

# Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 1

January 2006

## Visit to Members of the Institute

This month I am beginning the visitation of members of the Institute in Asia. I shall be in India from January 6 to 21. From January 21 to February 4 I shall be visiting Sri Lanka, and from February 8 to 14, I shall be in Laos. Article 166 of our Constitutions directs that the director general visit all the districts of the Institute at least once every six years. The experience I got during my first term as director showed me the importance of these visits, to stimulate formation and as a sign of the communion that exists between members throughout the world. It is also an occasion to meet the bishops and to advance the cause of the Institute.

## Greetings from Father Parent

On December 8 Father Parent sent me his best wishes; however, I believe that they are addressed to all the Institute. Here is a translation of the complete text.

Dear François,

I am taking a head-start with my wishes for 2006.

Let us continue to the best of our abilities to give Him the affectionate attention He expects from each one of us. Let us also continue to be the affectionate and submissive children of the Virgin who is charged with sanctifying every present moment of our lives, and let us tirelessly tell her, in the depths of our hearts, "God is so good!"

I am aging, and I have time to pray, that is, I have the time to love.

A Happy New Year to every member of the Institute, and may the Virgin continue to nourish our spiritual lives: is she not the nourisher of our hearts and souls?

And bless me too, all of you. with you I experience the happiness of lovingly serving the Lord, in the school of Mary.

*Louis-Marie Parent, O.M.I.*

## Director of Administrative Services

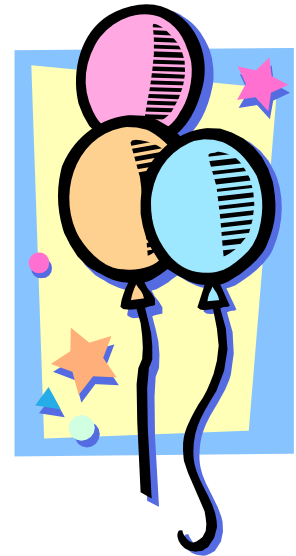
Paul-Alain Monpas has been director of administrative services of the Institute since the last assembly general. However, ill health has forced him to resign his position, and it is with regret that the central council accepts the resignation despite his good work and concern for members of the Institute. After agreement of the central council I have appointed Mr. Régnald Tremblay to take over the position of director of administrative services. Régnald is an associate member of the Institute, and he lives in the national capital region. His experience as a Canadian civil servant and his attachment to the Institute will certainly serve him in good stead. Thank you, Régnald, for accepting this service.

## Happy Birthday

January 13, to *Lloyd Shanthikumar*, director of the Sri Lanka Region.

January 22, to *George F. Hazler*, director of the U.S.A. Region. George is also president of the United States Conference of Secular Institutes.

January 26, to *Michael Craig*, member of the central council. Michael is also in charge of follow-up to the 2004 assembly general.



## My Wishes for the New Year 2006

At the beginning of 2006, I take this opportunity to wish you a grace-filled New Year. We have all chosen to live according to the spirituality of the Three Fives as our means of achieving holiness. Paraphrasing the second "5": In 2006, let us become even more aware of the presence of God at the very heart of our daily life. Let us curb our criticism and complaining. Let us show more concern for others by being of service, and let us be peacemakers in our milieu.

**François Hamel**  
**Director General**

# Voice of the Central...

Volume 5 ♦ Number 2

February 2006

At the time that you will receive this communication, I will be in Sri Lanka. During the second week of February, I will find myself in Laos with Louis Ling Mangkhanekhoun. I have the pleasure to travel with Pierre Marois, priest of the Canadian District, who asked to accompany me during the course of my visit.

## Statistics

Each year the Office of Statistics for the Vatican asks us to send to it data concerning our Institute. This year, as of December 31st, we have 834 members compared to 812 last year. This signifies a 2.7 % increase.

Bishop :	01
Priests incardinated in the Institute :	109
Priests incardinated in a diocese :	34
Deacons incardinated in the Institute :	04
Deacons incardinated in a diocese :	02
Celibate laymen :	37
Major seminarians:	82
Married persons :	565

Distribution by country is :

Cameroun :	02	Ethiopia :	04
Canada :	150	Guadeloupe :	02
Chile :	35	Haïti :	52
Colombia :	21	India :	173
Congo :	06	Italy :	02
Cuba :	04	Laos :	01
Ecuador :	05	Dominican Rep. :	243
Scotland :	01	Sri Lanka :	84
United States:	46	Venezuela :	03

You will note that it is necessary to distribute the number of members by country of residence rather than by districts and regions. For example, two priests who serve in Guadeloupe are two Haitian priests who belong to the District of Haiti. In the same way, the layman from Scotland belongs to the region of the United States. The members of Cuba and Laos belong to the Central Administration. It is the same for the new foundations in Cameroun, Congo, Ethiopia, Italy and Venezuela as they await being sponsored by a district and/or being self-sufficient in becoming a region.

### **Speedy Recovery**

The Secretary General, Léo Grégoire, has spent some time in hospital during the past few weeks. Having difficulty breathing, he was admitted into intensive care at the regional hospital at Edmundston where they discovered that he was anemic and had water around his heart and had gall stones. He was operated on January 9<sup>th</sup> to relieve the water around his lungs and heart. He was taken off of the artificial respirator on January 18<sup>th</sup> after a week of being in a doctor induced coma to facilitate his recovery. You will understand that after coming out of the coma he was somewhat confused; he came from afar.

He is now out of intensive care and in a standard room in the hospital. He is awaiting an operation for the removal of the gall stones. Please continue to remember him in your prayers so that his recovery will unfold for the best.

**François Hamel**  
**Director General**

# The Voice Of The Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 3

March 2006

It has been only a few days since I have returned to Canada. My visit to Asia permitted me to meet many colleagues in India, Sri Lanka and Laos.

***In India,*** the Institute is growing under the leadership of Father Thannikot. For a number of years, we have had a house of formation in Thiruvananthapuram for minor seminarians. The major seminarians were spread out throughout different houses of formation or religious communities accepted to help us. Several years ago the Central Council agreed to the idea of building a house of formation in Always for students in philosophy and theology. Thanks to the dedication of Father Thannikot, the project is taking shape. In April, the first floor will be completed and all of the major seminarians will be welcomed there for the next school year.

During my visit, three major seminarians were received into stability :: Victor Joseph ANTONY EVERYSTUS, Andrew FRANCIS, Dassayyan SHAIJU. I met priests devoted as Sengol and Churchil who are working with the Dalits, the lowest caste in the traditional caste system.

***In Sri Lanka,*** the Institute is also growing under the direction of Father Shanthikumar. We have there two houses of formation for minor seminarians : one in Jaffna and the other in Kockchikade, close to Colombo. In this latter house, students deepen their understanding of English. In 2000, the Institute acquired land and a small house in Kandy located very close to the national major seminary. The house was outdated and required repairs. During my visit, the bishop of Kandy, Bishop Fernando Joseph Vianney, came to bless a new residence built close to the small house. I met priests, celibate laymen and couples who continue to believe « in the positive » despite a daily life marked by a civil war that has been going on for a long time.

In Jaffna, four couples were received into stability : Joseph Sebamalai and Rajaprema MARIANAYAGAM, Joseph and Anne NAVARATNAM, Saverian and Thresammah SEBASTIAMPILLAI, Marianayagam and Josephine STANLEY.

***In Laos,*** I met Bishop Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekhoun. Louis always maintains a jovial attitude in spite of a political situation that does not favour Christianity. He told me that even alone and far from other members of the Institute, he has never felt abandoned. With him, there are five young men interested in becoming priests. Next September, he will welcome close to another eight. During a day of retreat, I spoke to them and presented to them the spirituality of the 5-5-5.

## **Secretary General**

Our colleague, Leo Gregoire, Secretary General of the Institute, gave us a scare in January. He is now out of hospital and has returned home. Thank you to everyone who accompanied him through prayers.

## **Our Feast Day**

On March 25 we will celebrate the feast day of the Institute. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that the Son to whom she will give birth will not only be a descendant of David, since she was betrothed to Joseph, but also the Son of God : « He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High » Luke 1 :32. This feast is the occasion for each one of us to rediscover the essence of our secular consecration. Like Jesus, we must live our life as sons and daughters of men and women but also as sons and daughters of God. Saint Louis of France said that the most beautiful day of his life was not his coronation but rather the day of his Baptism since he was made a son of God.



## **Birthday**

On March 31, Mrs. Nicole Lefebvre, cook at the Central House, will celebrate her birthday. Persons like Nicole who work behind the scenes are very important. Colleagues who have visited and stayed at the Central House recognize her qualities.

**François Hamel**  
**Director General**

# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 4

April 2006

At the time that you read these lines, I will be in Rome. In July 2004, at the World Conference of Secular Institutes that was held in Poland, I was re-elected as a member of the Executive Council of the Conference until 2008. This Council meets each year at the beginning of April. At the 2006 meeting, we will study the possibility of celebrating the anniversary of *Provida Mater Ecclesia*, the apostolic constitution, that officially created secular institutes in 1947.

## Father Parent

On my return from Asia, I visited Father Parent. I found him thin but in good humour. He is always dumbfounded when we tell him how many *Voluntas Dei* there are in the world. He adds : « That is what happens when one obeys God. » His health is good for a man of 95 years. He told me that he prays daily for the *Voluntas Dei* and that he awaits the Lord.

## Translators

I would like to underline the formidable work of those who do translations for the Central Administration. You receive this message by way of the internet but there are those who contribute their talents as translators. They work in the background. I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank **Guillermo Perez Montoya** of Colombia for the translation into Spanish and **Leo Gregoire** of Canada for the translation into English. I also note the participation of **Andrew Mayer** of Canada for translations into English.

## Ordinations to the Priesthood

On April 22, **Guillaume Mabilu**, of the Congo but in formation in Haïti and **Lycius Leclerc** of the District of Haïti will be ordained to the priesthood.

On April 23, **Innasi Muddiyappan**, from the Region of India will also be ordained to the priesthood.

I invite you to pray for them. The three of them will take up the challenge of being holy priests as *Voluntas Dei*, i.e., priests living the spirituality of the 5-5-5.

## Additions to the Web Page (<http://www.voluntasdei.org>)

A series of new documents have been added to the Institute's WEB page which should help all members participate more fruitfully to the current general consultation on the implementation of the 2004 General Assembly's recommendations. These PDF documents are available at the top of the Members' Area section and are all available for download.

This group includes:

1. [Introductory comments](#). This text is addressed specifically to the membership, stating the consultation objectives, describing the framework and the expected results of this process. It supplies invaluable information to assure a fruitful team reflection.
2. The final report of each of the five workshops:  
[Workshop 1](#): The Mission of the Voluntas Dei Institute.  
[Workshop 2](#): Our Missionary Vocation and the Formation of Our Members.  
[Workshop 3](#): Perception of the Voluntas Dei Institute.  
[Workshop 4](#): Recruitment  
[Workshop 5](#): Government, Functioning Management, Formation, Communication
3. [Questions to be reflected upon and to be shared in each Institute team](#). These questions will guide your team reflections

If you encounter login problems or have forgotten your password, just send a short e-mail to the webmaster at [webmestre@voluntasdei.org](mailto:webmestre@voluntasdei.org) and we will be glad to help.

## Birthdays

On April 10, our colleague, **Léo Grégoire**, will celebrate his birthday. Leo has been Secretary General since 1998.

On April 26, **André Côté**, Director of the Canadian District, will also celebrate his birthday. André has been the Director of the District since 2003.



The best gift we can give to them is a spiritual bouquet of prayers and masses for their intentions.



## **Happy Easter**

On April 16, we will celebrate the central mystery of our faith : the resurrection of Jesus. Since that first Easter morning, we are called to walk *in the footsteps of Jesus*, making our own his message to love one another as he loved us. No matter where we are inserted to live life daily, we must be peacemakers. This point of our spirituality seems to me more and more appropriate in a world weakened by war and terrorism. To each of the members of the Institute, I reiterate the wish of Jesus : *May peace be with you!*

***François Hamel***  
***Director General***

# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 5

May 2006

I wish to express my best wishes...

On May 17 to **Jacques Harvey** who is the Director of the Office of Vocations and Missions at the Central House. On a number of weekends each year he goes from parish to parish speaking about the missions of the Institute. He is also in charge of the monthly letter that we send to the benefactors of the Institute. Thank you Jacques for your work of education on behalf of the missions and for the collections for our brothers and sisters in need.



On May 18 to **Mario Laroche** who was the Director General from 1980 to 1992. Mario is at present the pastor of a parish unit that brings together a number of churches in the diocese of Amos in the north of Québec.

On May 27 to **Madame Claire Lafrenière** who is the book-keeper for the Central Administration. She is a devoted woman and she does the follow-up to the decisions of the Central Council that are related to administration. She works with Renald Tremblay, the Director of Administrative Services.

**François Hamel**  
*Director General*

# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 6

June 2006

## Welcome to the Central House

On May 17, Innasi Mudiyanpan of the India Region visited.

## Priestly Ordination

I request your prayers for Antony Rebello who will be ordained a priest in India on June 17. Every ordination is a grace from the Lord, for the Institute. It is important to support those who respond to God's call to them.

## Central Council

The central council met from April 28 to 30. Among matters discussed was the request of the United States Region to be erected as a district in formation. The request was granted.

The resignation of Paul Janvier as a member of the Haiti district council was accepted.

It was decided that reports of the director general's visitations – or those of his delegate(s) – would be partially published in *The Present Moment*.

The councillors also studied the question of the Office of Vocations and Missions monthly newsletter. Income generated by this source for the benefit of our missions is drying up. The Canadian benefactors die, and they are not replaced, so we must find other means of support. We are open to all suggestions!

The next council meeting will be its plenary session when our confreres Manuel Cornejo Garate and James Dunstan Selvaratnam attend. The meeting will be held from July 27 to 29. We request your prayers for us, on that occasion.

## **Surgery**

I am not in the habit of mentioning medical operations, in this newsletter, but there is one that I cannot let pass unnoticed. On April 28 Roger Corneau who is in charge of all the internet aspect of the central administration, had bypass surgery on four arteries. He is recuperating well. This gives me the opportunity to point out all the work he did to establish the Institute's web page and keep it updated. He volunteers many hours to this work because he believes in his commitment to the Institute. Thank you, Roger. Get well soon, with Cécile's care!

## **Follow-up to the 2004 Assembly General**

Mandated for this by the central council, the committee ad hoc reminds all of the June 1, 2006, to answer the questionnaire regarding the workshops of the 2004 assembly general. Your central council is eager to learn about how creatively each of you participated and have thought of concrete applications in your districts or regions. Thank you for your promptness in filling out the questionnaire.

## **Birthday**

*René Désilets* will be having a birthday on June 6. René was the institute's first director general, following Father Parent's many years at the helm. Happy Birthday, René!

**François Hamel**  
**Director General**



# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 7

July 2006

## Welcome to the Central House

On June 29, *Fr. Jean Lacaille* of Dominican Republic.

From June 29 to July 12, *Fr. Guillaume Mabilu* from Congo, Africa

## Ordination

Jean-Marie Luc of the Haiti District was ordained a priest in the cathedral at Port-au-Prince, on June 17.

## Sri Lanka

I request your prayers for peace in Sri Lanka. Towards the middle of June, Father Lazar Sebastian Croos's niece was brutally murdered, along with her family. Tensions continue to run high between the army and the rebels. Our spirituality calls on us to be PEACEMAKERS. I am certain that all of us want to do something constructive towards this end. Our powerlessness regarding those involved in this conflict must not make us forget the power of prayer.

## Happy Birthday!

*Manuel Cornejo Garate*, July 4. Manuel is director of the Chile Region, and a member of the Institute's Central Council.

*Father Louis-Marie Parent* celebrates his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 12. Let us offer him a spiritual bouquet by praying for him especially, on that day. I met Father two weeks ago, and he was very well... for a man his age. He said to me: "At my age, I am only a presence to those around me, but I feel a Presence within me." A beautiful lesson about the present moment!



***Rénald Tremblay***, July 20. Rénald has taken up the challenge of looking after the Central Council's financial administration... a thankless job, at times, though it is very important, in the actualising of the present moment.

***Marie Meunier***, July 23. Marie has been the secretary at the Central House for close to five years, and all know her for her sociability and her welcome of others.

***James Dunstan Selvaratnam***, July 25. Dunstan is a member of the Institute's Central Council.

François Hamel  
Director General

# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 8

August 2006

## Welcome to the Central House

From June 29 to July 12, *Fr. Guillaume Mabilu* from Congo, Africa

July 18-19, 26-31: *Manuel Cornejo Garate*, director of the Chile Region and member of the central council.

July 20-September 19: *Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekhoun*, our confrere, bishop of Paksé in Laos.

July 26-30: the *members of the central council*.

## Father Parent ...

On July 12 I spent some time visiting with Father Parent who was celebrating his birthday. He was happy and appreciative of life, despite the fact that he realised he was getting close to a century of living. He told me that 96 years is long, but that it goes by very fast. He lives the present moment in a state of waiting... waiting for the Lord to open his door to him. He added: "I imagine Mary being there and telling me, 'Come, my Louis' ('Viens, mon Louis'). He insisted on the fact that the Virgin will call him, "MY Louis.' We talked about the foundation of the Recluses, the Oblates O.M.M.I., the Volunteers, and the Voluntas Dei. He said that he did nothing, that it was the Holy Spirit who accomplished everything.

He thanks all those who sent him birthday greetings by way of the central house.

## Vacation ...

I shall be on vacation from August 4 to 24. In case of emergency, you can reach *Jean-Paul Chiasson*, the assistant director general, at 1-506-344-8212, or 1-506-344-7639.

## **Happy Birthday to:**

*Wilner Fils-Aimé*, director of the Haiti District: August 4.

*Yvon Carpentier*, director general from 1992 to 1998. He resides at the central house and spares no effort to help out in every way possible: August 5.

*Fernand Turgeon*, member of the central council: August 6.

*Raymonde Jetté-Turgeon*, member of the central council:  
August 9.

At the council table, Fernand and Raymonde represent the married couples.

I ask you to pray for me, on August 26, when I celebrate my own birthday.



**François Hamel**  
**Director General**



# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 9

September 2006

## **Last month, the following visited at the central house**

Bishop Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekoun, from Laos.  
August 1-18: Philippe Mantout, of the Canadian District.

## **Central Council**

The central council met July 27, 28, and 29. Michael Craig was unable to attend, for health reasons. The meeting was also a time to welcome two councillors from outside North America: Manuel Cornejo Garate from Chile, and James Dunstan Selvaratnam from Sri Lanka.

## **Regional Councils**

Two regional councils are ending their mandates.

In India, regional director Joseph Thannikot and councillors (John Remigius, Stephen Gnanaprakasam and the couple Lourde Mary and Ambrose Sesaian) ended their term on March 16. When I visited there in January, they accepted to go on for a few months more, to give time for consultation. After receiving the advice of the central council I re-appointed Joseph Thannikot to a second four-year mandate. Innasi Mudiappan, Shabin Kaniampuram, and the couple Lourde Mary and Ambrose Sesaian have been appointed councillors.

In Sri Lanka, director Lloyd Shanthikumar and his councillors Lazar Sebastian Croos, Anthony Marusiline, and the couple Ponamma and Joseph Johnpillai end their mandate in November of this year. After receiving the advice of the central council I appoint James Dunstan Selvaratnam regional director, and Anthony Sahayanathan, Anton Mariathas, and the couple Joyce and Joseph Navaratnam, regional councillors.

To those leaving their charge I express my deepest gratitude for the wonderful work accomplished either in India or in Sri Lanka. I know about the countless hours, the energy, and the personal commitment needed for the service of authority in the Institute and the Church. THANK YOU! To those who are continuing or are taking up this service in the Institute which is the direction of a council, I invite you to turn to the Holy Spirit, that He give you the discernment and the light needed to guide your brothers and sisters.

## **Happy Birthday**

September 1, to *Joseph Thannikot Variath*, director of the India Region.

Thank you to those who sent to me their wishes for my anniversary.

**François Hamel**  
**Director General**



# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 10

October 2006

## Was Welcomed at the Central House

Bishop Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekhoun of Laos (until September 18).

## Central Council

The central council will be meeting at Trois-Rivières October 27, 28, and 29. We count on your prayers that the Holy Spirit guide our deliberations and the decisions we must make for the good of the Institute.

I urge all district and regional directors to forward as quickly as possible all requests, so that the councillors may study them.

## Happy Birthday to

*Pilar Maximinio Matos Sanchez*, October 12.  
Maximinio is director of the Altagracia District (Dominican Republic).

**François Hamel**  
Director General



# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 11

November 2006

## Visitors to the Central House ...

**October 6-7:** Grégoire Lapointe (Canada); Yves Dionne (Canada); Guy Maillé (Canada)

**October 6 - ...:** Philippe Mantout (Canada)

## Death

In the Church, November is the Month of the Dead, when we think of and pray for the departed in a special way. The month begins with All Saints Day (November 1) and is followed by the Commemoration of all the faithful departed (November 2).

I invite you all to pray for the deceased members of the Institute:

June 29, 2006: *Elis Reyes de Leon*, associate member of the Dominican Republic. He was the husband of Justina Mercedes.

The district and regional directors are obliged to let the central administration know of the death of all members.

I also ask you to pray in a very special way for all our benefactors who died during the year. Their support was invaluable to us in “creating peace and fellowship in Jesus Christ.”

“The Spirit himself gives witness with our spirit  
that we are children of God.

But if we are children, we are heirs as well:  
heirs of God, heirs with Christ.”

(Rm. 8:16-17)

Let me remind you people who have access to the internet of the importance of sharing the contents of this Newsletter so that EVERYONE in the Institute benefit from it. This monthly newsletter is meant to be a communication link of unity with the central administration as well as between everyone in the Institute, wherever they be.

**François Hamel**  
**Director General**

# The Voice of the Central

Volume 5 ♦ Number 12

December 2006

## **The Central Council...**

At its October 27-28 meeting the central council renewed the mandate of some of the regional directors and councillors. Have been appointed:

### ***Chile:***

Director:	Manuel Cornejo Garate
Assistant Director:	Marcos Alejandro Guerra Romero
Councillors:	Henry Omar Bernal Arancibia Richards Eduardo Leive Muñoz Catalina Rosa Gonzalez Menay

### ***Colombia:***

Director:	Alonso de Jesus Posada Echeverry
Assistant director:	Guillermo Perez
Councillors:	Edward rengifo Dorado Martha Lucia Velasquez Salazar

### ***United States:***

Director:	George Hazler
Assistant Director:	Andrew Sioleti
Councillors:	John O'Neill Domenic Basile Elaine Antonucci Basile

## **Director General's Visit**

I shall be visiting the confreres in Ecuador, from January 9 to 12, 2007. This will be an opportunity to witness with the members the setting up of a structure for greater autonomy and growth.

From January 12 to 22, I shall be in Chile, and attending the ordination of Marcos Alejandro guerra Romero. He shall be the second Chilean priest incardinated in the Institute.

## Happy Birthday...

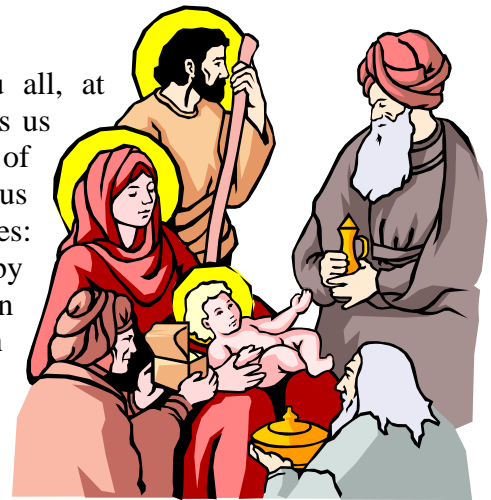
December 15: *Paul-Alain Monpas*, member of the Institute's central council.

December 25: *Alonso de Jesus Posada Echeverry*, director of the Colombia Region.

December 28: *Jean-Paul Chiasson*, assistant director general of the Institute.

## Best Wishes

I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to you all, at Christmastime. The celebration of the birth of Christ reminds us of God's love for humankind. We can still hear the message of the angels: "Peace on earth, good will to man." And Jesus himself tells us: "This is how all will know you for my disciples: your love for one another" (Jn. 13:35). In a world scarred by wars, we are summoned in a special way to be peacemakers in our milieus. *Cum Maria contemplemur Christi vultum!* With Mary, let us contemplate the face of Christ! Merry Christmas!



**François Hamel**  
**Director General**