: The cry of the earth and the poor

Example 2: Intercultural fraternity (Cf. «Fratelli Tutti»)

**3. Bringing the Kingdom into being**  
(Cf. The «extra step»)

Example 1: Creating places and structures to welcome migrants

Example 2: Encouraging the creation of international communities, places of witness to universal brotherhood

## Commission of Proposals

After examining the motions, proposals and suggestions freely sent to the Chapter by religious, communities, lay Assumptionists and Provinces, the members of the Commission presented their report to the capitulants.

Several of the proposals concern the Alliance with the lay in relation to governance and organization with the laity. Others concern formation and interculturality.

A lay person suggests that the Congregation pray one day a week, through the intercession of Father Emmanuel d'Alzon, for peace in Kivu. A vow calls for the promotion of pilgrimage and shrine activities. The Province of Europe asks the Chapter to examine the possibility of a foundation in the Ukraine as soon as the situation permits. These requests will be examined by the Commissions that have been set up.

### Word of the day

from Father Ngoa Ya Tshihemba, Superior General

*«I receive a lot of messages, especially from the Congo. My mother was told: 'Your son has become a General'. She replied: 'Then he's no longer a priest! She thought I'd joined the army!'*

## Presentation of the text of the «Youth and Vocations» Commission

The text from the «Youth and Vocations» Commission is the second to be presented to the capitulants, following yesterday's text from the «Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation» Commission. It gave rise to a debate on its content and on the working method of the Commissions.

The challenge: not too many texts, but concrete guidelines - «further steps» - that take into account the very different cultural, social and ecclesial contexts in which we live. How can we live unity in and through difference? The Chapter is at the beginning of the road...

The capitulants experience the unprecedented synodal path defined by Pope Francis himself:

«the purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to «germinate dreams, arouse prophecies and visions, make hopes blossom, stimulate trust, heal wounds, weave relationships, resurrect a dawn of hope, learn from one another, and create a positive imagination that illuminates minds, warms hearts, restores strength to hands»  
(32)

“Will our Assumptionist “little family” be able to remain for the Church and for the world this seed inhabited by the sap of the Gospel? Once again, when and how? At what rhythm or speed will it grow?

That depends above all on God’s decision. For us, the only duty that counts is this: where I’ve been planted, do I know how to be a presence of the Kingdom? Is the Kingdom of God drawing near in the land where we are planted? Does ‘my religious life have a taste of the Kingdom’, as Benoît Grière challenged us in his Letter on the Kingdom (#11)?”

Julian Dancă, during his recollection at the General Chapter, June 4, 2023

## READERS' LETTERS

«It is a great joy to see Father Ngoa elevated to the responsibility of Superior General by his brothers. His career testifies to the solidarity of the Provinces in the face of future challenges, and to communities united by the charism of the Assumption. Together with the General House team, he will have to «firmly establish interculturality», an invitation made in his predecessor’s report. A native of North Kivu, an exposed and committed region, he testifies to the urgency and necessity of the Assumption’s presence in places where migrants are welcomed, in parishes, in colleges and universities, as well as at the heart of the media, in many countries. All lay assumptionists are proud of this appointment, a sign of the vitality of vocations in the countries of the South. It shows that the Assumption is gifted for «fraternity without borders». - Georges Sanerot



«When I arrived on Malagasy soil, it was a nice surprise to receive this good news from a Superior General of North Kivu origin.

It was like turning a new page in the life of the Congregation. We’ve talked a lot about the shift to the South. It’s a reality and a challenge, and this election shows the way. I hope that the initial pace of this shift will not be too rapid, by putting in place a balanced team from North and South. May unity in diversity form a fraternal richness for the Congregation.» - Agnès Vololoniaina, lay Assumptionist, Fianarantsoa (Madagascar)



«It will soon be half a century that I have been a fellow traveler with the Assumptionist Congregation, via the Bayard group where I spent my entire career. I have known five General Superiors, four of them French. And now, at the end of their General Chapter, the Augustinians of the Assumption have chosen as their new Superior General a Congolese (who spent time in Mexico, and is currently novice master in the Philippines). A fine image of the universality of the Catholic Church, and a fine symbol of the courage to take note of the current contours of mission. Hats off to them! We can now look forward to the appointments that will follow: members of his Council, Provincial Superiors, the Congregation’s representative on Bayard’s (new) Board of Directors...». René Poujol, Saint-Affrique (France), on his Facebook page.



«Greetings to all the capitulating brothers! I’m scribbling a few lines to say thank you first of all for the noble work you have done for our Congregation. You have given us a young General full of energy, trained and open to all the cultures of the four continents. Thank you very much! Congratulations to our brother Ngoa. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and assist you in the heavy responsibilities that await you. Take heart, our prayers and brotherhood support you on your way. Sincere thanks to our brother Benoît Grière who led us for 12 years in patience, humility, openness to internationality and interculturality. Thank you and all the best for the future. Jean-Pierre Radimilahy, AA, Sokodé (Togo)



### Program

THURSDAY JUNE 15

#### Morning

- Community Structure and Organization» Commission
- Mobilizing Works Commission + Approval of minutes

#### Afternoon

- Formation Commission
- Work in the Commissions

#### Evening

- Election of 2 General Assistants



### Program

FRIDAY JUNE 16

#### Morning

- Charism Commission: Postulation, archives...
- Missionary Character of the Congregation Commission (Missionary Disciples)
- Oriental Mission Commission + Approval of texts

#### Afternoon

- Education Commission
- Work in Commissions

#### Evening

- Election of 2 General Assistants



# DRC: Cardinal Tagle calls for peace in Goma

A «lasting peace for us, for our children and for their children».

ZENIT, JUNE 14, 2023, BY MARINA DROUJININA

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization and special papal envoy to the Third National Eucharistic Congress of the Church of the DRC (June 4-11), launched an appeal for peace and reconciliation, arriving in Goma, in the province of North Kivu, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, reports the Vatican agency "Fides". [...]

In his homily during the Mass celebrated on Tuesday June 13, 2023 in the church of Notre-Dame du Mont Carmel, Cardinal Tagle spoke of the situation in North Kivu, noting that some of the readings from the day's liturgy «seem to be addressed precisely to the Church of Goma». These include the Gospel passage in which Christ calls his disciples to be «salt of the earth and light of the world» (Mt 5:13-16).

«Every baptized person, every family, every school, every hospital, every parish, every ecclesial organization and movement, every religious community and every priest», said the cardinal, «is called to be the light of the world in Goma», is called to forgiveness and reconciliation, and to «lasting peace for us, for our children and for their children».

The pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization pointed out that many people «in Goma and North Kivu» lead «insipid, bitter, hard-to-swallow lives». «Some people see others as spoiled or rotten food to be thrown away,» he noted. He hoped they would find a new «flavor» through Christ: «Through our compassion, humble love and service in Jesus' name,» he said, «we hope that many people will experience Jesus and find new meaning or 'flavor' in their lives.»



## 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.



«Journal of the Chapter»

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