

Once upon a time, there was a group of eight young Assumptionists from Chile (one of them, a religious) who had a dream: to take part in the national pilgrimage of Lourdes in France and to learn more about the Assumption. At the outset, the situation was very difficult for them, given the fact that a trip as big as this one was beyond their means. Nevertheless, God's help, their own work and the desire to reach their goal pushed them to move forward… Finally, after a great deal of effort, they were successful and set out on their pilgrimage. And now these same young people have returned to share a bit of their experience.

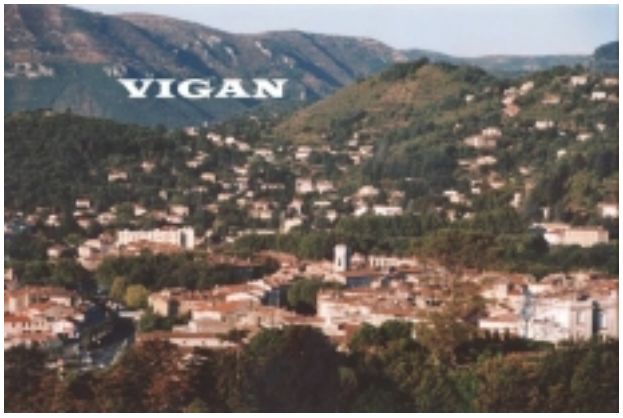


Our first stop was in Paris. Though it was great to learn about this beautiful city, the best part of the visit was to meet the Assumptionist brothers and novices who welcomed us warmly in their home and took very good care of us.

Then we headed to Lourdes, our main goal, where without a doubt we had our finest experience. We were very well received by all the participants of the pilgrimage and despite the fact that our poor knowledge of the language didn't help we understood each other without any great difficulties given the fact that the Assumptionist spirit was always there to assist us.

But what struck us most and pleased us as Assumptionists was to see the diversity of the

people who had gathered there: Africans, Indians, Europeans, Koreans, etc. And despite the fact that in many of those countries, Catholicism is not the official religion, the faith manifested by each one with regard to the Virgin and to God was worthy of our admiration. We saw with our own eyes that the Church is truly universal!



Afterwards, we went to Nimes to visit those places where Father d'Alzon lived and worked. Though we hadn't planned it that way, we encountered another group of lay Assumptionists from different places in the world, who together with the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption, intended to make the same kind of pilgrimage that we had planned. The Mother General invited us to join them, and so we had the opportunity to know and to spend time with other Assumptionist brothers and sisters.

It was really incredible to visit all of the places that were important to d'Alzon, to see where he was born and baptized, to see the school where the Congregation was founded, his childhood home, the Chateau of Lavagnac, a beautiful spot that inspired peace and tranquility.



On last evening we spent in Nimes, we offered to all those people with whom we had shared this d'Alzon pilgrimage a bit of our folklore. We really enjoyed this activity and in particular the

participation of the lay people and sisters, who even joined in the dancing… Then we went to Lyons, where we spent a few hours and once again benefited from the exceptional hospitality of the Assumptionist family.

And finally we arrived in Rome and spent time at the General house with all the Assumptionists, who once again received us very warmly. We joined them at meals and even for a birthday celebration. Once again the Assumptionists went all out to insure that our stay in their home would be the most agreeable possible for us all. In Rome we “left out feet on the sidewalk”, as we say in Chile. We walked all day long, getting to know churches, monuments, museums, etc. There’s no doubt that it was well worth it; the visit was marvelous. We are most grateful to the Assumptionist family for its hospitality, to Father Julio for his warmth and friendliness, and to God, who allowed us to know so well the Assumptionist spirit and to live it concretely.



This dream come true has encouraged us to continue participating and to be even more committed to Jesus in the Assumption, to tell others who are close to the Assumption about our life as Assumptionists. Our desire is to do all we can to share this great experience and encourage other young people to get involved and be part of the great Assumptionist family as we are.

Once again, many thanks to Fr. Julio Navarro, Fr. Claude Maréchal, Fr. Jacques Nieuviarts, Fr. Jean-Daniel Gullung, Fr. Marcos Bento de Souza, Fr. Noel Lebousse, the Oblate sisters and all the brothers who received us so well, to our Province of Chile-Argentina and to all those who made this trip possible. May God bless all of you for your generosity and for having believed in us.

The Kingdom is alive and well in the Assumption. The adventure is worth it.

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