

Familia Comboniana

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBONI MISSIONARIES OF THE HEART OF JESUS

814

January 2023



HAPPY NEW YEAR

DIREZIONE GENERALE

GENERAL NOTES OF THE 7TH CONSULTA – December 2022

Appointment by the Holy See – Auxiliary Bishop of Beira

The Holy Father has appointed our confrere Fr. António Manuel Bogaio Constantino, member and provincial of the province of Mozambique, as Titular Bishop of Sutunurca and Auxiliary of the diocese of Beira. The General Council expresses its good wishes to Mons. António Manuel for a fruitful episcopal ministry, the affection of the Institute and the assurance of prayers for him and his new ministry.

Appointments by the General Council

The General Council has appointed:

- Fr. Natal António Manganhe as Father Master and Superior of the Nampula Novitiate as of 1st January 2023
- Fr. Aldo Sierra as Superior of the community and first formator of the Pietermaritzburg Scholasticate as of 1st January.

Beatification of Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli

On 20 November 2022, the beatification of Fr. Giuseppe Ambrosoli (Ronago, Como, 1923 - Ngetta, Lira, 1987), a Comboni missionary, priest and doctor, was celebrated in Kalongo, Uganda. The Superior General, Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse and Fr. Luigi Codianni, Assistant General were present. The celebration was presided over by the Apostolic Nuncio in Uganda, Mons. Luigi Bianco, and concelebrated by numerous bishops. Also present was the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, who helped the local Church financially with the costs of the celebrations.

During the Mass, the date of the annual celebration of the memory of Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli was announced, set for July 28, the eve of his baptism. The Comboni communities scattered throughout the world, the archdiocese of Gulu and the diocese of Como will thus be able to keep alive the memory of the first Blessed of the Comboni family, to imitate his virtues and pray to him as an intercessor. On behalf of the entire General Council, Fr. Tesfaye expressed deep gratitude to the local Church in the person of the Archbishop of Gulu, his Vicar General, the Postulator of the Archdiocese Fr. Joseph Okumu, the whole parish community of Kalongo with its parish priest, Fr. Ramón Vargas, the Christian community of Kalongo and the Comboni missionaries of the province of Uganda with their Provincial.

On 3rd December, in Ronago - the birthplace of Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli - a Holy Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated, presided over by Cardinal Oscar Cantoni, bishop of Como. Present were members of the

family of Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli, Comboni Missionaries from Verona, Milan, Rebbio and Venegono, led by the Provincial Superior, and from Rome with the presence of members of the general administration (including the Postulator General who delivered the original certificate of the apostolic decree of beatification) and many members of the local clergy and civil authorities.

The GC wishes to express its gratitude in particular to Fr. Arnaldo Baritussio and to Fr. Cosimo De Iaco for the work done in preparation for the Beatification and to all the benefactors who wished to contribute to the realization of the event. A cordial thank you is addressed to H.E. Card Miguel Angel Ayuso, to the Italian Province, to the London Province, to the Treasurer General's office, to the journalists and translators (especially for the translation of liturgical aids and popular material in English - Fr. Martin Devenish - and in the Acholi language - Fr. Joseph Ukumu and Fr. Cosimo De Iaco). The GC also thanks the diocese of Como and its bishop, Cardinal Oscar Cantoni, and the ladies Giovanna Ambrosoli, niece of Blessed Fr. Giuseppe, and Prisca Auma Ojok for their contribution and the gifts offered to the parish of Kalongo.

Ordination ceremony of the new Bishop of Kotido, Archbishop Dominic Eibu

The episcopal consecration and installation ceremony of the new Bishop of Kotido, our confrere Msgr. Dominic Eibu, will take place in Kotido on January 14, 2023. The General Council once again wishes the new Bishop a fruitful episcopal ministry and invites all Institute to pray for him.

Regarding decisions during the handover period

The General Council has taken note of the fact that, in this phase of the end of the administration in the circumscriptions, many requests are being received for decisions regarding the assignment or closure of communities based on an agreement between the outgoing superior and the incoming superior. It is recalled that it is necessary to wait for the new district council to be installed before proceeding to any formal decision with the full assent required by the RV. For the appointment of the Vice Provincial, it is recalled that the public communication of the name can only take place after confirmation by the General Council.

Meeting of the circumscription superiors of the at the beginning of their mandate

The meeting of the elected Circumscription Superiors will begin on 26 February at the EUR house with the celebration of the Eucharist and will end on 19 March. The arrivals of the confreres are expected by 25 February and the departures no earlier than 20 March. The main aims of the

meeting are to illustrate the tasks expected of the function assumed by the district superior and to lay the foundations for effective and efficacious communication between the leadership of the district and the General Administration. An invitation letter with more information and the proposed program will be circulated around 10 January. Confreres who need an entry visa for Italy are advised to begin the process now.

Entry visa for Italy

The process to obtain the necessary endorsement from the Holy See (Department of Religious Life and Secretariat of State) for letters of invitation that are used to request an entry visa to Italy can now only take place by appointment and it can happen that it takes up to ten days to obtain it. All confreres who need an entry visa are therefore reminded to send the following by e-mail, well in advance, to the Secretary General: 1. photocopy of their passport, 2. The name of the embassy/consulate to which the confrere intends to submit his visa application; 3. the detailed physical address for shipping the document by courier (postal addresses are not accepted by couriers). The address must include a contact telephone/mobile number that the courier can call if there are difficulties in delivering the documents. Incomplete requests or requests sent via WhatsApp are not accepted.

Chapter Implementation Guide

The Guide for the Implementation of the Chapter was published and circulated digitally among all the superiors of the circumscription on December 3, 2022, in memory of St. Francis Xavier, Patron of the missions. The General Council calls for the rapid distribution of the guide to all circumscriptions and hopes that the text will be used at the personal, community and circumscription levels for discernment and decisions in view of the preparation of the six-year plans.

Portugal: GMG - August 2023

In anticipation of the celebration of WYD, which will take place in Portugal from 1 to 6 August 2023, the sector of Formation and PV of the European continent has proposed to organise, a week before the event, a "World Meeting of Comboni Youth". The meeting will be held in Maia from 26 to 31 July, inviting all members of the Comboni Family. On 7 August, after the conclusion of WYD, a day of sharing on the lived experience is planned.

The coordination committee of the meeting will send to the respective youth ministry leaders of the circumscriptions all the information necessary for participation/organisation. There are 150 places available for the Comboni Missionaries as determined by logistics.

Closing of the Jubilee Foundation Year of the Comboni Missionary Sisters

On 8 December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Comboni Sisters, with a celebration in their General Curia, concluded the Jubilee Year for the 150th anniversary of the Foundation of the Pie Madri della Nigrizia - Comboni Missionary Sisters. We thank God for their lives, their testimony - also marked by the seal of martyrdom - and their service. In the same celebration, the new General Council of the CMS greeted and thanked the outgoing General Council. As confreres, the mccc General Council thanks Sr. Luigina Coccia and the outgoing council and offers Sr. Anne Marie Quigg and the sisters of the new Council its best wishes for fruitful years of service to the mission and to the world.

Planned journeys

Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie with Bro. Alberto Lamana

- 1-7 February 2023: South Sudan (visit of the Holy Father)

Fr. David Costa Domingues

- 16 December 2022 - 5 January 2023: the Philippines for the hand-over to the new delegate
- 3-21 February 2023: Mozambique (Ordination of Mons. Antonio Constantino Bogaio)

Fr. Luigi Codianni:

- 6 January - 4 February 2023: Dublin

Fr. Elias Sindjalim Essognimam

- 9-21 January 2023: Uganda (Ordination Mons. Dominic Eibu)
- 22 January - 18 February 2023: Congo (CAE, communities)

Next ordinary consulta

The next ordinary consulta will take place from 27 March to 22 April, except for Holy Week.

Ordinations

Fr. Abreham Woldetinsae Hailemariam	Taza Wota/ET	03.12.2022
Fr. Deivith Harly Zanioli Gonçalves	Cacoal/BR	08.12.2022

Holy Redeemer Guild

January	01 – 15 A	16 – 31 BR
February	01 – 15 C	16 – 28 EGSD

Prayer intentions

January

That the week of prayer for Christian unity may be an occasion for growth in mutual knowledge and finding common elements among the different Christian denominations that urge us to create deeper relations between ourselves, promote universal brotherhood and so contribute to the dream of Jesus, "That they may all be one" (Jn 17,21). Let us pray.

February

That the celebration of the International Day against Female Genital Mutilation (6 February) may help all of us, women and men missionaries, to increase our attention and care for the dignity of women, especially those most vulnerable and that, through the intercession of Saint Bakhita, we may know how to find new ways of "making common cause" with all victims of oppression and inequality. Let us pray.

Comboni liturgical calendar

FEBRUARY

8 Saint Josephine Bakhita, Virgin Memoria

Meaningful anniversaries

FEBRUARY

4	St John de Britto, martyr	Portugal
6	The Martyrs of Japan	Asia
23	Kidane Mehret, Corredemptrix	Eritrea

BRASIL

Ordination

On 8 December 2022, under the protection of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Deacon Deivith Harly Zanioli Gonçalves was ordained a priest. Deivith had already entered the Comboni community of Boa Vista, dedicating his diaconal experience to the pastoral service of the Macuxi and Wapichana indigenous peoples, along the São Marcos river, a region entrusted by the diocese of Roraima to the care of the Comboni Missionaries. The ordination was held in Cacoal, in Rondônia, the birthplace of Deivith and the land of martyrdom of Fr. Ezechiel Ramin. "Death is a victory with the appearance of defeat", said Fr. Lele, and his gift of life becomes fruitful in the commitment of many people, lay or religious, to further the Kingdom of God.

The celebration was well attended, with the presence of the People of God who live in Cacoal, several guests of Deivith from the various regions where he lived, representatives of the Macuxi people (in whose village Deivith was ordained a deacon) and two bishops: Mons Norberto Foester,

SVD, of the local diocese of Ji-Paraná, and Mgr Zenildo Luiz Pereira da Silva, CSsR, of the diocese of Borba, Amazonas, but originally from Cacoal.

The Comboni Family, represented by several Comboni brothers, fathers and sisters, creatively prepared the celebration, a vocational triduum and two weeks of activities and visits to the surrounding parishes.

Fr. Alcides Costa, chosen by Deivith to give the homily at his first mass, underlined the evangelical and prophetic gesture of Deivith, who wanted to preside at his first Eucharist in the place where Fr. Ezechiel Ramin was killed, as a sign of communion with all communities and people still threatened today and deprived of the right to land, work and life.

CURIA

Annual Meeting of the Council for Finance

From 28 November to 2 December, the Financial Council of the Comboni Missionaries met at the Generalate in Rome. The continental representatives, the technical councillors and the members of the General Treasurer took part. Among the participants was Fr. Pietro Ciuciulla, recently appointed by the General Council as the new auditor of the internal accounts of the General Administration to replace Br. Guillermo Casas Rosell. Fr. Ciuciulla, former Assistant General, is currently in Verona and is joining the activities of the Nigrizia Onlus Foundation.

Fr. Martin Devenish, for Europe, and a member from the Americas-Asia continent who will soon be nominated to replace Fr. Medina Martinez Guillermo were not present at the meeting.

The most important topics on the agenda discussed during these days of work were: the analysis of the economic situation of the General Administration and of the circumscriptions, the proposals for the closure of the 2022 financial year, the budgets of the General Administration and the revision of the report forms of the circumscriptions to improve the consolidation of the Institute, making the data transmitted by the districts more reliable and punctual.

Furthermore, there was a review of the course for the new provincial bursars, held in Rome from 24 October to 4 November 2022 and a reflection on the Chapter Acts concerning the financial sector, with the related implementation and programming for 2023.

The Council for Finance meets twice a year and is made up of the Treasurer General, who heads it, the members of the General Treasury, four councillors representing the continents and two technical councillors. Its tasks cover different areas, from accounting control and auditing to the verification of administrative and management procedures, from the

preparation of budgets and final accounts to the auditing of accounts, from the indication of economic planning choices to the study of the financial problems of the 'Institute and the global financial environment. The next meeting will be held in May 2023.

***Studium Combonianum* Publications**

Volume LIII (53) of the journal *Archivio Comboniano* corresponding to the year 2023 has been printed and will soon be delivered to the communities (one copy for each). The volume offers the critical apparatus for the letters of September and October 1881, the last ones published in the volume *Gli Scritti* of 1991. In addition, the text offers some studies and research on the context in which the letters were written, the socio-political situation in Khartoum, and on nineteenth-century ecclesial reformism in the Verona and Brescia areas.

The historical-critical publication of the writings of the founder St. Daniel Comboni will be considered concluded only with the edition of volume LIV (54) of the magazine *Archivio Comboniano* which will be totally dedicated to the unpublished writings of Comboni; that is, to the letters found after 1991. There are about sixty letters, found in various archives, including private ones, all addressed to friends and benefactors, to priests and personalities from the world of culture and politics; this correspondence goes from 1860 to 1881.

As in the past, this work is being carried out by several people, the result of collaboration between Limone (Fr. Danilo Castello), Khartoum (Fr. Jorge Naranjo), Rome (Fr. Fidel González and Fr. Manuel Augusto), the Comboni Missionary Sisters (Sr. Maria Vidale), with the editorial coordination of *Studium Combonianum* (Fr. Manuel Augusto). The research of the letters was conducted by *Studium Combonianum* (especially by Joaquim Valente). The gratitude of the Institute goes to all for this achievement about to be reached.

ESPAÑA

"Mundo Negro" granted an audience by Pope Francis

On Thursday 15 December Pope Francis received in audience Fr. Jaime Calvera, director of the Mundo Negro publishing house, and Javier Fariñas, editor-in-chief of the magazine Mundo Negro, accompanied by the Comboni Cardinal Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

During the 40-minute interview, the Pope responded very cordially to the questions posed to him. In particular, he highlighted the link between faith and culture and evangelization and culture, emphasizing that the Gospel

of Jesus, wherever it is proclaimed, always enriches cultures. During the interview, he also recalled some of the experiences of his travels in Africa, the moments of insecurity experienced during the trip to the Central African Republic, and his meeting with the archbishop of Bangui, who later became cardinal, Dieudonné Nzapalainga. He confirmed his forthcoming trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan at the beginning of February 2023 and explained how he has prepared these trips in detail.

At the beginning of the hearing, he was given a special issue of *Mundo Negro* 2022, which is published every three years, with updated data on the continent. On receiving it, Pope Francis said: "I am keeping this and will use it to consult it in my duties".

The full interview will be published in the January issue of *Mundo Negro* magazine.

ITALIA

Closure of a community

After 88 years, the house and the community of the Comboni Missionaries in S. Pancrazio in Rome have been closed.

The community (Comboni community for Acse) will reside at the General Curia in Via Luigi Lilio, 80 in Rome. It is composed of Fr. Venanzio Milani, Fr. Pippo Crea and Fr. Lino Spezia.

Please do not send any more letters, magazines or anything else to via S. Pancrazio 17B. Magazines and newsletter subscriptions have also been cancelled.

TOGO

Meeting of ASCAF Provincials

From Monday 28 to Wednesday 30 November 2022, the provincials of the circumscriptions of Francophone Africa (ASCAF) met in Lomé, the capital of Togo, essentially to discuss the points relating to the priorities of the sub-continent. Among these points were the theme of the formation of young people, the Islamic-Christian dialogue, the Comboni work of human promotion and the commitment to the common home (*Laudato Si'*) drew the most attention. However, other issues concerning common commitments and internal organization were also addressed.

We recall that the meeting was also the moment of the transition of "service" between the old and new provincials. The new assistant general in charge of ASCAF, Fr. Elias Sindjalim Essognimam also participated. In total, there were eight participants: one from Congo, one from Togo, two

(outgoing and incoming provincials) from Chad; two (outgoing and incoming provincials) of CAR, the reference brother and the assistant general.

IV Assembly of the Comboni Lay Missionaries in Africa

The coordinators of the Comboni Lay Missionaries (CLM) of Africa celebrated their Continental Assembly, from 3 to 11 December 2022, at the Comboni novitiate house of Sèdégbé, in Cotonou, Benin. The purpose of the meeting was to share their experiences, joys and difficulties, reflect on their vocation and mission in the African context, identify the challenges and define work proposals for the coming years. The previous assembly was held in 2017 in Anchilo, Mozambique.

The CLM participants represented the following African countries: Chad (1), Togo-Ghana-Benin (4), DR Congo (2), Egypt (1), Kenya (2), Uganda (1). Of the Comboni Missionaries who accompany them in the various circumscriptions, there was only Fr. Léopold Adanle Abouke from the province of Togo. From the Central Committee, Alberto de la Portilla (Spain), coordinator of the CLM, and Fr. Arlindo Pinto (Rome), contact person for the Comboni Institute since 2011, were present. The coordinators of Mozambique and Central Africa, unable to be present, sent their apologies.

Fr. Timothée Hounaké Kouassi, provincial superior, opened the assembly with the celebration of the Eucharist. Two other Eucharistic celebrations were presided over by the formators of the novitiate: Fr. Akpako Théotime Parfait, father master, and Fr. José Francisco de Matos Dias, superior of the community.

Fr. Léonard Ndjadi Ndjate, superior of the Province of Congo, visiting the novices of his province, presided over the mass on Tuesday 6 December, during which he thanked the CLM for their work and witness in his province and in the other African circumscriptions.

The first three days (3-5 December) were dedicated to the presentation of the reports of each group, followed by those of the African Committee and the Central Committee. Alberto de la Portilla, after giving an overview of the reality of CLM at an international level, presented some concrete challenges that must be faced in view of a greater degree of CLM homogeneity in Africa.

The 9th was left free to visit the other two Comboni communities present in Cotonou, the community of brothers in Pahou and the community of Fidjrossé. On Saturday 10, the participants took up the most significant challenges that emerged during the assembly and elaborated and approved precise proposals for the path to follow up to the next assembly. In the afternoon, the following new members were elected for the African Committee: Hani Chafik Khalil (Egypt), Martin Juma Onyango (Kenya),

and Justin Noughur (Ghana – TGB). The Mass of the day was presided over by Fr. Arlindo Pinto.

At the conclusion of the assembly on Sunday 11 December - International Day of Comboni Lay Missionaries - the group participated in the mass of the parish community of Saint Joan of Arc, in Lobozonekpa, thus giving "visible" testimony of the vocation of the CLM in Africa.

UGANDA

Beatification of Father Joseph Ambrosoli

On 20 October 2022, during the Mass of the Solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, our confrere Father Joseph Ambrosoli (Ronago, Como, 1923-Ngetta, Lira, 1987), priest and doctor, was beatified. It was an event of faith and a great celebration of the people, in Kalongo, in the parish of Northern Uganda, near the hospital where Father Joseph poured his heart into his work as a doctor and priest with humble and tireless charity.

The spread of some cases of Ebola in southern Uganda did not prevent the participation of a good number of confreres, the Superior General, Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse, and Fr. Luigi Codianni, Assistant General, as well as a very large presence of pilgrims (about 20,000), both from the parish of Kalongo and from various parts of the Archdiocese of Gulu. A thousand of these went to Kalongo on foot, covering more than one hundred kilometres, the week before the celebration.

The celebration was presided over by the Apostolic Nuncio in Uganda, Mons. Luigi Bianco, and concelebrated by numerous bishops; it also saw the presence of the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni. Songs and dances accompanied the celebration, which was successful in every way.

During the Mass, the date set for the annual celebration of the memory of Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli was announced: July 28, the eve of his baptism. The Comboni communities scattered throughout the world, the archdiocese of Gulu and the diocese of Como will thus be able to keep alive the memory of the first Blessed of the Comboni family, to imitate his virtues and beg him as an intercessor for their physical and spiritual needs.

This Beatification addresses to everyone the call to a constant and serious commitment to the path of personal sanctification. Blessed Giuseppe Ambrosoli, doctor and priest, is a figure who speaks to each and every one of us according to his specific vocation, both to laymen and consecrated persons, men and women, both to priests and brothers, to doctors and health workers, young people and families. What is important is not

only to admire and imitate his charity but also to drink from the sources that nourished his life and his commitment: the prayer of abandonment to God and the daily recitation of the Rosary; the devout and faithful celebration of the Eucharist; devotion to the Heart of Jesus, whose meekness and humility he admirably embodied. (*Fr. Cosimo De Iaco, mcccj*)

Virus causing oral tumours identified

Some terrible diseases go hand in hand with poverty. Among these are the devastating and incurable oral cancers that mainly affect children in poor countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For two centuries the cause had been sought. Dr. Marco de Feo, a dentist from Rome close to the Comboni missionaries, who has been doing voluntary work in Africa for many years, has succeeded, with the help of researchers and the Associazione Economia Alternativa which financed the research, to identify the responsible virus, which infects through mice, bats and snakes. Unfortunately, a large portion of humanity is forced to eat these animals and drink infected water. The virus was isolated at the University of Kinshasa and can be considered the fifth oncogenic virus currently known.

On October 19, Dr. de Feo presented the results of his research to Pope Francis. On 9 December he received a letter in which the Pope encouraged him to persevere and imparted the Apostolic Blessing extending it also to the Comboni Missionaries.

IN PACE CHRISTI

Fr. Manuel dos Anjos Martins (01.11.1942 – 27.11.2022)

On 27 November we received the news of the death of Fr. Manuel dos Anjos Martins at our house in Tete in Mozambique. It was not entirely unexpected news because we knew that he was seriously ill and that, after a period in the Tete hospital, he had returned home with an ominous diagnosis: an inoperable tumour.

Fr. Manuel dos Anjos was born in Gonçalo Bocas on 1 November 1942; he had just turned eighty. We know little about his childhood. Doubtless, he got to know the Combonis thanks to visits to the parishes and schools by Fr. Dante Greggio and Fr. Rino Carlesi, animators and vocation promoters residing in our seminary in Viseu.

We met for the first time during the summer camp in the seminary of Viseu in 1954 and since then we spent ten years of our formation together: five in the seminary of Viseu, two in the novitiate of Famalicão and three in the philosophical seminary of Maia. Together we came to Italy for theology. He went to Venegono and I to Rome. We met in

Viseu for priestly ordination on July 13, 1968, together with five other ordination companions.

From his time in the seminary, I remember his jovial and playful character and a particular propensity for languages that would have marked most of his pastoral and missionary activity.

We were immediately sent to Mozambique and on 13 October 1968, we left together on a TAP plane which took us to Beira, where we were welcomed by Fr. Mário Amaral and Bro. Silvério dos Santos who was in charge of the Inhamítua Teachers Training School. After a few days, I went to Nampula while he went to Tete.

He worked in the missions of Boroma and Marara, in the parish of Matundo and recently in the parish of Chitima.

He spent almost 40 years in Mozambique, in three periods; the first, in Tete (68-73) and two longer periods (81-92) and (98-2022) in Beira and Tete, alternating with two periods in Portugal (74-81) and (92-98), in missionary animation in Aradas, Coimbra and Santarém.

For the newly arrived missionary, the first major task is learning the language and culture of the people among whom he works. Fr. Manuel dos Anjos immediately understood that the theoretical lessons were not enough and that he needed some indispensable tools, a grammar and a dictionary, and here begins the story of the precious legacy that he has left us.

Equipped with a tape recorder and a notebook, he spent many hours of his days talking to people, connecting sounds with objects and recording everything; then at home, he tried to give a minimally intelligible graphic form to the sounds that designated an object, a concept or an idea. Thus, he went on outlining the first rudiments of the phonetics, morphology and syntax of the Chinhungwe language which he went on perfecting and completing until the publication of the first complete grammar which also included a small dictionary of the most used words.

Talking to the people, especially the older ones, Fr. Manuel dos Anjos also collected a great variety of popular proverbs and stories, very useful for understanding the local culture. The complete dictionary was published during his second period at Tete.

With the completion of this work, a door was opened for the preparation of the catechism and for the translation of the essential liturgical texts into the local language. This effort did not have the due support of local leaders and the support and means that various organizations had made available for this purpose were lost. The translation of the Bible into the Chinhungwe language is now well advanced and Fr. Manuel dos Anjos was extremely busy with this task; his death leaves a legacy that we hope someone will continue.

During his stay in the diocese of Beira, he studied the Chindao language of which he published a grammar and a dictionary and also collaborated in the complete translation of the Bible into the same language.

As a missionary, he lived alongside the Mozambican people in the last years of the colonial war, particularly intense in the Tete region, and in the years of the civil war. He had experience of prison in Tete where he remained for more than six months, having for company the Bible - the only book he was allowed to keep - and the daily visits of the confreres who brought him his meals. It was an experience that marked him a lot and he spoke about it reluctantly. The thing that displeased him most was that the bishop of the diocese never went to see him.

His last period in Portugal was been quite long, both due to Covid and the precariousness of his health. But he didn't worry much and was always in a good mood. With the same humility and simplicity with which he had lived, he expressed his wish to be buried in the mission of Chitima, where he spent the last years of his missionary life. (Fr Manuel Horta, mccj)

Fr. Lorenzo Tomasoni (04.06.1942 – 01.12.2022)

Fr. Enzo returned to the Father's house on Thursday 1st December. Today, December 3, we celebrate his funeral on the feast of St. Francis Xavier, patron saint of the Missions. Even in sadness, our Eucharist, our prayers are a song of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for the missionary life of Fr. Enzo, Comboni missionary, priest and surgeon.

He was born on June 4, 1942 in Mairano (BS). He recounted that it was his sister, a Comboni missionary, who instructed the Comboni vocation promoter to go to the village and suggest to Enzo that he think about the missionary vocation. He entered the novitiate in Florence and made his first vows on 9 September 1964. He completed his scholasticate in Rome and made his perpetual vows on 9 September 1967. He was ordained a priest on 18 March 1968, at the age of 26.

54 years of priesthood: 35 in Africa between Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan and 19 in Italy, between medical training in Padua (together with Fr. Egidio Tocalli) and then, service in Milan and Brescia in recent years.

A priest, doctor, surgeon, specializing in tropical diseases and leprology. A service to Africa, translating the Gospel into love and charity towards all. He began his mission at the hospital of Kalongo, in Uganda, at the school of Blessed Fr. Joseph Ambrosoli, beatified last November 20 and just today celebrated in Ronago (Como) in his native town.

On 30 July 2003, Fr. Enzo had received from the President of the Italian Republic the title of Commendatore for his service of solidarity among the poor.

I leave the floor to Fr. Enzo himself, through his reflection in a diary found in his room (September 1, 2015). It is the re-reading of his life.

"I know I have received many graces from God: magnificent family (tenth of eleven children), my parish of Brandico: an excellent education: two years with the Jesuits at Arici in Brescia, strict educators, but maybe they were needed.

Then, a priestly and missionary vocation, monotonous years of tiring but serene studies, and then philosophy, theology in Rome (happy years of the Second Vatican Council). After priestly ordination, it is useless to ask in writing to be sent immediately to Africa. Order written and signed by the Vicar General, Fr. Battelli: have patience, more years await you on the books for medical studies in Padua. More sweating over books for six years. Then, practice with the Fate-benefratelli in Brescia, then England, Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan. I learn well general surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, tropical diseases, leprology and skin diseases. I discover that I have moderate medical skills; surgery is better. Discreetly patient character with patients and open to service to all. 'The poor are everywhere'.

Sometimes I withdraw into myself but it lasts only thirty minutes. I can't bear that someone suffers because of me, I admit that I love everyone and that I am generally well-liked. To love with absolute purity like Jesus, no one can. We are more flesh than him and weak of heart. If he didn't need to mortify himself, I need it extra but alas, except for a few small mortifications, I can't do anything else.

My prayer, what can I say, is quite childish, continuous prayer yes, but I don't digest long prayers. There is no mention of mystical prayer. Now, in fact, I live, I pray, I work, I preach, I serve others by continually asking Jesus to show me how he would do it, in short, it's all grace! Even if I don't care that it's only He who actually does good for me.

I confess clearly that I will never ask for big crosses unless Christ wants to carry them 100%. I'm not a cross saint and therefore I can't even dream of being a saint. Of course, I would accept a quick martyrdom for him right away, but wishing to die in two minutes for Christ, because it seems to me that I could bear it, I have the impression that it makes him laugh.

I thank God a hundred times that he trusts someone incapable of becoming a saint, and of forgiving me everything, indeed often of carrying me in his arms. Everything for Him but with Him. Forgive me Lord, I thank you Lord". (*Fr. Girolamo Miante, mccj*)

Fr. Ayele Sebhatleab Tesemma (13.07.1955 – 16.12.2022)

Br. Ayele was born on 13 July 1955 in Woki, near Asmara (Eritrea). Temporary vows on 3 May 1978 and perpetual vows on 3 May 1981. He

studied theology in Kampala (Uganda) from 1979 to 1982. He was ordained a priest on 16 May 1982. He worked in Uganda among the Langhi from 1982 to 1986; in the Ethiopia-Eritrea province from 1989 to 1998, then he was sent to Uganda where he remained until 2004 and then returned to Eritrea until 2011, the year in which he returned to Uganda.

Fr Ayele was a sociable person, always in the company of someone. He loved being with people. He was brilliant and had a great sense of humour, which made people feel at ease with him. He was generous and charitable towards the poor and needy. He had leadership qualities and was full of initiative. He was very intelligent, capable of organizing and animating people, especially the young. He had a friendly and simple manner with a certain unconventionality.

Both in Ngeta, in the diocese of Lira, and in Dongora, in the diocese of Hawassa, he competently managed some catechetical centres.

He had a knack for journalism, though he had never taken a journalism course, and was in charge of Leadership for a few years and wrote articles for Lobo Mewa. He had the courage to denounce some LRA leaders and dictators from neighbouring countries for human rights violations.

At the beginning of the Covid pandemic, he lost his mother and this year his sister; these were two terrible blows for him, especially since he was unable to attend their funerals.

We were shocked at the news of his sudden death on 16th December in Nairobi. (*Fr. Tesfaghiorghis Haile, mccj*)

LET US PRAY FOR OUR BELOVED DEAD

THE MOTHERS: Maria del Consuelo, of Fr. Ramón A. Orendáin Camacho (M), Zena, of Fr. Paolo Paoli (ET).

THE SISTERS: Giuliana, of Fr. Mario Porto (I); Sr. Barbara, of Fr. Davide Ferraboschi (EGSD), Maria do Céu, of Fr. Manuel Ferreira Horta (P), Sr. Angelina, of Fr. Silvio Greggio (I).

THE COMBONI MISSIONARY SISTERS: Sr. M. Costanza Capelli, Sr. Manfreda Zerman, Sr. M. Silvana Meregalli, Sr. M. Assunta Xotta, Sr. Neghesti Tecchie Fecake.