

2023, October (no. 5)



OASIS 2023

Participants with the General Superior, Anamators and
Facilitators, after the profession of their covenant.

Herewith we present to you the fifth issue of IGC in 2023, which
will inform you about the following:

- * Reflection on Life of Communion and Appostolate
- * News from Provinces: Professions in Ghana
- * Report FIC Journey to Spiritual Enrichment 2023
- * Multiday Meeting General Council, the Netherlands
- * In Memoriam
- * Special Birthdays

Life of Communion and Apostolate

(From the Synod of Bishops, The Vatican 1994)

The charism of the apostolate is a common patrimony. All members of an institute or society participate in it by their vocation, and are open to its sanctifying activity. In this way, they form a community, a group organized in common life and works, bearing public witness to divine charity in the church and in the world. Here, there is a true shared responsibility, even if lived according to the various functions performed.



Fraternal life in common cannot be separated from apostolic activity, otherwise a dangerous separation would result. Apostolic activity is essentially communal, even when it is performed by individual members.

Christ is the origin of fraternal life in community and of apostolic mission. Christ calls to himself those whom he chooses and invites them to extend his mission in the world. Therefore, the basis of their being gathered in a single apostolic activity is their love for Christ, who calls individuals and sends them on a communal mission.

There must be a growing awareness that the apostolic mission is given as a charism by Christ, first and foremost, to the founder or foundress. This is a collective charism passed on to each member and to individual communities only through the institute which extends the charism in time. The individual mission comes from Christ but is part of the church's one hierarchical mission, in communion with the pope and the college of bishops, and is mediated by the institute because it is a share in a common mission.

Therefore, every member is personally responsible for fulfilling this mission and ought to live the specific mission he has received from the superiors as the mission of the whole institute. The mission given by the superior in the name of the institute guarantees that the activity performed by the individual or a particular community is consistent with the mission of the whole institute in communion with the universal and particular church.

First Professions Ghana



Professions and ceremonies of transition are significant events in the life of the FIC Brothers. On the 7th of September, 2023, we witnessed the first profession of Religious vows of three of our brothers, namely Bros. Kyiileyang Frederick, Aabeyir John Vianne and Prince Kob. The Eucharistic celebration which had the theme “Call to Serve”, took place in the In- Service Training Centre (ISTC) Chapel, Wa.

The Provincial Superior, Bro. Seregious Dery, on behalf of the General Superior, received the vows of the newly professed brothers, in the presence of a large number of the brothers in the province.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided by Very Rev. Fr. Pamphilio Tengan, Dean of Wa, and attended by family members, relatives and friends of the three candidates, a good number of priests, religious and the laity. The previous evening the FIC Brothers witnessed some ceremonies of transition of candidates in initial formation and renewal of vows of temporary professed brothers. This Eucharistic celebration also occasioned the end of the annual common retreat of the Brothers in Ghana.

Very Rev. Fr. Pamphilio in his homily exhorted the three Brothers to embrace their Religious Life with all the seriousness that it deserves, paying adequate attention to prayer and community life. He encouraged them to radiate the joy of the Gospel to all those who will come into direct contact with them in the course of their apostolic duties.

The three newly professed Brothers have already reported to their new communities. Bro. John Aabeyir has been sent to Sunyani community where he will reside and pursue Electrical Engineering course at the Sunyani Technical University. Bro. Prince is posted to Bernardus Community, Tumu. He is to take up his apostolic task at St. Clare's Technical Institute in the Electrical engineering Department as part time teacher. Bro. Frederick has joined the Mt. Zion community in Nandom. He will assist the teaching staff of the FIC Jubilee School.

Bro. Prosper Ganye

Report FIC Journey to Spiritual Enrichment 2023

The official opening of the *FIC Journey to Spiritual Enrichment 2023* began with a Eucharistic celebration in the evening of 1 October at the CB Sisters house complex called “Önder de Bogen”. The Eucharist was led by Msgr. Everard De Jong. He expressed admiration for the work of Brothers in general and the FIC Congregation in particular for their mission in the church. The three-week program, also called “Oasis gathering” had the theme **“Called Together and Sent to be the Bearers of Good News in a Joyful Life”**. Some guests from the Religious House Netherlands (RHN), were invited for the opening. These include fellow brothers, associated members and co-workers.

In the official opening address, the General Superior, Bro. Augustine Kubdaar, outlined the programme for the next three weeks as follows: “In the first week, you (the Brothers) will be guided to understand more profoundly ‘our identity as human, Christian and as FIC Brothers’. In the second and third weeks, you will reflect on ‘The Spirituality of our Founders and our core mission.’ You will have the opportunity to visit some historical sites of our Founders and fellow Brothers who have gone before us. The three-week long program will be summed up in a composition of a personal covenant with God, and I pray you do so with hope, conviction, and trust.”



This congregational exercise is made up of three phases, each involving a number of spiritual exercises. The preparation for this “Oasis gathering” started last July in our provinces where the program was launched. The “Oasis gathering” that is currently taking place here in Maastricht, is the second stage. The third consists of a follow-up exercises when they return to their provinces. The most significant experience is the physical presence of participants in the cradle of the congregation as it brings them in close contact with the spirit of our Founders.



In terms of content, the first week focussed on our identity, and this includes sharing of personal stories and symbols, vocation stories, discussions on who I am as a human being, Christian and Religious. Hence topics like *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the church*, *Dealing with stress as religious* and *Growing towards Psychological and Spiritual maturity* were highly required. The second week was dedicated to the Pilgrimage program which includes visits to some of the historical places of the Congregation. These include the birthplace of Msgr. Louis Rutten, Saint Matias Church, where our Founder said his first Mass after his priestly ordination, and Saint Servatius Basilica, where he started his catechism classes.

The rest are a visit to the “Red Lion”, where the congregation began, De Beyart and finally the final resting place of our Founders at Anjoulaan. These visits were carefully blended with some input on the Spirituality of the our Founders, Msgr. Louis Rutten and Bro. Bernardus Hoecken. At each of these historical places, we spent time to reflect and pray for our Founders, and for their selfless dedication to the needs of the youth.

Having gone through a very hectic week of pilgrimage to historical places associated with the lives and works of our Founders, observing a day out was more than welcome news. This certainly would offer an opportunity to recreate, relax and prepare for the coming days. The outing was a boat trip on River Maas from St. Servaas bridge through the new Ceramique district and a number of canals. Just before the Belgian border, the boat turned back towards the centre of Maastricht, and finally ended at the St. Servatius Bridge, the oldest bridge in the Netherlands, named after St. Servatius, the first Bishop of Maastricht, who died in 384.

Our concentration in the final week was on FIC mission as radiated by our Founders. So the following topics were scheduled, among others *the identity of FIC according to our Founders*, *The development of FIC charism*, *The style of leadership of our Founders*, *Apostolic mission*, *prayer and community life*, and finally, a reflection on *Mary’s Immaculate Conception*. We drew the resource persons from the General Council members, the Animators, and Bro. Johan Muijtjens.

Our visit to De Beyart, our Mother house, was very special. After we were conducted around the facility, both outside and inside, we spent some time with our elderly Brothers in the recreation hall of Bernardus community. The whole afternoon of the day was devoted to Mary, our Patroness. We began with a reflective prayer on Mary at the meeting center before moving back to De Beyart. This time, we had a special Marian devotion with the elderly brothers in De Beyart chapel.

The Oasis participants expressed their devotion to Mary in their different cultures as found in Indonesia, Ghana, Malawi, Netherlands and Chile. So, that afternoon the OASIS participants and the brothers at De Beyart celebrated the richness of our culture in praising Mary, our Patroness.

De Beyart was originally built as a motherhouse for the FIC brothers. Currently, De Beyart has been transferred to a different owner, and now mostly functions as a residence for the elderly.

The current residents of De Beyart consist of FIC Brothers, religious Sisters, and lay people. Today, De Beyart is no longer owned by the FIC Congregation. It has become the property of a Foundation that organizes care for elderly people.

Participants had a positive impression on the gathering. Even though language was a challenge in this Oasis, this did not deter the brothers from the pleasant expression of our Brotherhood expressed through the daily Eucharistic celebrations, prayer services, meals, recreation and other informal interactions. The gathering led to an increase in participants' sense of purpose, new insights into our charism and a better understanding of the Spirituality of our Founders. As said by one participant, "the experiences gained through the visit to historical places of our Founders will help us to live the struggles of our present time."

During the Eucharistic celebration that brought the gathering to a close, the Superior General Bro. Augustine Kubdaar advised participants to "consistently put your rich experiences into practice and at the service of your fellow brothers and all the people you will meet in life." He assured them they "would find a great source of energy and motivation to continue with your spiritual journey if you can integrate your experience from this program properly." After this he declared the Oasis gathering officially closed.

Bro. Raphael Besigrinee

Multi-day meeting General Council

From 19 - 22 September 2023 the GC held its second multi-day meeting of the year at the Charles Borromeo Sisters' facility "Onder de Bogen". For over three months, all GC members were away for various assignments, namely Canonical visit, Congregational Conference and Formators' meeting, all in Indonesia. It was only by the middle of September that the GC became complete again. Among others, this meeting was used to do an evaluation of the three events that took place in Indonesia.

One urgent congregational event that was fast approaching was the FIC Journey to Spiritual Enrichment 2023, also known as the "Oasis gathering". Based on the schedule made by the coordinator of the international gathering, the final preparation was completed. The first part of the exercise was underway in our provinces or had already been completed. We spent this time to do the final preparations for the second part of the Spiritual Journey program which include a visit of the participants to Maastricht, the cradle of the FIC Congregation. Fourteen participants were being prepared to take part in this Oasis gathering.



The Canonical visit of the General Council to Chile has also been on the drawing board for some time. This too was given the needed attention. From 24 October until 19 November 2023, Bros. Augustine and Raphael will be in Chile for this visit. They will have the opportunity to attend the celebration of the 70th anniversary of FIC presence in Chile. As done in the other provinces, the procedure will be the same for Chile, among others, the same theme will be used namely “Closeness as a culture of encounter with God and people”.

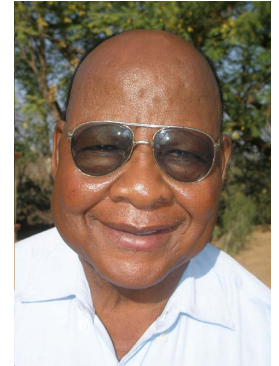


Lastly, the GC made some initial preparations for next year's General Chapter, in terms of the venue and date. After some serious deliberation we reached agreement that the General Chapter 2024 will be held at the In-service Training Centre in Ghana from 4 until 24 August.

In Memoriam

Brother Peter Saatuo

Peter was born on April 6, in Dangko. He made his first profession on September 15, 1966 and his final profession on February 24, 1973. He passed away on October 30, 2023 in Wa, Ghana.



Special Birthdays

December

- 15 Jos van Dinther (75) - Accra
- 25 Yohanes Krismanto (50) - Talca-San Antonio

January

- 6 Nicholas Yangtibr (85) - Wa-St Louis Community
- 8 Kees Gordijn (80) - Maastricht, Prins Bisschopsingel
- 10 Godwin Kuu-ireme (50) - Nandom-Mt Sion Community
- 14 Frans Turkenburg (90) - Maastricht-Bernardus
- 24 Michael Poedyartana (85) - Jakarta-Haji Nawi
- 28 Ivo Heatubun (75) - Limbe-Mary View