

Pater Bhekinkosi M. Shabalala CMM berichtet aus Mariannahill, Südafrika (ENGLISH)

21 June 2016

Dear confreres,

1. Introduction

We would like to congratulate the Province of Bulawayo who were blessed with the ordination of three deacons last Saturday (18.06.16). They are deacons Herbert Mudzimu CMM, Thomas Alphase Sadya CMM and Proud Jonathan Mukamba CMM. God bless you in your ministry my confreres. During the same ceremony which was presided over by archbishop Thomas Alex SVD, the Province of Bulawayo launched the 120 years jubilee of the Congregation's presence in Zimbabwe. May this year jubilee and celebration for Bulawayo Province serve as a reminder and challenge to all of us that "our mission field is the Kingdom of God and that has no boundaries". Amhlophe!

We also thank God for the forthcoming episcopal ordination of our confrere Fr. Siegfried Mandla Jwara CMM as the episcopal vicar of Ingwavuma Vicariate. We encourage confreres to go in numbers to support our confrere to thank God for choosing one of our own for this special ministry of being a shepherd to the flock. Congratulations and best wishes to Bishop elect Fr. Jwara.

2. Arrival of Fr. General and Unit superiors

We have the pleasure and privilege to welcome to our Province the Superior General Fr. Damian Weber CMM who will arrive in South Africa on the 23rd June 2016 and return to Rome on the 04th July 2016. The Unit Superiors of Zambia (Fr. Thulani Mbuyisa CMM), East Africa (Fr. Robert Kaisa CMM), Bulawayo (Fr. Peter Nkomazana CMM) and the Netherlands (Fr. Frans Lensenn CMM) will also visit our province as they will attend the episcopal ordination. On the 28th June 2016 there will be a meeting for the Unit Superiors of Africa and the Board of Directors of Abbot Francis House at Mariannahill Monastery. Welcome to all our confreres and guests.

3. Provincial chapter and official opening/launch of the archives

You have received the convocation letter inviting you to the extra-ordinary Provincial Chapter on the 25th July 2016, starting at 9am at Mariannahill Monastery St. Anne's chapel. We hope that all of you will make it to this very special chapter whereby the superior of the Monastery will be elected. At the close of the Extra-ordinary Provincial Chapter we shall have the official opening of the Monastery archives followed by a special supper and social. There will be time provided for a tour of the archives. I sincerely thank the donors who have made it possible for us to build the archives.

4. Appointments in Mozambique

Fr. Abidon Katai Kabwe CMM has been transferred from Namaacha - Mozambique to Mariannahill Monastery. Our confreres at the Mariannahill Monastery Retreat House will mentor him and introduce him to the house and the work that it entails. At the same time, he will be doing part time studies to prepare himself for the future ministry at the Retreat House.

In the meantime, he has been temporarily appointed the chaplain of St. Mary's hospital where he works from 6am – 12 noon. Welcome home confrere.

As a result of the departure of Fr. Abidon from Mozambique, Fr. Agostinho Raul CMM has been appointed the superior of the community in Namaacha as well as the parish priest of the Shrine of Mary of Fatima. Fr. Roberto Cossa CMM has been appointed the formator and vocations director, while Fr. Germano Troesch CMM has been appointed the community bursar.

We would like to extend a vote of thanks to the confreres in Mozambique for arranging the pilgrimage in May which was a great success.

On similar note, we would like to congratulate Fr. Sylvester Namale CMM who was appointed one of the bishop's consultors in Witbank diocese.

5. Appointment of Siyabonga Mbeje CMM and Tendai Gandanzara CMM

The Mthatha Province has asked that we have a combined candidacy programme this year and we have decided in favour. Since Mariathal cannot manage to accommodate 7 candidates, a decision has been made to run a candidacy programme at Mariannahill-Monastery this year. Accordingly, Fr. Syabonga Mbeje CMM was appointed as the candidacy director for this year only. He will then move to Abbot Francis House as planned next year. He is assisted by Bro. Tendai Gandanzara CMM. I thank the two confreres for their readiness to serve and I thank Fr. Mthokozisi Khumalo CMM for his understanding. I also thank the parish priests of the parishes where these vocations come from as well as our vocation's team for their sterling job in encouraging religious vocations.

6. Formation of the business support structure

As a follow up to the gathering of Business people at the launch of the Coolock House in April 2016, we have formed a Catholic Business Forum to assist us with putting together the business plan and implementation for the greater Mariannahill. The forum comprises of Mrs. Stella Khumalo (CEO of Shaka Marine), Mrs. Pamela Mfeka (CEO of Igugu Investments), Mr. Vusi Mvelase (CEO of Zayaba Records and chairperson of Nacma Foundation), Dr. Bandile Mkhize (former CEO of Ezemvelo Parks Board) and Mr. Gugulakhe Mazibuko (Director of Moteko Enterprise).

As a result of my initial meetings with the forum, an invitation was extended to the Dioceses of Mariannahill, Eshowe, Mzimkhulu and Kokstad to come on board. Bishops Pius Dlungane, Stanley Dziuba, Zolile Mpambane and Teddy Khumalo attended the first meetings after which a Board of Trustees to manage our common business venture was formed. It comprises of representatives from the three dioceses and our Congregation since Mariannahill diocese is pulling its feet. Fr. Raphael Phiri CMM is a member of the business structure and the Trust and he is the one representing me and the interest of the Province as they engage with a number of businesses that are interested in supporting the Church in the implementation of her mission. We thank the management of the development office and Fr. Mxolisi Ngcobo O.M.I. in particular, for helping us by exposing these business people to us. Let us pray for the success of this business venture and for Fr. Phiri who represents us.

Through the contacts we have made with these business people, one business man Mr. Bongani Mfeka has offered to build and pay for the students' accommodation facility at

Vilakazi Road Marinnhill so that the Monastery can have permanent income. He also plans to build a conference centre so that Mariannahill could be able to hold bigger meetings and conferences. The Superior of the Monastery and his council are deliberating on the implementation of these projects. We shall keep you informed of the progress.

7. The Retirement Village

As the Provincial and council reflected on the business ventures that we are already involved in including the buying of Collock House, a decision has been taken to abandon the project of building the retirement village at Mariannahill so that we can focus on raising enough funds for completing the purchase of the house. I am pleased to announce that through our share (40%) of selling any piece of land for the General Government, the CMM Club as well as through donations from individual confreres and their benefactors, we are very close to completing the purchase of the Coolock House. We hope that by the end of next month we will have paid all the remaining debt. We appeal to confreres that they continue to contribute to the CMM Club as we plan to do some maintenance and alterations on Mariannahill Coolock House especially on the conference room and making some rooms en suite. Thank you so much confreres for your commitment and support of this project.

8. Monastery sewage system

For a long time the Monastery has been trying to raise funds to fix the leaking sewage pipes which had become a health hazard especially behind the Mission Centre where the sewage had destroyed a lot of grass. Through the project that the Province put together, the USA/Canada Unit has come to our rescue by providing the necessary funding of US\$38,00 to fix the sewer. The project of fixing the sewer has begun under the supervision of Bro. Konrad Diethei CMM. I sincerely thank the USA/Canada province and their benefactors for their assistance. May God richly reward them.

9. Mass intentions

We thank confreres who faithfully come to the bursar's office to collect the mass intentions which they persolve so faithfully. We ask more confreres to come forward and sign for the mass intentions since we have received more from the General Government. By persolving the mass intnetions you are not only praying for the intentions of our benefactors but you are also, contributing towards the financial being of the Province.

10. Change of formation policy

The Provincial and his council have changed the formation policy regarding pastoral ministry. From now on all confreres and candidates studying philosophy will not do pastoral work in parishes. Pastoral ministry will be arranged for them in hospitals, orphanages and homes for people who need special care. Pastoral ministry in a parish setup will be reserved for students who are studying theology.

11. Conclusion

The process of designing the new printing Press business which focuses on digital printing and publishing house is in progress. Such a change has led to the unprecedented retrenchment process at the Press which is aimed at cutting down the costs and increasing revenue. Therefore, most of the ground floor staff have already been retrenched. In addition, the big

litho machine was sold. The company that bought the machine decided to rent the same space from the Monastery and they will run their business from there. This is advantageous for us when we have big printing orders since we outsource our jobs to the company. We are in the process of retrenching Mr. Dean Petzer, the financial manager, and he is cooperating very well. Protas Madlala has been very helpful in this whole venture. I also thank the board of the Mission Press Trust Frs. Gideon Sibanda, Lawrence Mota and Bro. Tendai Gandanzara for working very hard to manage this transition of our business. God bless you confreres.

Fr. Bhekinkosi M. Shabalala CMM

Provincial Superior