

Members of the Mexico territory on retreat along the Gulf of Mexico

From Monday, June 26, till Friday, July 1, the members of the Mexico territory gathered at a rustic retreat center run by the Misoneras Marianitas for their annual retreat under the direction of Fr. John Franck, AA, assistant general, who was on his way from the meetings of the Plenary General Council held earlier in the month in Pinhal, Brazil, to the international Assumptionist education congress to be held in mid-July at Assumption College, in Worcester, Massachusetts (USA).

The retreat house lies along a picturesque stretch of the Gulf of Mexico in the state of Veracruz, known as the Costa Esmeralda (the Emerald Coast), having gained its name because of the sparkling green waters it features the length of its more than 50 miles (80 kilometers) of white sand beaches.

In spite of temperatures that rose into the high 90s, a steady sea breeze blew throughout the week bringing some measure of relief.

Inspired by Fr. General's exhortation, the retreat focused on the *Rule of Life* in the wake of the recent "Year of the Consecrated Life" decreed by Pope Francis. After a general treatment of the meaning of "apostolic community," Fr. John spent time addressing Fr. d'Alzon's fundamental apostolic and spiritual intuitions and concluded with presentations on the concrete implications of the two chapters on the vows and prayer.

The three sisters who run the center enhanced the retreat experience not only with their kind smiles and constant attention, but also with their culinary skills, providing the brothers with a wide variety of local specialities.

On the way back to the capital, the group stopped at the world-famous site of Tajin, a pre-Columbian archeological site and one of the largest and most important cities of the Classic era of Mesoamerica with its numerous temples, palaces, ball-courts, and pyramids. El Tajín was named a World Heritage site in 1992, due to its cultural importance and its architecture.

so-called Pyramid of the niches (Tajin, Mexico)

In the end, the whole week's experience proved to restore spiritual and physical health