AUGUSTIANS OF THE ASSUMPTION
Province of North America & the Philippines
Provincial Chapter of Implementation
25 july– 1 august 2017

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER: 3rd DAY





The 3rd day of our Chapter began with the Eucharistic celebration at 7:30 am, presided by Father Marcel Poirier and animated by the religious and lay people from Quebec. In his homily Father Marcel stressed the importance of listening to the Word of God and the danger not to be open to the presence of the Lord. After breakfast, the capitulants gathered in the conference room.

The moderator of the day, Fr. Ngoa Ya Tshimeba, gave practical information and presented the work of the morning. He pointed out that we somehow should take the path of liberation theology: seeing, discerning and acting. In the morning, we continued to see the realities of the territories of our Province. Numerous questions were addressed to the representatives of Quebec and Mexico. Several comments followed in order to better understand our fragilities and difficulties but also to better evaluate the possibilities of revitalization of these two territories.

After this fruitful exchange, Father Bernard Holzer shared with us the news from the Philippines. He put his presentation under the words of Pope Francis: "the realities of life are stronger than ideas." The Philippines is preparing to become part of the Asia Vicariate. This territory has seen many developments: Adveniat House which is a residence for theology students, Pavel House, Language Center, Bayard and the Lay Religious Alliance. However, fragilities are not absent. Several challenges arise with regard to youth training, leadership training and personal accompaniment.

The morning ended with the presentation of Father Peter Precourt on the territory of the United States. Father Peter shared with us the riches and fragilities of the communities at the moment. The death of Father Claude Grenache, as well as several departures, was a difficult time for the religious and lay people. We can see the real and positive results of vocation work, but we must also be clear about the region's human resources, which are very fragile even if there is reinforcement that has arrived. The question in the United States: how to consolidate the different works of the mission?



The second part of the day was devoted to working in small groups constituted according to linguistic affiliation: French, English and Spanish. In rereading the documents of the General Chapter and of the January session of our Provincial Chapter, we were asked to define the main points to which the Chapter should pay attention. Father Ngoa, who introduced us to this reflection, asked us to answer a simple but radical question: "I do not want this Chapter to end without mentioning _____ ?

After brainstorming in groups, we met altogether to put our thoughts in common and to see more clearly the guidelines of the work to come. In plenary assembly, the following points were highlighted: apostolic priorities, communication, collaboration between the territories of our province, education, finance, formation, internationality, the Lay Religious Alliance, spiritual life and charism, structures, work with young people and the mission of vocations. Our day ended with the Evening Prayer and the fraternal meal. Several members continued to work, though, in order to prepare for the next day. And, of course, the night will bear counsel.

Edouard Shatov, a.a.

4th DAY



On July 28th, we started our day with the gift of a beautiful sunrise coming from the mountains surrounding Cuernavaca and shining directly inside the chapel, our special place of prayer. On this day, Morning Prayer included Psalm 51 with the following message:

"A pure heart create for me, O God,
Put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit."

Later, during the Mass, Father Peter Precourt in his homily reinforced the same spirit. He reminded us that God has put a seed in us to bring a richness to our brothers and to ourselves. Therefore, we have to use this time together to create a new direction and reality for our changing Province so as to serve the Church well.



We had a chance to work in small groups. Each team worked on one specific area which included: Spirituality and Charism, Formation, Collaboration and Internationality.

Groups are expected to present final proposals tomorrow to be included in the Acts of the Chapter. At the end of the afternoon, our new Provincial Father Dennis Gallagher presented a first draft of the new structures of the Province. This question is very important considering that our Province will become much smaller after the departure of the Philippines to another Province. He also gave some orientations about the composition of the futur provincial council and of the futur provincial council. The participants were very impressed with Father Dennis' approach to the Provincial Governance. He stressed that it will be "lighter" fraternal and more communal. The group discussion and formulation of the new structures will continue later.

Tomasz Jaster

Provincial Chapter - Days 3rd and 4th -   PDF file