

# Familia Comboniana

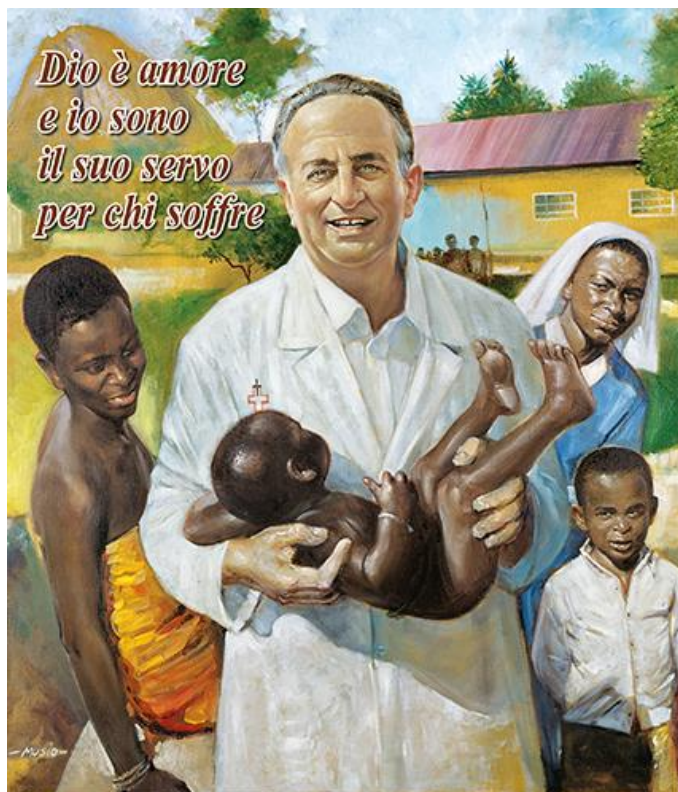
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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBONI MISSIONARIES OF THE HEART OF JESUS

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812

November 2022



**BEATO**  
**GIUSEPPE AMBROSOLI**

*missionario comboniano - sacerdote e medico*

25-7-1923 Ronago (Como) — 27-3-1987 Lira (Uganda)

Beatificazione 20 novembre 2022, Kalongo (Uganda)

## **Looking forward to the Beatification of Fr. Giuseppe Ambrosoli**

The Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe is now close and this year should have a particular flavour for every Combonian: the Church has chosen this date to honour Fr. Giuseppe Ambrosoli. We want to raise him up a little higher, without however detaching him from us, with the intention of illuminating the field of mission and certifying the goodness of the event of missionary holiness, which always aims to bring people, in some way touched by the proclamation of salvation, to the full maturity of Christ. In Uganda, everything is being prepared so that the ceremony of the beatification of Fr. Giuseppe can take place in a spiritual atmosphere as befits the person being celebrated whose spiritual stature is equal to his great simplicity and humility as well as to his multifaceted preparation and experience in the fields of surgery and obstetrics.

Looking back at this whole beatification event, we can say that it was God who set the agenda. First of all, the place (we let the local Church choose, which kept faith with his choice of the small town of Kalongo). Gulu would have been easier, perhaps even more prestigious, but the 31 years spent in Kalongo by Fr. Giuseppe prevailed, which well represents the radical choice of the "mission in the peripheries".

Divine Providence also chose the year (2022), despite the pandemic creating more and more difficulties for us and falling behind schedule. The Lord also chose who should represent the Holy Father to preside over the ceremony, namely the Cardinal of Como, Oscar Cantoni, who is the bishop of the diocese where Fr. Ambrosoli received that splendid spiritual and professional formation that allowed him to engage in complete and effective missionary action. Finally, he also chose the most suitable instrument, who would work alongside our confreres in Uganda and the local Church of Gulu to obtain support when needed, Fr Cosimo de Iaco. Fr Cosimo, as a person deeply familiar with the place and the local languages, gave an exemplary hand and guided matters so that everything could be done with true spiritual participation and liturgical dignity. Another no less important gift of Providence can also be seen in the fact that the parish of Kalongo has always been entrusted to the Comboni Missionaries and now more than ever after the beatification of Fr Ambrosoli. An honour but also a burden!

The ceremony of the beatification in Kalongo will be broadcast in Italy via streaming by the non-profit association "Lights in the world" of Verona. Later we will see how to celebrate the event among ourselves. (continued on p. 11)

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### GENERAL NOTES 5<sup>TH</sup> CONSULTA (October)

#### HOLY SEE APPOINTMENT

##### **NEW Bishop of Kotido**

On 25 October 2022, the Holy Father appointed our confrere Fr. **Dominic Eibu**, presently a member of the Egypt-Sudan Province, as Bishop of Kotido. Mons. Eibu succeeds Mons. Giuseppe Filippi who became Bishop of the diocese in 2009. The General Council wishes Mons. Dominic Eibu a fruitful episcopal ministry, assuring him of the prayers of the Institute for him and his new ministry. It also thanks Mons. Giuseppe Filippi for his long service as pastor in the land of Karamoja.

#### APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

##### **Appointment of Circumscription Superiors**

The General Council, following the electoral indications of the confreres and the consultations made, has appointed the following confreres as Superiors of the respective circumscriptions for the triennium 2023-2025.

##### **Provinces**

Brasil	Fr. Raimundo Nonato Rocha dos Santos
Congo	Fr. Ndjadi Ndjate Léonard
DSP	Fr. Grabmann Hubert Josef
Spain	Fr. Llamazares González Miguel Angel
Ecuador	Fr. Poletto Ottorino
Egypt-Sudan	Fr. Dalle Carbonare Diego
Ethiopia	Fr. Weldeghiorghis Asfaha Yohannes
Italy	Fr. Baldan Fabio Carlo
Kenya	Fr. Wanjohi Thumbi Andrew
London Province	Fr. Padilla Rocha Rubén
Mexico	Fr. Güitrón Torres Rafael
Malawi-Zambia	Fr. Mumba Michael Nyowani
Mozambique	Fr. José Joaquim Luis Pedro
NAP	Fr. Ezama Ruffino
Portugal	Fr. Fernando Domingues
PCA Central America	Fr. Calderón Vargas Juan Diego
Peru	Fr. Mitchell Sandoval Nelson Edgar
South Africa	Fr. Opargiw John Baptist Keraryo

South Sudan	Fr. Schmidt Gregor Bog-Dong
Togo-Ghana-Benin	Fr. Hounaké Kouassi Timothée
Uganda	Fr. Kibira Anthony Kimbowa

### **Delegations**

Asia	Fr. Aguilar Sánchez Víctor Manuel
Colombia	Fr. Benavides Orjuela Jorge Alberto
Eritrea	Fr. Gaim Haileselassie
Central Africa RCA	Fr. Castillo Matarrita Víctor-Hugo
Chad	Fr. Vailati Marco

### ***Representative of the Vicar General to the communities of Poland***

Poland	Fr. Zagaja Adam
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### **Handing over of responsibilities from outgoing to new Councils**

When handing over responsibilities, it is important to bear in mind some aspects that merit particular attention:

- Voting for the choice of Vice-Provincial or Vice-Delegate must take place after 1° January 2023, when the new council will have effectively begun its mandate. It is to be borne in mind that the “Vice” in each circumscription must be appointed by the General Council and it is therefore desirable that his name should not be published before being confirmed by the GC.
- It is necessary that the new circumscription council adequately receives whatever information is necessary to ensure the continuity of whatever processes have already begun. In particular, sufficient time is to be given to handing over responsibilities in canonical cases and particular situations and the modalities of their accompaniment.
- Part of the handing over of responsibilities must consist in a draft balance of the circumscription to allow the members of the council to have an understanding of the patrimonial and financial situation, emphasising especially the financial report which is most indicated means of understanding the financial state of the circumscription.

### **New auditor of accounts**

The GC appoint **Fr. Pietro Ciuciulla** as the new auditor of the internal accounts of the General Administration and ex-officio member of the Financial Council replacing **Bro. Guillermo Casas Rosell**. The Council thanks both confreres for their availability and collaboration and wishes Bro. Casas every success in his work of accompanying the elderly and sick confreres in Spain.

## **Transmission of the XIX Chapter**

After the publication and circulation at the beginning of October of the Chapter Acts in digital format in all the languages of the Institute, the GC proceeded to print them in paper format in the quantities required by each circumscription. The Italian edition is already available and has been distributed. The others will be available in the first weeks of November. The Guide for the implementation of the Chapter is also being prepared, which is expected to be circulated in digital format by 3 December 2022, in memory of St. Francis Xavier, Patron of the Institute.

## **Reference Brother for each continent**

The 2015 Chapter decided to create the Continental Reference person from among the Brothers (CA 2015 n. 71). On May 18, 2022 the Holy Father issued a rescript according to which a Brother, notwithstanding can. 588 §2 of the CIC, can be appointed major superior. Taking into account the result of the process of appointment of the Superiors of Circumscriptions just concluded, in which no Brother has been appointed circumscription superior, the GC asks all continental / sub-continental assemblies to start the process of electing a Continental Reference Brother.

## **Meeting of Circumscription Superiors**

The General Council has set the dates for the next meeting with all the Circumscription Superiors who have been appointed during the consultation. The meeting will start on February 27 at the EUR house and end on March 19. Confreres are expected to arrive by 26 February and depart not before 20 March.

## **Text of the “Liturgy of the Hours in Spanish”**

The General Council thanks Fr. Arnaldo Baritussio and the confreres who collaborated, both in Spain and in Rome, in the drafting of the texts and in carrying out the process that led to the approval by the Dicastery of Divine Worship on 29.7.2022, of the booklet "Translatio Hispanica Liturgiæ Horarum". The GC in particular thanks the province of Spain which is taking care of the Spanish language editing of the booklet “The Comboni Family in Prayer”.

## **Meeting with the “Comboni Survivors Group”**

Following the meeting between Fr. General and Fr. Jeremias dos Santos Martins and the “Comboni Survivors” group in London on 13 September 2022, and according to what was decided during the

meeting, the joint communique issued for publication is given here below.

*“A meeting between the Comboni Survivors’ Group and the Comboni Missionaries (Verona Fathers) that took place on September 13<sup>th</sup> 2022 at Archbishop’s House, Westminster, London, was an important moment of encounter and dialogue by all those involved. The two groups in attendance offer the following comment:*

*From the Comboni Survivors Group: “Following the meeting today with the Comboni Missionaries the Comboni Survivors Group were deeply moved and believe the journey on the healing process has taken one step further. We recognize that the Comboni Missionaries have responded positively to our request for an acknowledgement of the abuse that was suffered, and we welcome their heartfelt apology. We have committed to continue this path of healing together which we look forward to in a spirit of collaboration and trust.”*

*From the Very Rev. Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie, Superior General of the Comboni Missionaries: "On behalf of the Comboni Missionaries (Verona Fathers) I wish to offer my heartfelt apology to each and every individual who suffered abuse in the hands of those who were entrusted with their welfare, safekeeping and schooling at St. Peter Claver College. I extend this apology to Family Members and loved ones who have suffered too. We regret that mistakes were made over the years, and we make the words of the Holy Father our own in asking for forgiveness from those who have suffered so much. I hope this apology demonstrates our sincere wish to bear witness to the plea of the Holy Father to acknowledge the terrible hurt caused by the sexual abuse of minors to facilitate the journey towards healing and reconciliation.”*

Also present were Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archdiocese of Westminster, Mons. Marcus Stock, Diocese of Leeds, Mons. Paul Mason, Bishop of the Armed Forces and Fr. Padre Andrew Small, OMI, of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

## **XXI General Chapter of the Comboni Missionary Sisters**

The General Council wishes to congratulate Mother General Sr. Anne Marie Quigg and the new General Council on their election and most fervently wishes them a fruitful service to the Institute. It assures them

of their commitment and that of all the confreres to continue with determination the collaboration experienced in recent years. It offers its heartfelt thanks to Sr. Luigina Coccia and the Sisters of the outgoing General Council for their collaboration and the experience of friendship and cordiality shared during the past six years.

### **The next Consulta**

The next ordinary Consulta will take place from Monday 5 December to Monday 12 December. In the meantime, some extraordinary sessions will be organized to evaluate the results of the polls for the councillors.

### **Journeys of the CG**

#### **Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse**

- 12-23 November in Uganda – Beatification of Fr. Ambrosoli
- 23-25 November at Sacrofano - USG

#### **Fr. David Costa Domingues**

- 21-27 November visit to the Paris community
- 16 December – 5 January: trip to the Philippines for the handing over of the delegation

#### **Fr. Elias Sindjalim Essognimam**

- 5-21 November: visit to the novitiate of Magambe and Kinshasa scholasticate in Congo
- 28 November – 4 December: meeting of outgoing and incoming provincials of the ASCAF in Lomé (Togo)

#### **Bro. Alberto Lamana Cónsola**

- 17-23 December: APDESAM assembly in Jinja (Uganda)

#### **Fr. Luigi Codianni**

- 12-23 November in Uganda – Beatification of Fr. Ambrosoli
- 13-17 December – Madrid for the continental assembly of provincials

### **Holy Redeemer Guild**

November	01 – 15 SS	16 – 30 T
December	01 – 15 PE	16 – 31 U

### **Prayer intentions**

**November** – We pray for young people who are the present and future of our societies, that they may find their vocation and place it at the service of the weakest. *Lord, hear us.*

**December** – We pray that all the families of the world may welcome with joy and gratitude the gift of life and protect it as the Holy Family of Nazareth did. *Lord hear us.*

### **Comboni liturgical calendar**

#### **November**

Commemoration of deceased confreres, relatives and benefactors

**Date** to be established annually

### **Meaningful anniversaries**

#### **November**

**21** Madonna del Quinche (Ecuador)

### **Comboni liturgical calendar**

#### **December**

**3** Saint Francis Xavier, priest

*Patron of the missions, Feast*

### **Meaningful anniversaries**

#### **December**

**1** Blessed Clementina Alfonsina Anuarite Nengapeta  
Virgin and martyr (Congo)

**3** Saint Francis Xavier, priest

*Patron of the missions, Feast (Mozambique, Spain)*

**12** Our Lady of Guadalupe,

*Patron of the Americas (Mexico)*

### **Publications**

**Victor Manuel Aguilar Sánchez mccj**, *Corpus Nestorianum Sinicum: Thus have I heard on the listening of Mishihe (the Messiah) and “Discourse on the One-God”*, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Roma 2021.

We hereby give notice of the publication of Fr. Victor's voluminous doctoral dissertation (an extract from the thesis was published in the MCCJ Bulletin 280, July 2019, pp. 57-68) which focuses on the identification, exposition and explanation of the Trinitarian, Christological and Soteriological concepts in the two documents of the Corpus Nestorianum Sinicum. We also note that, for this work of his, Fr. Victor received the Premio Bellarmino from the Pontifical Gregorian University (Familia Comboniana n. 786, June 2020).

**José Alberto Pimentel Guzmán mccj**, *Creo en ti, mi Señor: Vivencias y testimonios de una fe misionera*. The book is an



autobiography of Fr. Pimentel Guzmán which, embellished with numerous photos, follows a path from the first years of formation through the various stages of his missionary life, desiring to testify to a journey of faith given and received.

**Dr. Emmanuel Taban & Andrew Crofts**, *El chico que nunca se rindió. El épico viaje de un refugiado hacia el triunfo*, ed. Mundo Negro, Madrid 2022. Emmanuel was sixteen when he fled his war-torn country and, after a long and danger-filled journey, he reached South Africa where, with the help of the Combonis, he achieved his dream and became a prestigious pulmonologist. This book is the moving story of a son of South Sudan who overcame poverty, racism and xenophobia to become a legend in all of Africa.

### **Specializations**

On 27 October 2022, Fr. Kakule Muvawa Justin discussed his licentiate thesis at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical Urbanian University entitled “Du sujet constitué au sujet autoconstituant. Pour une éthique de la vérité chez Michel Foucault” (From the constituted subject to the selfconstituting subject. Towards an ethic of truth Michel Foucault).

Congratulations Fr. Kakule!

## **CENTRE OF ONGOING FORMATION**

### **The fourth edition of the Comboni Seniority Course**

Every religious institute wants to take care of its members. In this context, the magic word is "ongoing formation". There is no age that does not need it. Seniority is also a phase that requires care. Our Institute has already offered four editions of the Seniority Course (2014, 2016, 2018, 2022) in the months of September and October, in Rome. The last one ended on 28 October with a solemn Eucharistic celebration.

There were nine participants: Fr. Silvio Zanardi (82 years), Fr. Lino Eccher (81), Fr. Antonio Campanini (81), Fr. Franco Mastromauro (80), Fr. Gian Paolo Pezzi (80), Bro. Mariano Zonta (75), Fr. José Arieira de Carvalho (75), Bro. Alberto Visintin (73) and Fr. Franco Moretti (72).

Some interesting themes were presented and offered for personal reflection and prayer: the stages of life; the experience of God in old age; wisdom reinterpretation of life; physical dimension of seniority;

the experience of the General Chapter and the prospects of our Institute; lectio divina on the experience of the apostle Paul as a reference of our identity; the Comboni mission today; meeting with St. Daniel Comboni; mission in ministry. The pilgrimage to the birthplace of Daniele Comboni in Limone sul Garda was beautiful and truly moving. The course of spiritual exercises led by Fr. David Glenday was very engaging.

The evaluation of the course made by the participants was more than positive. To the point that they said they regretted that the opportunity of this course is not welcomed more readily by many elderly confreres. It is not a question of "updating", but of the wise attention that the Institute wants to pay towards confreres who belong to the slow-paced generation, bent under the weight of years.

But the spirit has no age: you can always learn to live old age well with its peculiarities. The various inputs on symptoms and signs, on the phenomenon and effects of aging met with prompt understanding and aroused lively participation. After all, they were nothing more than the eloquent echo of a lived or ongoing experience.

In the second half of life, the goal changes. We are no longer on a peak, but in a valley, where the climb began. It is now a question of moving in this new direction. "If it is true that a young man who does not fight - and does not win - has lost the best of his youth, it is even more true that an old man who does not understand that he must listen to the secret of the streams that run from the peaks towards the valleys, it is senseless. He becomes a spiritual mummy, finds himself with a petrified past and feels cut off from life" (Carl Jung, *The stages of life*). But the spirit has no age: you can always learn to live old age well with its peculiarities. The various inputs on symptoms and signs, on the phenomenon and effects of aging met with prompt understanding and aroused lively participation. After all, they were nothing more than the eloquent echo of a lived or ongoing experience. In the second half of life the goal changes. We are no longer on a peak, but in the valley, where the climb had begun. It is now a question of moving in this new direction. "If it is true that a young man who does not fight - and does not win - has lost the best of his youth, it is even more true that an old man who does not understand that he must listen to the secret of the streams that run from the peaks towards the valleys, has no meaning. He becomes a spiritual mummy, finds himself with a petrified past and feels cut off from life" (Carl Jung, *The stages of life*).

The "Magnificent Nine" who attended the course said they were better prepared to look to the horizon with greater hope, feeling more fulfilled, because anxiety vanishes and regrets weigh less. And, guided by an "Inner Voice", they want to advance wiser than yesterday, determined to do the right thing and to transform daily experience into wisdom. (*Fr. Franco Moretti, mccj*)

## GENERAL POSTULATION

### **Looking forward to the Beatification of Fr. Ambrosoli** (*continued from p. 2*)

We may already say that this beatification in itself constitutes a significant event for the Comboni Family and certainly a memorable occasion for the Church of Northern Uganda, born from the tireless dedication of a large group of Comboni nuns and missionaries. It is a mission event because the beatification has to do with the totally significant figure of Fr. Ambrosoli for the clarity and complexity of his vocational choice in favour of evangelisation: or to be a missionary and doctor in such a way that his medical service, precisely in its most rigorous and competent professionalism, was lived and expressed by him as a priestly exercise. This characteristic was always clearly perceived by the people who supported him: doctors, nurses and even patients undergoing treatment from him. In addition, high-quality missionary service for the clear modality immediately proposed by the young doctor Ambrosoli upon entering the Institute, in 1949, presenting himself at twenty-six to the superior of Rebbio Fr. Simone Zanoner, his desire is to immediately combine the pastoral ministry and the medical service in Africa, and for the choice of an Institute, such as that of the Comboni Missionaries, with a specific and exclusive orientation to the *missio ad gentes*. An anticipatory choice, as was also the ethos given to the hospital - not a simple hospital but a structure that could prepare other doctors for other hospitals - and to the Midwifery School: not simple nurses but specialized midwives who could fit into public structures, thus passing on Christian skills and values beyond the modest enclosure of Kalongo. In what he did, Fr. Giuseppe was never commonplace, but somehow always made choices aimed at favouring the common good, typical of people who, as Pope Francis affirms in *Evangelii Gaudium*, believe that "time is worth more than space" and that "reality always surpasses the idea" (cf. EG 231). Fr. Giuseppe, as a missionary, always made time prevail

in relationships with people and realism in dealing with situations of any kind.

Sister Caterina Marchetti who, from 1963 to 1983, shared a long period of life and service with Fr. Giuseppe, reconstructing one of Fr. Giuseppe's days, looks even further and concludes: "Operations numbered about 1200-1700 'year. One year, there were over 1900. That is as far as I can remember. The administration of the hospital was then carried out by him, during the little free time he had, in the evening or during the night. I assure you that he had everything in order and everything was written down. One wonders how he did it, also because he devoted a lot of time in the evening to prayer".

The bar, as you can see, was quite high, and this is surely not meant to deter but to stimulate us. The life of our brother Fr. Giuseppe is truly one of those "Talking Lives" which the mission and the Church are in dire need of. It is worth listening to him and admiring him as "Joseph, a gift of God", the opening words of the song with which they welcomed him when his mortal remains were brought back to Kalongo on the afternoon of April 8, 1994. It will be nice, therefore, to live this 20 November 2022, in communion with the whole Comboni Family and ask the new Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli to keep the missionary flame alive and burning within us, with these two final recommendations that came out of his mouth: "Try to do things perfectly, but if you manage just to do them well, do not undo them to make them perfect, you would ruin them; be satisfied with having done them well. But always look for perfection" and "when you don't know which way to choose, always take the one that costs you the most: it's the right way". (*Fr. Arnaldo Baritussio, Postulator*)

## GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF FINANCE

### **Workshop in Rome for circumscription bursars**

The General Econoate is currently offering an economics course in Rome, aimed mainly at those responsible for administration in the various Comboni circumscriptions. A dozen participants took part, those who felt the need or who have recently taken on the task of provincial bursars.

The initiative takes place over two weeks, from 24 October to 4 November. The aim is to provide information, knowledge and practice relating to the vast field of finance, taking into account both the world / global context as well as the national / local context in which everyone

operates. Given the time available, the course certainly does not claim to be exhaustive; rather, it wants to offer some fundamental criteria of economic management. Among the topics addressed we find the following: Finance, mission land; Economic management and mission in the light of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC); The bursar's office: organization, management and archives; Projects; Fundraising and relationships with benefactors; the General Directory of Finance; the Code of Conduct.

Thanks in particular to General Treasurer Fr Angelo Giorgetti and to Fr. Sebastian Chmiel, his assistant, who oversaw the organization, themes and development, accompanying the participants throughout the two weeks. We also thank the community of the Rome Generalate for their welcome and fraternity.

## COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

### **State of health Comboni communications**

In recent months, the Communications Office wanted to take stock of the situation of "Comboni communication" also based upon a need that emerged from some capitulars on the occasion of the presentation of the Report of the Communications Office to the XIX General Chapter 2022, last June in Rome.

First of all, the data of each Comboni circumscription relating to communication were collected. The data obtained were examined and made known to the superiors and to the communication representatives of each circumscription, to be sure of their reliability. They were then transcribed in table format.

The guiding idea of all the work is that on the threshold of the 21st century, communication - internal and external - for us Comboni Missionaries can no longer be considered an option, but is a necessity, an obligation. St. Daniel Comboni, if he were now alive, would be the first to use all the means available for missionary animation, to narrate the daily experience of the mission among neighbours and far away peoples most in need and to seek human, spiritual and economic resources, involving everyone in the mission of Jesus and of the Church. To know about the missionary activity of the Church yesterday and today, and therefore of the Comboni Missionaries, is a right above all of friends and benefactors who know us and support us at all levels. Furthermore, it is also a right of the present and, above all, future Comboni Missionaries who will want to

know what we are doing or have done as individual missionaries, as a community and as an Institute. The article on the "State of health of Comboni communications", complete, also in table format, is available on our website at the link [www.comboni.org/contenuti/114710](http://www.comboni.org/contenuti/114710) and has been published in the MCCJ Bulletin n. 293 - October 2022. (Fr. Arlindo Pinto, mccj) (*Fr. Arlindo Pinto, mccj*)

## BRASIL

### **Brief obituary of Fr. Ezio Datres**

"The faith that leads us to do good keeps our hope alive!".

This is the last message that Fr. Ezio sent us, as he did every day, at dawn. He was born in Preghena in the province of Trento on 21 May 1941. At the age of 22 he entered the Comboni novitiate in Gozzano (NO) and made his first vows on 9 September 1966. On 18 March 1970, he was ordained a priest.

Appointed to the province of Brasil Sul, at the end of 1970, he worked in the parishes, in the pastoral care of vocations and in the formation of seminarians, in Cacoal (RO), Campo Erê (SC), Curitiba (PR), Carapina (ES) and in various parishes of the diocese of São Mateus, in the state of Espírito Santo. He also took charge of the parish of São Judas Tadeu and the direction of the Social Work in São José do Rio Preto (SP).

In 2007, Fr. Ezio left the Institute to be incardinated in the diocese of Votuporanga (SP), as pastor of the parish of Nossa Senhora do Divino Livramento, in the city of Buritama.

A Bible scholar, he translated and published a number of conferences given by Fr. Alberto Maggi, of the Order of the Servants of Mary, director of the "Centre for Biblical Studies" in Italy. He also attended a biomagnetism course, to help the neediest people in his parish, training them in hope and life. God took him to Himself on October 22, 2022, while he was traveling in the state of Santa Catarina. Loved by his people, Fr. Ezio left a legacy of hope and joy. (*Fr. Enzo Santangelo, mccj*)

## THE GERMAN-SPEAKING PROVINCE – DSP

### **Provincial assembly**

This year's provincial assembly was held from 25 to 30 September, and was attended by 34 of the 43 confreres belonging to the Province.

The Provincial Superior welcomed all the participants, in particular the two missionaries on vacation, Fr. Josef Gerner, from Uganda, and Fr. Josef Schmidpeter, from Peru, who contributed significantly to the assembly.

On the first day there was a missionary forum on the theme "Against violence - The mission as a service of reconciliation". Unfortunately, the forum was cancelled because the speaker was unable to arrive on time, due to a strike by air traffic controllers.

The Provincial began work on Monday morning with his report on the Province. He presented the period between the last provincial assembly (2021), with the celebrations of the centenary of the presence of the Comboni Missionaries in Ellwangen and the visit of the Superior General Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse and Assistant General Bro. Alberto Lamana, up to the current post-General Chapter situation.

He expressed his satisfaction at the arrival in the province of the Togolese confrere Fr. Kevin Simtokena. Fr. Kevin and Fr. Moses Otii, from Uganda, will attend courses at the University of Graz in preparation for a doctorate. The two confreres are entering the work in the pastoral unit of the area. Kevin speaks German quite well and therefore will soon be able to start his university studies.

The Provincial then addressed the precarious situation of the personnel in the province due to the advanced age of the confreres. With 12 confreres under 70 and only four under 50, it is not easy to plan the future of the Province. We therefore hope that the internationalization of the European provinces, promised by the General Chapter, will also include the DSP. The provincial bursar noted that, while donations to projects remained unchanged last year, the revenues from employment contracts and from the Holy Redeemer Guild are instead constantly decreasing. Without resorting to financial investments, the current income would no longer cover the expenses of the province.

Tuesday and Wednesday were dedicated to group study of the Chapter Acts and the priorities approved by the Chapter.

To cultivate fraternal life together, on Wednesday afternoon we visited Ellwangen Castle and the Marian shrine of Schönenberg. This grandiose sanctuary is due to the initiative of the German Jesuit Fr. Philipp Jeningen, beatified on July 17, 2022 in this city. The parish priest of the sanctuary presented to us the life and apostolic work of the Blessed. In the late afternoon we gathered around the tomb of Fr

Philipp, in the basilica of the city, to celebrate Holy Mass. The life of the popular missionary still inspires many people in this area today. On Thursday afternoon, we met in groups to reflect on the election of the Provincial Superior and on other issues that are important to us. The assembly concluded with a Eucharistic celebration at 5.00 pm. (*Fr. Alois Eder, mccj*)

## ETHIOPIA

### **The Province welcomes the Chapter Acts**

The Province of Ethiopia met to welcome the Acts of the XIX General Chapter which took place in Rome in June 2022.

Comboni Day - as the annual event of ongoing formation is called - began on the afternoon of 25 October and ended with lunch on 27, in Hawassa. Fifteen missionaries were present.

Fr. Nicola Di Iorio opened the meeting with a meditation on the image of the vine and branches, the evangelical icon chosen for the Chapter work. He recalled that every missionary is one of the branches of Jesus, his instrument for producing good fruits: "this is our honour".

Fr. Weldegiorghis Asfaha Yohannes, Vice-Provincial, acting Provincial and Chapter Delegate, made a general presentation of the work of the Chapter, its dynamics and the main structure of the 2022 Chapter Acts.

Juan Núñez, apostolic administrator of the Vicariate of Hawassa, presided at the Eucharist at the end of the first day.

The Chapter has chosen for the next six years five priorities for the Institute: spirituality, community life, revision of formation, ministeriality and sustainability. These specific themes were presented, on the second and third days, by Fathers José Vieira, Joseph Anane, Mbala Topa André and Corrado Masini.

Each document was discussed through group work and in plenary. The conclusions will form the basis for the Province's six-year plan which will be prepared in the course of 2023 by the new provincial council.

On Wednesday evening, the participants shared a fraternal meal at which the Comboni Sisters of the Hawassa community and the apostolic administration were present.

Some videos were shown on the works of Fr. Giuseppe Detomaso (who is celebrating 50 years in Ethiopia) in Teticha and Daye, Fr. Nyakundi Isaiah Sangwera and Fr. Giovanni Baccanelli among the



Gumuz, and also "La Lettera", the documentary film with the Pope on the protection and safeguarding of our common home. Fr. Asfaha presided at the closing Eucharist. (*Fr. José Vieira, mccc*)

## MEXICO

### **XV Afro-American and Caribbean pastoral Meeting**

From 16 to 20 October, the XV edition of the African American and Caribbean Pastoral Meeting (EPA) was held in the diocese of Puerto Escondido (state of Oaxaca, Mexico), with the aim of recognizing, deepening and enhancing Afro culture through a space of dialogue. The Comboni Missionaries of Colombia have opened a web page entirely dedicated to this event.

Among the participants, there were Comboni confreres and Comboni sisters, men and women religious and priests from Mozambique, Togo, Kenya, Italy and Indonesia, who carry out their pastoral service in Latin American and Caribbean countries. Among other things, there was talk of the reality of black populations and the movement of black women in Mexico and the continent and of synodality from an Afro perspective.

The meeting ended with a final message in which the more than 170 participants - delegates from Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Peru, including lay people, religious, priests and bishops - shared their dreams and made some commitments.

The need to recognize each other as brothers and to value the richness of diversity was immediately emphasised, dreaming that African Americans and, in particular, the Afro-descendant woman, emerge in the Church and in society with their rights and their vision of the world. Drawing inspiration from Querida Amazonia and from Fratelli Tutti by Pope Francis, the participants reaffirmed the dream of a synodal Church and the commitment to deepen the culture, history and spirituality of the Afro-descendant peoples, to strengthen the Secretariat of Afro-American Caribbean pastoral care (SEPAC) and to give visibility to Afro pastoral care in ecclesial bodies (CELAM, CLAR, CRC, Episcopal Conferences and dioceses) and to remain in connection with the defence networks of Integral Ecology (REPAM, REMAM, Iglesia y Minería, RENAPE).

## MOZAMBIQUE

### **Priestly ordinations**

Two young Mozambican Comboni Missionaries, Manuel Novais Quembo and Moisés Zacarias Daniel, were ordained priests on 2 October, in the parish of Santa Teresina del Bambino Gesù in Chemba, which this year celebrates its 75th anniversary. Mons. Claudio Dalla Zuanna, Archbishop of Beira, presided over the Eucharistic celebration. Present were Fr. António Manuel Bogaio Constantino, provincial superior, who thanked those who helped in preparing the feast, as well as the parents, relatives and friends and Fr. Mkhari Antony Abednego and a family from South Africa, from the parish where Fr. Manuel Quembo did his missionary service. Also present were several priests and nuns from the various institutes who worked in the Chemba mission and the diocesan priests who have been in charge of the parish since 2021.

The following day, 3 October, the newly ordained celebrated their First Mass. In his homily, Fr. Constantino Bogaio stressed the relationship between the commandment of love for God and neighbour, insisting on the importance of cultivating the virtue of listening, which is one of the expressions of love for God and for the People of God.

Fr. Manuel Quembo and Fr. Moisés Zacarias are the first fruits of the Comboni novitiate of São Francisco Xavier of Nampula, which opened its doors in November 2015. Fr. Leonardo Leandro Araya, Father Master, thanking the parents and all those who have accompanied the newly ordained in their path of formation, stressed that the Church and the needs of the mission are now the priorities of the new priests and urged families to continue to honour their commitment to support and help them in the exercise of their Comboni mission and vocation which is preferentially for the poorest and most marginalized. (Sc. *Jamito Paulino, mccj*)

## NAP

### **One Parish Priest for two parishes**

On Sunday 25 September, Fr. Jean Philippe Lokpo was appointed pastor of the parishes of St. Nicholas and St. Mary in Evanston, Illinois. José Manuel Sánchez Ortiz will be his curate.

Bishop Mark Bartosic, of the Archdiocese of Chicago, presided over the inauguration Mass. In his homily, he described this moment in

which the two parishes come together as a new missionary family "very moving": "In Evangelii Gaudium - he said - Pope Francis calls all the baptized to be missionary disciples. No matter how long we or our people have been Christians, we are all missionaries. I am very grateful for the spirit in which these communities come together".

During the celebration, there was also an intervention by Fr. Ruffino Ezama, Provincial Superior, who, after having briefly retraced the history of the Comboni presence in the Province, welcomed the parishes into the Comboni family saying: "St. Mary and St. Nicholas are now not only part of the same family, but they are also part of the Comboni family and I am really happy for this".

## PORTUGAL

### **Santarem: fifty years of Comboni presence**

On Sunday 9 October, the bishop of Santarem, Mgr. José Traquina, presided over the Eucharistic celebration for the 50 years of Comboni presence in the diocese: "Today we give thanks in particular for the fifty years of presence and mission of the Comboni Missionaries in Santarem. Thousands of people, from our diocese and the surrounding area, have benefited from their preaching, witness and missionary zeal ", said Mgr. José Traquina in his homily. The bishop also stated that he felt he too was a "beneficiary" of Comboni missionary animation which "reached from Santarem to Évora de Alcobaça: your publications impressed me with the courage of the Comboni Missionaries in distant missions". He then renewed his gratitude also for the many people who are a point of reference and witnesses of a presence that preceded the creation of the diocese of Santarem.

On 22 and 23 October, World Mission Day, the Comboni Missionaries will carry out missionary animation during the Eucharistic celebrations in the parishes of the city.

### **Radio GIM, online radio**

The Comboni Youth Vocation Centre of Maia has created, with its young people, Radio JIM, an online broadcaster, "born from the dream of creating a radio station created by young people for young people. A missionary radio that puts Jesus at the centre of everything and sets young people working. Even for a single listener, young people will do everything to seek message content and bring Jesus to

others ", Sara Maia said today, in an interview with the ECCLESIA agency.

The coordinator and assistant of the Youth and Vocation Ministry of the Youth Vocation Centre of Maia, affirms that the watchword is "involve young people and engage them", with the support of a team which includes Fr. Filipe Resende, a Comboni, who explained: "to the young people who collaborate with us, we say that we hear God and Jesus in what they do: I am not here just to talk about Jesus and God to others; I am here to meet God, so even those who listen to them meet him ".

The new internet radio, which began broadcasting on 10 October, the feast of St. Daniel Comboni, is available on <https://radio.jim.pt/> or on the app of the Comboni Missionaries in Portugal.

The radio gives ample space to World Youth Day (Lisbon 2023) and every day it signals the pilgrimage route of the two symbols of WYD - the cross and the icon - which, until 31 October, will be located in the diocese of Porto. The Youth Vocation Centre of Maia is planning various activities for the pastoral year 2022/2023, such as the volunteer project, the Eucharistic animation groups and the proposals for preparation for WYD. Among the objectives of the radio, the two leaders underlined the desire to work for universal fraternity and to reawaken in young people the passion for the mission.

## UGANDA

### **Resignation and appointment of the Bishop of Kotido**

The Holy Father has accepted the resignation from the pastoral care of the diocese of Kotido (Uganda) presented by Mons. Giuseppe Filippi and appointed as bishop of the same diocese Fr. Dominic Eibu, a Comboni, currently parish priest of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Cairo (Egypt).

Bishop Eibu was born on April 30, 1970 in Lwala, in the diocese of Soroti (Uganda). After studying philosophy at the Queen of Apostles Philosophy Centre in Jinja, he made his first vows in our Institute on May 16, 1998, in Namugongo (Kampala). Later, he completed his theology studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He made his perpetual vows on 12 January 2002 and was ordained a priest on 15 August of the same year. Subsequently, he obtained a Licentiate in Arabic and Islamic Studies in Cairo (Egypt) and then at the Pontifical Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome.

He has held the following positions: director of the Comboni Primary School, in Khartoum (2005-2016); vice provincial superior of Khartoum (2008-2013); member and secretary of the College of Consultors (2013-2016); secretary of the presbyteral council (2013-2016); Secretary of Education (2013-2016); since 2017, school director and assistant pastor in Cairo. He was currently pastor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Cairo, vice provincial superior of Egypt-Sudan and a member of the Education Committee at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

## IN PACE CHRISTI

### **Fr. Giorgio Dorin (08.12.1943 – 03.07.2022)**

Fr. Giorgio Dorin was born in Este, in the province of Padua, on 8 December 1943. After his novitiate in Gozzano, he took his temporary vows on 9 September 1966, did the scholasticate in Venegono, Asti, and again in Venegono. He took perpetual vows on 9 September 1969. He was ordained a priest on 19 March 1970 and sent to Trent as formator in the minor seminary. In 1979 he was assigned to Mexico, where he remained for over twenty years, with the post of trainer and treasurer. He then did the Renewal Course in Rome, and was sent to the Mother House in Verona as provincial treasurer where he worked until 2011. On 1 January 2012 he was sent to Ecuador.

The mission to which he was assigned was El Carmen, in the Manabí area, with countless pastoral activities, due to the vastness of the territory and the large population.

He therefore found it difficult to accept when, a few years later, he was asked to take on the post of provincial treasurer in Quito, precisely because of his long experience in that field and the needs of the moment. However, he agreed and carried on his work with admirable dedication. He obviously had to learn the country's complex legal rules; Giorgio considered promoting an austere lifestyle in solidarity with the poorest as part of the economy.

If we were to describe his personality in a few words, we could say that he was a priest of God, a man totally available to serve, a missionary in the style of St. Daniel Comboni.

Deep faith always guided his steps and clearly nourished his vocation. He was the first to arrive in the chapel every morning, always with the Bible in hand. He had an exemplary dedication in preparing homilies

and in taking care of the liturgy. This communion with God, simple and filial, was reflected in his choices and in his concrete dedication.

Regarding his service, he was either in the office, carrying out his duties, or being an electrician, carpenter, mechanic and anything else necessary for community life. He was always available to the requests of others, so much so that sometimes it was necessary to tell him not to exceed in this availability. He believed in charity in deeds.

Right from the years of his formation and, later, as a formator in our seminaries, Fr. Giorgio had developed a strong identification with the charism of St. Daniel Comboni. His great passion was that of being a missionary among the poor. He dreamed of returning to the direct apostolate with the people, but shortly after his assignment to Borbón, a marginalized area north of Esmeraldas, he was struck by the sickness that abruptly rendered this desire of his impossible.

Giorgio was a discreet presence, balanced in his judgments, upright in his vocation as a Comboni missionary, cheerful and smiling. Sometimes his instinctive character betrayed him, but he was always willing to apologize and to accept the other's point of view.

*(Fr. Rafael González Ponce, mccj)*

### **Fr. José de Sousa (26.06.1940 – 20.07.2022)**

"Among so many memories - writes Fr. José Boaventura, a Comboni - I still feel the emotion of when Fr. José arrived at our school, one morning in April 1967. Introduced by the teacher, he stopped in front of us with his small and fragile figure, like us children. His words translated the missionary experience in Mozambique, magnified it and captured our attention. And in that state of wonder we heard him say: 'Who wants to be a missionary?'. We all raised our hands with joy, even though we didn't know what it meant to be a missionary. His eyes sparkled with joy and hope. Years later, I accepted God's invitation to be a missionary like St. Daniel Comboni. Fr José left in me a beautiful memory of tenderness and poetry. Thank you, great 'little' missionary ".

José was born in Aguiar da Beira (Portugal) on June 26, 1940. He entered the novitiate in Vila Nova de Famalicão and made his first vows on September 9, 1958. He did the scholasticate in Maia and then in Verona, where he took his perpetual vows on 9 September 1964. On 27 June 1965, he was ordained a priest. After his ordination he worked in Viseu in missionary animation before leaving for Mozambique, assigned as curate in the parish of Buzi, where he

remained for only one year; in fact, he had to return to Portugal for health reasons. After the Renewal Course in Rome (1977-1978) he was assigned to Brazil, as curate in the parish of Jerónimo Monteiro, in the south of the state of Espírito Santo. He then spent a year in the Provincial Public Prosecutor's Office of Rio de Janeiro and was subsequently sent to Campo Erê, in the state of Santa Catarina, to help in the parish and vocations ministry.

Returning to Portugal in July 1988, he agreed to work once again in missionary animation in Viseu and in the unified postulancy of Maia. In 1995, he returned to Brazil to help with vocations ministry in Carapina, near Vitória, the capital of the state of Espírito Santo. In 2001, he returned to Portugal and the following year he attended the second Renewal Course in Rome.

Being in very poor health, in 2002 he was admitted to the CAA of Verona and from there, he returned again to the Postulancy of Maia. In 2015 he was assigned to the Comboni seminary of Viseu, where he remained for about seven years, helping in missionary animation. He passed away on July 20, 2022 and was buried in his homeland.

### **Fr. Zaverio Maria Carlo Colleoni (28.05.1927 – 21.08.2022)**

Fr. Zaverio Maria Carlo Colleoni was born in Fiorano al Serio, in the province of Bergamo (Italy) on May 28, 1927, to Ernesto Colleoni and Giuseppina Caffi. He entered the Comboni preparatory seminary at a young age and did his novitiate in Venegono. He made his perpetual vows on August 15, 1946. For the scholasticate he went to Rebbio (Italy) from 1946 to 1948, the year in which he first arrived in the United States. There he went to the Forestville scholasticate, Cincinnati, Ohio, and then to Mount St. Mary's Seminary, also in Cincinnati. He made his perpetual vows on 9 September 1951, in the hands of Fr. Giulio Rizzi, in the house of Forestville.

He was ordained a priest on June 7, 1952 in Cincinnati Cathedral. After his ordination, he served as assistant pastor in St. Henry's Church from 1952 to 1954. From that year until 1963, Fr. Zaverio taught Latin at the Seminary of the Sacred Heart.

At school, he left his mark: he painted a beautiful mural for the main chapel and collaborated on the stained-glass windows and in the design of the animated nativity scene, now appreciated by hundreds of visitors every year.

Meanwhile, he had taken a master's degree in philosophy from the Jesuit Xavier University, in Cincinnati.

From 1963 to 1970 he was the spiritual director of our theology seminarians in San Diego. From 1970 to 1982, he was first assistant pastor and then pastor of the parish of Holy Cross in the archdiocese of Los Angeles (California).

For a year, he was the formator of seminarians in the pre-Postulancy. Then, for two years, 1983-1985, he went to brave the cold of the "Windy City" as parish priest of San Vito I the Archdiocese of Chicago. But he did not like the cold and returned to the warmer climate in California: arthritis in his knees did not spare him pain. From 1985 to 1991 he was pastor of the mission of San Antonio de Pala among the Native Americans, the tribes of the Cupeño and Luiseño Indians. His desire was precisely to work in a pastoral environment and close to the poor, of any ethnic origin. Later, Fr. Zaverio returned to the parish of Santa Croce, where he remained until 2009, when he was assigned to the parish of Santa Cecilia, which in 2015 was returned to the archdiocese of Los Angeles. From then on, Fr. Zaverio remained in the parish of Santa Croce.

The best expression of appreciation on the part of the people to of their 'Father Zaverio' was their presence during his funeral, the day when people kept vigil over his body for the whole day.

He was buried in Pala Cemetery, which belongs to Native Americans: Fr. Zaverio is one of only six Comboni Missionaries buried in this cemetery. "Generosity, kindness, honesty and humour make us rich and for this reason he was a millionaire," said a parishioner at the end of the celebration of his funeral. (*Fr. Ruffino Ezama, mccc*)

## **LET US PRAY FOR OUR BELOVED DEAD**

**THE BROTHERS:** Serafín, of Fr. Juan Antonio González Núñez (ET); Fr. Alejandro (ex Comboni), of Fr. Florentino Lafuente (E).

**THE SISTER:** Francisca, of Fr. Juan Antonio González Núñez (ET).