



CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARIES OF MARIANHILL,

MTHATHA REGION

P. O. BOX 85 MTHATHA, 5100,

EASTERN- CAPE PROVINCE- SOUTH AFRICA•

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11th April 2022

Dear Confreres

The celebration of Palm Sunday makes alive that historical event in which Jesus entered triumphantly into Jerusalem to accomplish his paschal mystery. It ushers us into the Holy Week in which we reflect and participate in a process of suffering, dying and rising, but ultimately, the celebration of a new life (the resurrection). In a world that has been ravaged by Covid-19, with so much suffering and death: how can we make the celebration of the paschal mystery of our Lord real and meaningful? I pray that the Lord may inspire and guide all of us during the Holy Week and immensely bless us with new life at his resurrection so that we can share this new life with each other and with the faithful. Have a blessed Holy Week Confreres!

Regional Assembly and Celebration of the Principal Feast of our Congregation

Our Regional assembly was held on 1st February 2022. The attendance was impressive and those who could not attend tendered their apologies. Thank you for your active participation and contributions during our discussions. Our leadership team will study the minutes of the assembly and identify issues that need to be addressed during the course of the year.

The celebration of our principal feast was successful and a joyful occasion. For the very first time (I was told it has not happened before), Bishop Sithembele Sipuka presided over the liturgy and delivered a powerful homily (those who were in attendance can attest to this). It was significant for me that the majority of the Confreres were part of the celebration and together we had the opportunity to renew our vows. It is on such occasions that we demonstrate our unity and identity despite our differences. I want to appeal to all of us that in the future, we prioritise both the assembly and the celebration of the principal feast.

Diaconate Ordination

Our two confreres (Frts Likabo Jackson Mandela and Joel Bokoyo Mpenbe) have been admitted to the order of diaconate and will be ordained deacons together with the Missionaries of Africa at Merrivale on the 7th May 2022. Archbishop Mandla S. Jwara, CMM will be the ordaining bishop. I am aware that it will be difficult for many confreres to attend

because of pastoral commitments, however, those who can afford, please let us go and support our young confreres.

Graduation

We congratulate Frts Jackson Mandela and Joel Bokoyo who graduated with their BA Theology degrees and Novice Serge who graduated with a BA in Philosophy. Brothers, we share your joy for this achievement and encourage you to continue developing yourselves.

Emmaus pilgrimage

The annual pilgrimage to Emmaus to celebrate the death anniversary of Abbot Francis Pfanner will take place on the 21st May 2022. The choir of St Pauls, Ngangelizwe will be responsible for singing. We are all encouraged to attend and participate.

Home leave

Fr Stephan Mandl CMM will be going to Austria for his home leave at the beginning of June and is expected to return at the end of August 2022. We wish Fr Stephan a restful time and enjoyable holidays back home.

Retreat

At the assembly we agreed that we will have our own retreat as a Region this year, which means we will not join the one organised by the Diocese. We are working on this and as soon as we find a venue and suitable time, we shall communicate it to you.

Mariazell Farm

The Bishop of Mthatha Diocese has allowed us to utilize the piggery at Mariazell and a portion of the farm for income generation purposes. Ten female pigs have already been delivered and ten more piglets will be delivered during this week. A portion of the farm will be ready for our use as soon as the current farmer moves out at the end of June 2022. In addition to income generation, our aim is to create employment for the local people. I appeal to you confreres to support this initiative which is aimed at improving our financial situation.

Candidacy programme

The Candidacy programme has started with one candidate, Mr Genesis Akundo from Cameron. We are expecting two aspirants from DRC and one from Bloemfontein to join the programme soon.

Fr Wenceslaus Wangila CMM

I would like to welcome Fr Wenceslaus who has been transferred from the Region of East Africa to the Mthatha Region. You are most welcome Fr Wenceslaus and I wish you God's richest blessings in your new ministry.

Preparation for Perpetual Profession Programme (PPPP)

The PPPP is scheduled to take place during the winter break at Mariannhill. This programme is organised and coordinated by the GG (Formation Portfolio). Three of our young confreres will participate in this programme (Frts Chika Kingsley, Nhlanhla Bright Ziqubu and Pius Mwangi). Let us keep them in our prayers.

The New Bishop Elect of the Diocese of Kokstad

On behalf of our Region of Mthatha I wish to congratulate our former Superior General, Rev. Thulani Victor Mbuyisa CMM on his appointment as the New Bishop Elect of Kokstad Diocese. We pray that God may guide and strengthen him to be a good shepherd to His people, and that both the clergy and the faithful will accept and welcome him. Okumhlophe kodwa Baba Mbuyisa.

Pre-Chapter Commission Meeting In Rome

The Pre-Chapter Commission has had several virtual meetings to assist the GG prepare for the General Chapter. A physical meeting has been planned to take place in Rome. To this end, I shall be traveling to attend that meeting on the 21st April and return on 2nd May 2022. Fr Thomas Wao will be fully in charge of the Region during my absence. In case you need to contact him, his cell phone number is 0780242663, and his email is thomaswao1980@gmail.com.

Once again, I wish you all a blessed Holy Week and joyful Easter celebrations. Together we can!

Sincerely Yours,

Fr Gideon Sibanda, CMM

Regional Superior