

As we approach Christmas, I thought it may be of interest to share with you a bit about our life and activities here in the Region of Spain.

As you might be aware, at the beginning of the pandemic Spain together with some other countries in Europe very sadly and terrifyingly was hit very hard by the pandemic; people losing their lives in dreadful numbers, the economy falling like never before.

Throughout this past year we have continued to suffer from effects of this pandemic and it continued to cause much pain and fear among the people of Spain. Even now, undoubtedly, these months continue to be very difficult for thousands of people and for all of us. Looking around us, we can see how hard what has happened to us has been.

However, our faith always helps us to rise above the tide and to remain hopeful. As we come to the time of Christmas our hope will be fulfilled once again. In a couple of days we will celebrate the birth of the Child Jesus in Bethlehem. From that portal He continues to be the light that illuminates our world and our lives. He is the one who gives meaning to our joys and our sorrows. He is the one who accompanies us when things are going well and who sustains us when things go wrong.

Still, because of this pandemic, once again, many will not be able to meet up with their families as they did in previous years. Family gatherings, so typical of the Spanish culture, will sadly not be as many would have liked them to be. And we too will miss our loved ones from whom we have to stay. But with the vaccine that keeps raising up our hopes and confidence in the combat against this pandemic, we keep hoping.

But one fact remains, many families - too many - feel the absence of family and friends who have gone forever. These are moments of grief to which we ourselves as ministers and pastors cannot remain indifferent. Therefore it is in this spirit that I hope that we all may give the best of ourselves so that those who suffer from this sadness may feel the warmth of our company.

For each and every one of us, the Child of Bethlehem has a word of comfort, of hope and of peace. Jesus is with us, suffers with us, and weeps with us. He is always with us. We are not alone. Together with Him we are also accompanied by the whole Church.



A LITTLE BIT OF OUR LIFE



The Formators and Formees



The Photo family after Mass in 2nd of February

As some of you might be aware, in this region we are one of the smallest units in the congregation. We are 11 in total from different countries: 7 priests and 4 student priests and the countries of our origin being, Spain, Panama, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Kenya. We have 2 houses in the unit: in Madrid which is the provincial house with 4 members and Salamanca which is our formation house with 7 confreres. The students go to the Pontifical

University of Salamanca; Frts. Mauricio (Moz) and Frt. Felizardo (Moz) are in their 5th year of theology and Frts. Jared (Ken) and Bongani (Zim) are in their 3rd year of theology. Fr. Lino and Fr. Thomas are involved in the parish ministry and convent ministry. Fr Lino is assisting in 5 parishes;



Fr. Tomás in one of his Parishes



Fr. Lino after celebrating baptism

while Fr Thomas, who at the same time is the rector of the study house in Salamanca, has 4 parishes. Fr. Juanjo, who at the same time is the vice rector, is mainly involved in the ministry convent.

In Madrid there are 4 members in the community with Fr. Rafael Chichava CMM as Unit Superior; Fr Musa Mchunu CMM as the Local Administrator of the community of Madrid; Fr. José Alonso Torres M. CMM and Fr. Innocent Shava CMM. In this community, as it consists of vibrant priests, the main focus is pastoral activities, parish ministry, chaplaincy to the convents and, recently, pastoral care to 2 retirement homes. While all 4 of us are involved in the ministry to 5 convents, Fr. Rafael is fully involved in the parish of *San Pablo de la Cruz*; Fr. Innocent is actively involved in the parish of *San Juan Bautista*.



Fr. Innocent in his Parish

When we thought that was enough, recently the Archdiocese



Fr. Musa's Residence

of Madrid asked us to assume a new pastoral ministry to 2 retirement homes which consists of more or less 100 residents. Fr. Alonso and Fr Musa have assumed this pastoral care ministry which involves weekend and festive days Holy Masses and stand-by duties when called. Fr Alonso is at *Manoterás* and Fr. Musa at *Santísima Virgen y San Celedonio*. This pastoral engagement seems to be working very well especially as we are a relatively a young and vibrant community.



Fr. Rafael in his Parish



Fr. Alonso's Residence

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

I would like to highlight some of the developments that took place this year which may be of interest to you.

1. As we normally do every year, in February 1-2 we met as a Region in the house of Salamanca. On this occasion we celebrated the main feast of the Congregation. Fr. Rafael Chichava CMM was officially installed as the Regional Superior of the Unit. Our confreres Frts. Jared Omondi CMM and Bongani Ndlovu CMM renewed their vows and the confirmation of vows by all the members of the Unit.



Fr. Rafael and Frts. Jared and Bongani after renewing the vows

2. On the same day we had an Assembly in which two Regional Councillors were elected: Fr. Tomás Camissone Guetsane CMM as First Councillor and Regional Vicar and Fr. Innocent Shava CMM as Second Councillor.



2nd of March in Salamanca

3. Like in some of the units of the Congregation, on March 2nd we celebrated the commemoration of our Blessed Engelmar Unzeitig.

4. As per custom, in September the Region again met in Salamanca from 30 August to 8 September for the annual Regional meeting beginning with the Regional annual retreat and ending with the Regional Assembly in which we look at an overview of the Region for the past year.

5. Every year our unit has a tradition of visiting our deceased confreres who worked and died here and are buried in Palencia;

Alberto Schärf (+1975) and Matias Tutsch (+2002), which is our first presence in Spain. So on the 29th of October the members of the Unit go to the cemetery to pray and celebrate Mass.

It is my hope that this brief picture does give a simple picture of our Unit of Spain. It is of utmost interest for me to keep sharing with you about the life and activities here in our Unit.



During our prayer in the cemetery in Palencia

Dear confreres with this brief sharing about our Unit of Spain, I hope that you pray with us to ask the Lord for His grace to guide our move forward, both communally and pastorally, responding to today's challenges, of which there are so many.

My wishes for 2022 are peace, prosperity and hope as well as unity as we join our efforts to mitigate the health emergency that all of humanity is experiencing and whatever challenges that our Congregation is facing.

I hope that together we can commit ourselves from our faith and charity in Jesus Christ to heal and alleviate all the suffering of this time.

Dear brothers and sisters, I and together with all the members of the unit of Spain wish you a Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

P. Rafael Manuel Machavane Chichava CMM

Superior Regional