



The Redemptorist Provincialate,
St. Mary's Monastery, Clapham,
SW4 7AP

5-X-2023

Dear Confreres, Sisters, Lay Missionaries, Associates, friends and benefactors,

My warm greetings to you wherever you are in the Province or Region. It has been sometime since I was last in touch so formally as through a letter of this kind. Nonetheless plenty of emails went around to you all;

- * For the feasts, especially our Mother of Perpetual Succour, the Holy Redeemer and St Alphonsus.
- * A slightly longer email detailing all the many things happening in Zimbabwe; Acceptance of four new Postulants, Six First Professions, start of a New Noviciate, three confreres accepted for Final Profession, Ministries of Lector and Acolyte given to eleven confreres, Regional Convocation, Regional Retreat, Beginning of Academic Year, to name but a few things.
- * There was note on the Solemnity of St Alphonsus telling of the appointment of Alfonso Amarante CSsR as the new Magnificent Rector (*Rettore Magnifico*) of the Lateran University and his Episcopal appointment.
- * The news that Pope Francis has now appointed our conferee +Raymond Mupa from the Diocese of Chinhoyi to the biggest diocese in Zimbabwe, Masvingo.
- * There was a 'postcard' from Tuchow outlining how things were going at the European Third Phase of the General Chapter.

We all can appreciate that there was a lot going on over the summer months right up to now, but such is our vocation, our ministry and our joy!

As I write I am conscious that today is the **Feast of our Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos CSsR**, a Redemptorist Missionary and The Cheerful Ascetic. A man whose life was one of prayer and praise. The rosary was one such prayer that he recommended to the people he came in contact with, "say the Rosary every day." We know that this month of **October** is dedicated specifically to the **Rosary**. Recently I came across the following piece on the

rosary, which I found helpful and pass on to you, in the hope that you might find this helpful personally or as something that might come in useful from the pulpit.

“When we spend the time it takes to pray a Rosary in the company of our Saviour and His Mother, we start to find that they become a bigger part of our lives and that the events of their lives become part of our own. We learn how to live as mature Christians by being with them and observing how they lived, just as we learned to be mature adults by living with our parents or other guardians. None of us is obligated to pray the Rosary, but when we know that it’s not a boring series of prayers but a way of deepening our relationships with people who already love us more than words can say - Jesus and Mary - it becomes something that we want to do. It’s been my personal experience that it truly is the Gospel on a string.”

Sr Johanna Marie Melnyk, OSB

May we spent some time with the Rosary in hand praying for *Vocations to the Priesthood and the Religious life.*

Speaking of **Vocations to the Religious Life and/or the Priesthood** I have had a summer of several professions of differing kinds. I had the privilege of receiving the vows of six young men in Zimbabwe - four were from Kenya and two from Zimbabwe. I was in Dublin for the Solemn Profession of one of our ‘big’ sisters in the Monastery of St Alphonsus, Sr Louisa of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Sr Bindhu will make Simple Profession also in that monastery on Saturday 7th October. Many of you will remember Br Fabrizio Podda CSsR who was with our Clapham community for a year as part of his initial formation, he made his Perpetual Profession in San Gioacchino in Rome on the 3rd of September. I was glad to be there representing Clapham and the Province, as was the confrere who came to represent Albania, where the other confrere Br Gianluigi, who made Final Profession was for one year also. On the 4th of November there will be three Perpetual Professions of our confreres in Zimbabwe and on the 11th of November there will be yet another Solemn Profession of Sr Angela OSsR in the monastery of St Alphonsus. We all know that Vocations have changed significantly over the past few decades, however I would argue that when one sees with ones own eyes these committed men and women giving themselves to God in this present age it should make us wonder in awe.

European Third Phase of the XXVI General Chapter - Tuchow

Three of us from the Province attended this 3rd Phase, myself, Br Michael Duxbury and Fr Maurice O'Mahony. It was a long meeting from the 11th until the 22nd of September, beginning with mass at 7.30am and going on through the day finishing in the evening. That being said I think the three of us would agree that it was a good meeting and a time of grace.

Br Michael and Fr Maurice took the hospitality of the Polish Provincial Fr Dariusz Paszynski CSsR very much to heart when he offered to take any confreres across the border into Ukraine. On our one day off, when most of us went into Krakow, both our men along with Fr Brendan O'Rourke, the Dublin Provincial went to Ukraine, leaving the monastery in Tuchow at 3.30am and returning 21 hours later at about 12.30am. They have some stories to share!

There was talk and sharing about the situation in both these countries in conflict. It was very distressing to hear some of the things that were being said, while at the same time there were stories of extraordinary hope, bravery and joy. Our prayers were asked for two of our confreres, Fr. Ivan Levytskyi CSsR (47 years old) and Fr. Bohdan Haleta CSsR, (58 years old) who have been held since the 16th November 2022. Our confreres who related this news spoke of how unimaginable the conditions most certainly will be. Please pray for these two confreres, whose only crime was that they stayed with the people.

From the Dublin Province, Fr Ciarán O'Callaghan wrote a piece for the CSsR Scala News which is a good article and can be found at

<https://www.cssr.news/2023/09/iii-phase-of-the-xxvi-general-chapter-and-xvi-cre-assembly-in-tuchow-poland/>

He sagely ends the article with this lovely paragraph,

“As I said at the beginning, I was conflicted at the thoughts of coming here. I was not just happy that I came – I was blessed. It was a grace-filled, Spirit-directed, transformational event in our journey as missionary disciples in the footsteps of the Redeemer.”

More information will come from this as the decisions and directions of this part of the Chapter come back to us from Rome.

I attach to this letter a Status Report given by Fr Jan Hafmans, the Provincial of St Clemens Province, on the progress we in the North West

Europe (NWE) has made over the four years. It is a clear and honest report that hopefully will help you appreciate where we are in all of this.

We spoke as the Chapter as a whole, we did work in groups and we met in our units of new federation and/or Provinces. There was very much a feeling that this is the way that we are surely going and now let us see how we can go this way with ease and harmony. We spoke about how we had already decided in March 2022 that our Federation will begin 1st July 2025. Given that this is the beginning of October 2023 there seems to be little time to move forward with things, however with our good relations amongst our number this is not the case. Progress is happening and will continue to happen.

This month there will be an important **meeting of all our confreres 50 years of age and under** to come together, to share, to discuss, and to pray. This meeting will be from the 23rd October until the 27th in a retreat centre in Neustadt, Germany. Please pray for our confreres, about 28 of them, who will participate in this meeting. Like Fr Ciaran said above, let us hope and pray that it is a *grace-filled, Spirit-directed, transformational event in our journey as missionary disciples in the footsteps of the Redeemer.*

Secretariats within the Province are slowly taking shape and I can tell you that we have a new Apostolic Life Secretariat. Let me first of all say **thank you** to the last Secretariat -Fr James McManus CSsR and Fr Kieran Brady CSsR - who worked so hard to make things happen even though with this last Quadrennium, Covid put paid to much of their ideas.

The Apostolic Life Secretariat (ALS)

Chair, Fr Casper S Mukabva CSsR

Br David Nyamuronda CSsR and Fr Peter Morris CSsR

We wish our brothers well as they take on this new role of our behalf. The first thing they will do is organise a Province Meeting in Liverpool, dates to be decided, for 2024.

At the end of this month I am travelling to Zimbabwe to have 'emergency' meetings with the Provincials' of the Carmelites and the Franciscans (OFM) as we have decided, that is COREAM have decided, that all our Theologians (South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya) are now to all study together in Kenya. This sadly means that our Holy Trinity College (HTC) in Harare, which we the Redemptorists had brought to life along with the Friars, is now in danger. Our meetings will try to look to the future and

see where HTC sits or not as the case may be. Notwithstanding the discernment that has been going on for many years with COREAM this blow to HTC is a sad chapter in the ecclesiastical history of Zimbabwe; 'yet another thing leaving this country', as said by the Nuncio. Please pray for everyone involved in these meetings and for our confreres in formation.

This weekend I have the privilege of going to Rome, responding to Fr General's invitation to Alfonso Amarante's Episcopal Ordination. This will take place tomorrow, Friday evening in the Lateran Basilica and Cardinal J Tobin CSsR will be the ordaining prelate. Please pray for Archbishop elect Alfonso, his new ministry and the enormity of the work that lies ahead of him. I am attending as the Provincial, however I have known Alfonso for these past thirty years!

I wish you all a blessed happy feast day. Wherever I go, I take you with me and I hold you in prayer. Please let us pray for all these issues stated above and let us hold one another in gratitude and in prayer. There are a few other issues that are not spoken of here however know that your prayers for these intentions will make all the difference. In our ministry and because of our vocation, each of us has the power of prayer, let us never forget this!

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Reid CSsR". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

V Rev'd Fr Richard Reid CSsR
Provincial Superior

5-X-2023

Attached: Status Report, Reading for Personal Meditation, ·
Photos... Br Fabrizio's Final Profession, the 3rd Phase of General Chapter, Sr Louisa OSsR