

News of the Director General

Volume 6♦

2015-2016

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News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 1

July 2015

Chile

The Voluntas Dei Institute was birthed in Chile in 1982 at Linares with the first team. In this country, our Institute owes its existence thanks to the generous support of our big sisters the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate (O.M.M.I.). They greatly contributed to the development of our Institute in a number of mission countries. Especially in Chile, we must extend a particular thank you to Gabrielle Foucault who knew how to accompany the first steps of the members of this country.

The members of this first team knew how to sow the spirituality, life and the charism of the Institute in such a way that after 33 years of existence, this District in Formation today comprises 33 members: 4 priests, 5 candidates to Orders, 4 celibate laymen and 19 associate members. Even though the number of members may be slight, the quality of them is magnanimous. Indeed, their great involvement and commitments and what they bring to the local Church as members in the strict sense and as associate members is incredible. Our priests exercise their ministry in the churches of the different dioceses and also work in the universities and elsewhere where their help is requested.

The way of life of the Voluntas Dei, being particular and unique, seems to cause a certain loss of vocations in the spirit of those responsible for vocations of the different dioceses. Through good cordial, peaceful and reassuring relationships that our members have with the diocesan priests and consecrated persons of the various communities, this fear or difficulty has been become less marked. In this way, the members of Chile create an atmosphere of “**Christian contact**” in their own milieu where they live and work.

News

Dates to Remember

On July 2nd, we will celebrate the 57th anniversary of the foundation of the Institute. Please pay particular attention to this day and live on this day thanksgiving and joy. Happy celebration!

On this same day will be the 63rd anniversary of the foundation of our big sisters the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate. We congratulate all with our assurances of prayers.

Meeting of the Central Council

The next meeting of the Central Council will be held July 13-16 at the Central House. I invite you to pray for the success of this meeting.

Thought of the Month

To share with others is to strengthen oneself. (*L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.*)

Birthdays

On July 2, **Marcos Alejandro Guerra Romero**, Director of the District in Formation, Chile, will celebrate his birthday.

On July 4, **Manuel Cornejo Gárate** will celebrate his birthday. He is a member of the Central Council and the Assistant Director of the District in Formation, Chile.

July 12 is the birthday of our Founder, **Father Parent**. Let us hold him in our prayers.

On July 20, **Rénauld Tremblay**, Chairperson of the Committee Responsible for the Prevention of Harassment and the Resolution of Abuse Complaints will celebrate his birthday.

On July 22, **Paul-René Lavigne**, long time friend of the Institute, will celebrate his birthday.

I wish all a good birthday and ask for your prayers for them. May God bless them and keep them in good health!

On July 25, I will celebrate my birthday as well as my anniversary of priesthood. I invite you to offer your prayers for me.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 2

August 2015

India

Toward the end of the 60's, Father Parent, accompanied by Father Florentine Rajaratnam, visited India. They introduced the spirituality and charism of the Institute in the diocese of Trivandrum. Bishop Marc Netto demonstrated a great interest and expressed the desire to belong to the Institute. He and a number of diocesan priests constituted the first team which became a part of the District of Sri Lanka under the direction of Father Florentine.

In 1980, students were recruited by the Institute that erected a house of formation in Trivandrum, named « Bethel ». In 1988, India separated from Sri Lanka and became a distinct region. Vocations continued to grow more and more and a second house of formation was established by the Institute for major seminarians in Aluva.

Toward the end of the 80's, understanding the nature and involvement of laypeople in the Institute, the Archbishop of Trivandrum permitted the region of India to integrate married couples as committed members.

It has always been a great challenge in India to express secular consecration in the milieu on account of the cultural barrier, religious consecration specifically and the participation of laypeople. However, India is one of the promising districts for vocations today. In a short period of time, it comprises:

- 31 priests incardinated in the Institute
- 2 priests incardinated in a diocese
- 32 candidates to the priesthood
- 50 committed members

For a total of 115 members.

India has members in two states of the country: Kerala and Tamil Nadhu. Now its mission is to extend to Assam (north east of the country). Further, a new mission is in construction in Australia comprised of five priests.

It is a great challenge for the members of the Voluntas Dei Institute in India to form their members both initially and on-going in order to be evangelizers of secular consecration within the context of multi-culturalism, multi-religious and involving a number of rites. In their daily life, they put into practice the complexity of « becoming leaven in the dough, salt of the earth and light of the world » in a pluralistic society.

Let's thank God for the blessings of vocations and also let us pray for the realization of the very essence of **Secular Consecration**.

Ordination to the Priesthood

Jean-Baptiste Fils-Aime was ordained to the priesthood on July 25, 2015 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. I invite you to pray for him and give thanksgiving to God for this new priest that God has given to our Institute and the Church.

New Districts' councils Dominican Republic and Haiti

The Assembly of the Dominican Republic District took place from July 20 to 24 2015. I am pleased to announce the new director and his council.

Director: Pablo Daniel Zorrilla Ramirez
Assistant Director: Andrés Solano Sosa
Counsellors Hector J. Sánchez Diaz
Wander Vladimir Polanco Sánchez
Angel Tonis Savinon Heredia and Giselda A. Garcia de Savinon

The Assembly of the Haiti District was held from July 27 to 31 2015. I am pleased to present you the new director and his council.

Director : Francis Evens
Assistant Director : Angelo Etienne
Counsellors : Madelon Eustache
Bernard Nemorin
Pierre-Marie Brynner Belledent
Justin Harry Chery and Marie Carmel Valcourt

I wish good luck to the directors and their council, and I pray God to bless them abundantly.

Assembly General of Our Big Sisters

Our big sisters, the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate, will hold their Assembly General August 8-23, 2015. I invite you to join me in prayer for the success of their Assembly.

Plenary Meeting of the Central Council

I am happy to share with you some information from the last meeting of the Central Council held July 13-16, 2015. I take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers.

➤ We have decided to begin the process for the canonization of our beloved Founder, Father Parent. Two Councillors have been appointed to look at the possibilities of moving forward. It has been decided also to formulate a prayer for this particular cause.

➤ As usual, the financial statements and the forecasted budgets of districts and regions were approved and funds are going to be sent in two missives.

➤ The next meeting of the Central Council will take place November 2-4, 2015. Please forward all documents that you wish to be presented to the Council at least two weeks in advance of this date.

Thought of the Month

In the world and from the world, members of the secular Institute participate in the evangelizing function of the Church whether through the witness of a Christian life and of fidelity towards their own consecration, or through the assistance they offer to order temporal things according to God and to inform the world by the power of the gospel. (Code of Canon Law # 713/2)

Birthdays

Yvon Carpentier will celebrate his birthday on August 5. He was the Director General from 1992 to 1998.

Fernand Turgeon will celebrate his birthday on August 6, and his spouse, **Raymonde Jetté**, will celebrate her birthday on August 9. Raymonde and Fernand are members of the Central Council. Gracitudes for their great devotion to the Institute.

Guy Veer, the Director of Administrative Services of Voluntas Dei Institute celebrate his birthday on August 18.

Salvador Diaz Hernandez and Dignora Batista Suráez, of the Dominican Republic will celebrate their 50th anniversary of marriage.

François Hamel will celebrate his birthday on August 26; he is an advisor in Canon Law to the Central Administration and was the Director General of the Institute 1998-2010.

I invite you to join me in prayer to mark these birthdays and anniversary. May God bless them and keep them in good health.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 3

September 2015

Colombia

Colombia is a country of South America that is called « the ground of vocations to consecrated life » where we are present. In 1978, Guillermo Pérez, a priest of the Institute, working in Canada at that time came to know and live the *Voluntas Dei* spirituality. At the time of the return of Father Guillermo to his country, the Institute, desiring to have an entry door to this continent, took advantage of the opportunity to promote the Institute in Colombia. It then asked Pierre Marois, a Canadian priest, desiring to become a missionary, to connect with Guillermo to establish the Institute there with this opening onto all of South America. The Bishop of Pereira welcomed them and gave them permission to found the Institute in 1979. Pierre created a team at Pereira and Guillermo created another one in Armenia.

As the number of members grew, not only in Colombia, but also in neighbouring countries, the Central Council decided to erect the District of South America in 1989. Pierre Marois was appointed the director of the district and he remained there until 1999 when he left Colombia to return to Canada. Guillermo Pérez became then the director of the District of South America. In 2002, the district was dissolved to form two (2) regions : the region of Colombia with Ecuador and the region of Chile. Jaime Alberto Henao Arroyave, a priest of the Institute, became the director of the region of Colombia until 2004. Another readjustment occurred in 2004 making the members of Ecuador dependent upon the Central Administration.

With an open attitude, the members of Colombia agreed that a celibate layman assume the post of director of the region ; Alonzo de Jesús Posada Echeverry filled this position until 2011. Since 2011, Guillermo Pérez has been the director.

The members of the Institute come from different regions such as Quindío (Arménia), Antioquia (Medellín) and Tolima (Purification). At the beginning of 2015, the Institute comprised :

- 2 priests incardinated in the Institute
- 4 celibate laymen
- 3 candidates to the priesthood
- 7 committed members

For a total of 16 members, and also 2 spiritually affiliated persons.

The Colombia sector tries hard to integrate and consolidate the members in the spirit and objectives of the Institute. And, even if the villages are far from each other, the members have created an atmosphere of peace and fraternity not only in the midst of the members of the Institute but also with our big sisters, the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate (o.m.m.i), who are also present in Colombia.

Let us pray together that in this country and elsewhere where the Institute is erected, the attitude of « **Peace and Fraternity in Jesus Christ** » gives rise to more people becoming members and also the flourishing of vocations.

News

Assembly General of Our Big Sisters

During the month of August the Assembly General of our big sisters, Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate, took place. It was a great success. It is with joy that I present to you the new President and her Council:

President:	Denise Desrochers
Vice-President:	Rose Mathieu
Council members:	Pierrette Fortin
	Maria Carmela Proietto
	Theresa Olsheskie
	Flor Angélica Acuña Rios
	Ellena Brelu-Brelu

Thought of the Month

Life is a question of love; love that gives, gives again, forgives, surrenders and hums its joy. Friendship grows by cultivating gentleness in one's attitudes and in the expression of one's thoughts. (*L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.*)

Birthdays/Anniversaries

On September 1, **Innasi Mudyappan**, of India and a member of the Central Council, will celebrate his birthday.

On September 6, **Renée Croteau**, a volunteer at the Central House, will celebrate her birthday.

On September 8, **Lenin Delgado**, priest of the United States, will celebrate his 25th anniversary of priesthood.

I invite you to pray for them on their special occasion. May God accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 4

October 2015

Haiti

It was in 1964 that the Voluntas Dei Institute made its entry into Haiti with the arrival of Father Parent who had been approached by Father Rodrigue Auguste. It was mutually agreed that Father Parent would bring a number of major seminarians to Canada to give them Voluntas Dei formation. In May 1965, four seminarians made their entry into the seminary at Red Rapids, New Brunswick, Canada for their initial formation. They were ordained as priests in June 1966. The Institute began in Haiti with native priests of this country.

Moreover, Father Claude Lacaille began the project of a minor seminary in 1966 and welcomed 20 students that he initiated into the spirituality of the Institute at Maison de Bolosse, Port-au-Prince.

The first Haitian priests and a number of Canadian missionaries participated ardently in parish activities and evangelization in the different dioceses such as Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, Jérémie and Jacmel. In this era, they had sometimes to cover miles on horse or donkey, and they accomplished magnificent missionary work. At the time of the second visit of Father Parent in 1981, married couples were introduced to the spirituality of the Institute. Six couples from the dioceses of Jérémie and Port-au-Prince began their journey with our Institute.

With time, young seminarians recruited received their formation at Bolosse and were ordained priests. They joined their colleagues and participated in the development of the Institute in their country. Numerous vocations and the witness of the life of the members continue to light up this district in spite of the growth of economic and political difficulties and poverty that are often the lot of daily existence in this country.

In different parishes where they work, our members are appreciated and attract young people to the spirituality of the 5-5-5 and to priestly life. They contribute to showing the light of Jesus Christ through their devoted and attentive presence to the Haitian people. In addition, not only are the members of this district missionaries «ad intra», but they have added missionary teams "ad extra" ; that is why they are now doing their work of evangelization in Haïti, France, Dominican Republic, the United States and Guadeloupe. The number of members does not cease to grow, and as of December 31, 2014, the district comprised :

25 priests incardinated in the Institute
6 priests incardinated in a diocese
3 lay members

11 major seminarians
34 committed persons
for a total of 79 members.

Haiti is a district officially erected. This country faces a lot of challenges. The growth in Voluntas Dei members is constant ; each commitment is very deep and real. It is a great challenge today for these members of our Institute to keep their identity while maintaining unity in diversity. This unity must be maintained with each member in Haiti in order to develop **the Voluntas Dei spirit of team life.**

Let us give thanks to God for the witnessing given by our members in Haiti and let us pray for the realization of unity in the midst of diversity.

News

The next meeting of the Central Council will take place November 2-4, 2015. I invite you to send to us all documents that must be studied by the Central Council two weeks in advance of the meeting. All documents received after this time limit will be submitted to the next meeting of the Central Council scheduled for April, 2016.

October is the month of the Rosary. I invite you to practice the 5th of our spiritual exercises with great devotion. Let us be united with the Virgin Mary, Holy Mother of God.

At the beginning of October, the Synod of the Bishops on the Family will take place. The XIV Ordinary Assembly General on the theme : « The Vocation and the Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World. ». I invite all of you to pray this intention for the success of this synod.

Thought of the Month

Human beings grow more through forgiveness than through hatred or sadness. Let us listen to our being in order to discover the talent that will allow us to help others. . (L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.)

Birthdays

Robert Lebel, Director of the District of Canada, will celebrate his birthday on October 3rd.

Nestor Fornaris, Director of the region of Cuba, will celebrate his birthday on October 9th.

Harnold Napier and Ellen Napier, of the United States, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on October 9th.

Anthony J. Ciorra, Director of the United States, will celebrate his birthday on October 11th.

Andrew Sioleti, member of the Central Council and member of the Committee on the Prevention of Harassment, will celebrate his birthday on October 29th.

Christudasan Stephen Croos and Mariarani Dalima, of Sri Lanka, will, celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on October 31st.

James Joseph Yogaraj Croos and Agnes Sebastian Croos, of Sri Lanka, will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on October 31st.

May God accompany them in their good and less good moments in order that they pursue their journey!

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 5

November 2015

Cuba

In 1977, the Voluntas Dei Institute extended its roots into Cuba with the generosity of our big sisters, the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate, already present in this region and Father Yvan Bergeron, p.m.e., who desired to give birth to it in this country.

At the very beginning, thanks to the spirituality of the 5-5-5 and secular consecration, three celibate laymen and a number of married couples showed their interest in the Institute and became members. In that era, it was very delicate and problematic to practice consecrated life in this country. Cuba began under the responsibility of the Central Administration and became a region on May 1, 2014.

Father Louis-Marie Parent, Marcel Forest and Michel Laroche played a crucial role in the beginnings of the Institute in Cuba. Thank you to the Apostolic Nuncio, the Cardinal of Havana, the Archbishop of Santiago and the Bishop of Matanzas who worked diligently in order to have the Institute rooted in their land.

In spite of numerous challenges present in Cuba, the members manifested a great serenity and a great spirit of faith: the majority persevered in their vocation, but a number withdrew. With determination and passion, Nestor Fornaris pursued his journey and not without a lot of sacrifices incurred during a long period of time. Finally, on February 9, 1993, he was ordained a priest by Cardinal Jaime Ortega, Archbishop of Havana, with the participation of the Director General, Yvon Carpentier. Throughout many years, he remained alone and lived the spirituality of the Voluntas Dei Institute in a discreet manner. Then, Juan Carlos Borrero Simon was recruited and pursued his theological studies in Chile where he was ordained and then returned to Cuba to serve as a Voluntas Dei with Nestor Fornaris.

In time, another member was recruited; Eduardo Enrique Fonseca Ponce, doctor, also attracted by the charism and the spirituality of the Voluntas Dei Institute; he is doing his priestly formation in Havana, Cuba. Other celibate laymen and couples have been recruited. At the end of 2014, the statistics were :

- 2 priests
- 2 celibate laymen
- 1 candidate to the priesthood
- 2 married couples

for a total of 9 members.

In order to favour the development and the recruitment of Voluntas Dei members in this country with the recommendations of the Apostolic Nuncio and the Bishops, Cuba is now a region. Our members in Cuba are the salt of the earth, the light of the world and the leaven in the dough, witnessing to the charism and the spirituality of the Institute.

I am convinced with the recent visit of Pope Francis as well as the new relationship established with the government that the young Cuban Voluntas Dei shoot will become a magnificent mango tree whose fruits will be known to bring life to everyone.

I ask you to keep them in your prayers.

News

Ordinations

In November, we will have 2 ordinations:

- Manuel Alejandro Lizana Lizana, from Chile, will be ordained November 21, 2015.
- Jimmy Osciel Veliz Gonzalez, from Chile, will be ordained November 28, 2015.

Congratulations to both, and to the District in formation Chile. May God guide their steps and accompanies them throughout their journey. We invite you to join them in prayer for the success in their mission.

Deceased

Sylvie Fernand, employee at the Central House, Trois-Rivières, died Thursday, October 22, 2015. Let us entrust her to the love of God, our Father, in faith and in the hope of eternal life. May her soul rest in peace.

Let Us Remember

In November, the Church invites us to particularly pray for the deceased. Let pray for Father Parent and for the members of the Institute who have died. I recommend especially to your prayers those who have left us this year:

Lilian Doucette, spouse of Hubert Doucette (Canada), Anthony Sahayanathan, priest (Sri Lanka), Raymond Lefebvre, priest (United States), Réal Maltais, priest (Canada), Normand St-Jean, priest (Canada), Sylvie Ferland, (Canada)

Meeting of the Central Council

The next meeting of the Central Council will take place at the Central House in Trois-Rivieres November 2-4, 2015. I invite you to pray for the success of this meeting.

Departure from the Central House

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Yvon Carpentier who is moving from Central house due to his health. He has been a person of wisdom and service from 2004 till today to all the persons of the Central Administration.

I thank him personally and on behalf of all members of the Council and of the Institute. May God be with him and protect him always.

Thought of the Month

If I wish to be effective, I must not hold on to the past, otherwise I distance myself from tomorrow and today become ineffective. (*L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.*)

Birthdays and Anniversaries

November 2, **Richard Normandin**, member of the Institute and volunteer at the Central House, will celebrate his birthday.

November 7, **Jesuthasan Richman and Christiana Rochanthy Croos**, of Sri Lanka, will celebrate their 25th anniversary of marriage.

November 20, **José Santana and Carlixta Monegro**, of the Dominican Republic, will celebrate their 50th anniversary of marriage.

November 24, **Laurier Albert** will celebrate his birthday. He is the chairperson of the Committee of Basic and On-Going Formation. He is also a member of the Preparatory Committee for the 2016 AG.

November 30, **Francis Evens**, Director of the District of Haiti, will celebrate his birthday.

May God accompany them on the route of life and bless all of them.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 6

December 2015

United States

In the first years of its foundation, the Voluntas Dei Institute attracted a good number of persons. The first member from the United States was Leo Grégoire in 1960 ; he joined the Canadian District.

Later, Thomas Furlong, Michael Craig and several other laymen joined the Institute and, slowly they formed teams under the jurisdiction of the Canadian District. Through their enthusiasm, spirit of joy, openness and a great freedom of expression of their faith, the growth in the United States has progressed very rapidly through the openness of spirit and lay spirituality. In August 1998, the United States was canonically erected as a region. George Hazler became the first American director.

By reason of the growth in members and the vitality of teams and sectors, the United States became financially self-sufficient. On account of their continued development, the United States region was erected as a District in Formation on August 5, 2006.

Coming up to the expectations of the reality and deep nature of the Voluntas Dei spirituality in the spirit of our Founder, the United States was canonically erected a District on March 1, 2013.

Spreading the charism and the spirituality of the Institute, the United States District accepted members from various countries such as Trinidad, Tobago, Japan, Germany and England. At the invitation of the Central House, the United States District accepted the responsibility of guiding the members in Ethiopia ; Ethiopia is now a sector of the United States.

The District is well organized ; it has put into place different committees such as the committee of formation, committee of vocations, committee of missions, committee of finances and finally the committee of liturgy. An annual congress is preceded by a retreat of a couple of days in length not forgetting the sector meetings in March and November as well as the team meetings each month.

As of December 31, 2014, the United States District comprised :

- 20 priests incardinated in the Institute
- 19 priests incardinated in a diocese
- 2 deacons
- 17 celibate laymen
- 65 committed members

For a total of 123 members and 15 spiritually affiliated persons.

I wish to thank all members and especially those in charge. In order to live the spirit of Father Parent, I want to say to each member, God has created each person and a number of abundant hearths where people recharge their batteries, get the fire and connect with other hearths and I pray that you may continue all with the spirit of « **Being Voluntas Dei.** »

News

Meeting of the Central Council

I am happy to share with you some information from the last meeting of the Central Council that took place November 2-4, 2015. I thank you for your prayers. I share the following information with you :

- Several members received their stability
- The next meeting of the Central Council will take place April 11-13, 2016.

Canonical Visit

At the present time, I am on a canonical visit to Chile. I request your prayers for the success of this visit and the meetings that I am having with the members. Also, I had the joy of participating in the ordination of two new Voluntas Dei priests, Fathers Manuel Lizana Lizana and Jimmy Osciel Veliz Gonzales. Let us give thanks to God.

Preparation for Advent

A new liturgical year is about to begin as well as the beginning of Advent. The Child Jesus invites us to prepare ourselves for his coming at the occasion of Noël 2015.

Merry Christmas

With this last letter of the year 2015, I wish all as well as your families and friends, a holy Christmas filled with peace, good health and love! May the Infant King bring you His support and guide you throughout your life.

Thought of the Month

Let your light so shine before all that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in heaven. (*Mt, 5-16*)

Birthdays

Napoleon Gomez, Director of the District in Formation of India, will celebrate his birthday on December 13.

Pierre Marois, Secretary General of the Central Council and Director of the Office of Vocations and Missions, will celebrate his birthday on December 23.

Jean-Paul Chiasson, Assistant Director General, will celebrate his birthday on December 28.

May God grant them good health, peace and happiness!

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 7

January 2016

An Important Year

May the peace of the Lord be with you at the beginning of 2016. This new year puts before us three important ways of orienting our lives. Firstly, the year of consecrated life that will end on February 2, 2016, puts forward the challenge of making concrete decisions in regard to our commitments. Secondly, the year of the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy invites us to practice acts of mercy in our daily life in the midst of the world. Finally, the Assembly General of our Institute asks us to go to the root of our being as *Voluntas Dei* including our belonging in the presence of God.

The evangelical counsels of obedience, poverty and chastity guide the life of committed persons. Father Parent said that we are called to obey the Word of God, the authorities and the signs of the time. The Bible mentions that each Christian should share a certain percentage of his/her talent and revenue with God (Leviticus 27 :30) (2 Cor 9 :7). Our *Constitutions* mention that « members are called to live a disinterested and universal love in total availability to God and others, (*Const.* # 60), through the vow of chastity. Since it is the last month of the year of consecrated life, let us reflect . . . where am I at as a person committed to obedience, poverty and chastity?

The year of extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy invites us to live a deep expression of our heart. We are called to witness to the love of Jesus in each person, especially in those who are fragile and who are around us, without human dignity or well-being, and in those who are excluded on account of our indifference. Each human being is created in the image and likeness of God. During our short life on earth, we are called to live it fully. As baptized and consecrated persons, it is our primordial and urgent duty to respond positively to the call of the Holy Father.

The end of the year of consecrated life and the beginning of the year of Mercy, involves us slowly but surely in our march toward the Assembly General in July 2016, « *Rooted in the Presence of God as Voluntas Dei.* » We are one of the secular institutes called to evangelize, throughout the world with the values and the flavour of the Gospel, all those who have lost themselves in the wind and currents.

As Father Parent said : through our spirituality we should sanctify ourselves and at the same time those around us, in our families, workplace and milieu of life. I invite all of you to pray for the Assembly General that will take place in July. May we all become a single and same family in the presence of God in order to be new evangelizers of the Institute in the Church and at the centre of the world.

May God bless all! I wish you a magnificent year.

News

Celebrets

The celebrets for the members incardinated in the Institute have been sent to the directors of the districts/regions. You should receive them shortly.

Members' Directory

The 2016 Members' Directory is now available on our web site.

Thought of the Month

Happiness is a state of mind that we create by the way we accept and use the present moment.
(L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.)

Birthdays and Anniversaries

On January 5, **Adrien Émile Jean** and **Marie Alina Lizaire** of Haïti, will celebrate their 25th anniversary of marriage.

On January 25, **Pablo Daniel Zorrilla Ramirez**, Director of the Dominican Republic, will celebrate his birthday.

On January 26, **Christhogu Kennedy Dias** and **Pamila Kennedy Dias** of Sri Lanka, will celebrate their 25th anniversary of marriage.

May God accompany them in their good and less good moments in order that they may pursue their journey!

Happy New Year 2016!

To each and everyone of you, I extend my best wishes for health, peace and love in the 2016 new year!

May it bring you serenity, success and happiness!

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 8

February 2016

Stop!!! Reflect!!! March!!!

I have spoken to you in January about three important factors that direct our lives as Voluntas Dei. We are all called “to discover the will of God to be faithful to it, to cherish it and to accomplish it... through our consecration in the midst of the world... wherever Christ has his rights.” (Const. #1) Father Parent invites us to surrender ourselves completely like Blessed Virgin at the Annunciation to God in order to draw everyone to God by words and deeds of his/her exemplary life. He adds as well that a Voluntas Dei must have the quality of humility to live obedience, the simplicity to live poverty and the fidelity to live chastity in daily life beginning with self in his/her immediate family and going on in all circumstances to place it in relationship with one’s fellow beings.

February is the month in which we celebrate the day of consecrated life. Each year, we renew our vows and commitments as members of the Voluntas Dei Institute and as consecrated persons in the universal Church. We do not have a community life, nor a unique and particular mission in order to express our commitments.

Thus, how do I witness and manifest myself in discovering God’s will? How do I live my quality of humility to cherish the will of God? Am I sharing my life as I am with simplicity to accomplish the love of God to everyone? Where am I standing as a human, as a Christian, as a consecrated person, as a Voluntas Dei towards fidelity to God and his will? No one can tell us for the response must come from us.

Jesus said: “for even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” (Mk 10/45) He affirms further by saying that he has come not to do his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him. (Jn. 6/38) Similarly, we all called primarily by baptism and eventually by consecration. We will have to render an account to God.

Our strength is the team life. Team is our formation house where we gather together to build peace within ourselves and in the whole world in order to promote mutual confidence love understanding and belongingness not only with the members of our team but also with all those in the Institute. As members of the Voluntas Dei Institute, we must participate with our own identity in the life of the particular and universal Church.

Where am I in my vocation? What is my response as a consecrated Voluntas Dei? What is my involvement towards my own Institute? How do I manifest myself to the local Church? Am I a visible witness in the midst of the world as Voluntas Dei?

Let us stop!!! Reflect!!! Let’s move forward!!!

Conclusion of the Year Dedicated to Consecrated Life.

February 2 will be the last day for the year of consecrated life. On this day, all of the representatives of the various religious communities, secular Institutes and those of Apostolic life will come together in Rome with the Holy Father after an international meeting of consecrated life in communion. Please take a time in prayer and let us be united in spirit in order to renew our own vocations and commitments.

On this very special day, I will be present in Rome with all of these representatives. George Hazler, representing the conference of secular institutes in the United States, will also be present.

Lent 2016

Lent this year takes on a particular time where we live the Jubilee year of Mercy. Let us welcome this grace that is given us and let us trust to the Lord this need of being supported by His mercy. As Pope Francis requested, let us accomplish works of spiritual mercy for our own advancement and works of corporal mercy in kindness toward others.

Statistics of the Year

As of December 31, 2015, the Institute comprised 926 members as well as 57 spiritually affiliated persons and is present in 23 countries.

The distribution of members and spiritually affiliated persons is as follows

Priests incardinated in a diocese : 36
Priests incardinated in the Institute : 172
Cleric members incardinated in a diocese : 7
Cleric members incardinated in the Institute: 2
Celibate laymen with temporary incorporation: 27
Celibate laymen with definitive incorporation: 17
Candidates to Orders : 71
Associated members : 594
Affiliated persons : 57

Here are the numbers by country. The district/region of belonging is in parenthesis :

Germany (U.S.A.)	2	United States	75
England (U.S.A.)	1	Ethiopia (U.S.A.)	44
Australia (India)	5	France (Haïti)	11
Canada	139	Guadeloupe (Haïti)	4
Chile	32	Haïti	65
Colombia	16	India	113
Cuba	9	Italy (Central)	1
Scotland (Central)	1	Japan (U.S.A.)	1
Ecuador (Central)	2	Kenya (U.S.A.)	2

Laos (Central) 2
Dominican Rep. 246
Sri Lanka 148

Switzerland (Sri Lanka) 1
Trinidad (U.S.A.) 6

Thought of the Month

Each gift, talent and quality is a living source and I have 24 hours at my disposition to water completely my existence. Life has no more worth than what it makes of it in the present moment.
(L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.)

Birthdays

On February 6, **Guillermo Pérez**, Director of the region of Colombia, will celebrate his birthday. He is our precious translator for the texts into Spanish.

On February 8, **Sylvie Dagenais**, secretary for the Central Administration, will celebrate her birthday.

May God bless them throughout their life and keep them in good health,

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 9

March 2016

The Holy Father

The Voluntas Dei Institute is a secular institute of pontifical right since April 3, 1987. The Holy Father is the first director general. Not only for Voluntas Dei members, but also for all of the orders of consecrated life that are under pontifical jurisdiction; they are called to obey his authority. There is about three thousand congregations and 1.5 million consecrated men and women in the universal Church today in order to participate in the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ with the local Church..

February 2, 2016 was the day concluding the year of consecrated life. Representatives of many religious institutes, institutes of apostolic life and secular institutes etc. who participate in consecrated life came together at the Vatican for five days to reflect upon and deepen their commitments in union with the Holy Father. There was a great deal of joy, love, sharing, happiness and planning for the future. Finally, a public audience with the Holy Father who addressed them by mentioning clearly important choices for deepening the commitments to the new evangelization. He insisted on employing a different method for extending the hand to all of creation with humility for holiness.

« There is no humility and there is no holiness without passing through humiliations; there is no humility without humiliations. And if you are not capable of supporting a humiliation in your life, you are not humble. Thus, the objective of holiness that God offers to His children, to the Church, goes through the humiliation of His Son whom He allowed to be insulted, to be placed on the cross unjustly. And this Son of God Who humiliated Himself is the way to holiness: through your attitude, you prophesy the humiliation of Jesus. »

During my visit to Rome, I had the privilege of a private audience with the Holy Father after the Mass at Santa Martha. I spoke to him about the Institute, its charism, spirituality, our founder, our members and our presence in different countries. As is his habit, Pope Francis addressed himself to me in complete simplicity and humility. At a given moment in the course of our conversation, I felt like I was with members of my family or with my best friends. This personal encounter with the Holy Father made me challenge my own simplicity and humility.

In closing, I asked him to bless all of the people that I held in my heart and all of the Voluntas Dei members. Before the blessing, he asked me to pray for him and he also requested that I tell

all of the Voluntas Dei members to pray for him. Afterwards, he blessed me as the representative and Director of the Institute. Then he asked that I transmit the blessing that he had given to each and everyone of you.

Let's be faithful to the Holy Father who is the head of the universal Church as well as the head of our Institute. Now, I send to each of you the blessing that he gave.

May God bless you!

News

Deceased

Father Arthur Candreva, of the United States, died February 18, 2016. Let us give thanks to God for his life among us as a member of the Voluntas Dei Institute and for his ministry in the Church as a priest.

Fr. Eddy Julien, the first member of the Haiti district, died on February 25, 2016. His funeral will be on March 12, 2016 at Jeremie in Haiti. We express our deepest sympathies to the members of the district and to his family members. Let us all pray for the repose of his soul.

Ordinations

There are six new priests in India for our Institute. Jacob Prajosh, Vipin Edward, Xavier Kuttappassery and Lenin Antony will be ordained priests on March 30, 2016; Sunil Francis and Nibu Napoleon will be ordained priests on March 31, 2016. Let us praise God for our new priests and with our prayers, let us wish them to serve the Lord as Voluntas Dei priests in the vineyard of God.

Happy Easter

To all of you I wish a Happy Easter. May the Risen Christ grant you faith and rebirth of heart and may He bless all of you.

Thought of the Month

If the world is so sick today, it is because there are too many people talking about it and not enough doing in humility what is required. (*L.-M. Parent, o.m.i.*)

Joyous Resurrection, Happy Easter to all!

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 10

April 2016

Assembly General

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, please receive my greetings in Jesus and Mary,

I think that it would be good to share with you the message that I addressed to the delegates of the General Assembly that will take place in July 2016.

Ex officio members and elected delegates will participate very soon in this Assembly that is the supreme authority of the Institute. Yes, a sincere thank you to all of you for accepting to render service to our family. It is with joy that we will gather together, fraternize, build the Church and confess Jesus Christ. Let us give thanks to God!

It is the responsibility of the A.G. to define the general orientations of the development of the Institute. We will have to make clear our plans, review the whole of discipline, and revisit our commitments as evangelizers and guides for building peace and fraternity in Jesus. This Assembly that we will live together will also be the occasion to provide us with past experiences (reports) in order to incline us toward improving the reality of our family through a greater engagement in the future of the Church and the Institute.

During this time, we will reflect on the theme: « *Rooted in the Presence of God as Voluntas Dei* ». The point of the presence of God is at the heart of our spirituality. Father Parent, in his conferences and writings, returns constantly to the presence of God and the present moment.

The Vine: its meaning:

For a tree to have beautiful foliage and produce good fruit, it must plunge its roots into the earth. In the same way, a *Voluntas Dei*, who plunges him/herself into God and His Word, will bear fruit and it will last. In order to complete your preparation, please read attentively the documents that have been sent to you and study them in depth. We ask that you add your own ideas to reflect the spirit of the members of your district/region while keeping in mind the whole of the Institute. Your involvement and participation will be very important. I invite you to remain in the presence of God in order to prepare yourself to discern His Will.

In this message, I wish also to express my sincerest gratitude to the members of the Preparatory Committee of the A.G. as well as to the members of the Central Council who have worked very hard in preparing documents by consecrating their time and energy and for their experience for the good and growth of the Institute and the success and smooth unfolding of the Assembly General.

May God bless you and may the Holy Mother be with you. Let us pray that Father Parent will help us to continue to make our Institute shine forth according to the inspired spirit at its founding.

Let us remain united in action and in prayer.

News

Meeting of the Central Council

The Central Council will meet April 11-13, 2016. I invite you to pray for the success of this meeting.

Memo

Since the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord occurs during Holy Week, the Church has decided to celebrate this feast day on April 4, 2016. Thus, I wish you a good feast day!

Priestly Ordination

There is a new priest in Sri Lanka for our Institute. Frankduff Mariaselvam will be ordained priest on April 21, 2016. Let us praise God for our new priest and with our prayers, let us wish him to serve the Lord as *Voluntas Dei* in the vineyard of God.

Thought of the Month

“God simply asks us to give him the present moment so that he may give us eternal happiness” (Fr. Parent omi).

Anniversaries and Birthdays

On April 2, **Filipos Tisiyano and Sara Shure**, of Ethiopia, will celebrate their 25th anniversary of marriage.

On April 5, **Bishop Louis-Marie Ling** will celebrate his birthday. Bishop Ling is the Bishop responsible for the Apostolic Vicariate of Paksé, Laos.

May God bless you and keep you in good health.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 11

May 2016

Openness to the Holy Spirit

In this beautiful month of May, month of Mary, month of the feast of Pentecost, month in which we are going to mark the departure of Father Parent for heaven, I invite you to reflect on openness to the Holy Spirit. I will do it from certain aspects of the life of our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, from the life of our good Father Parent, and from our own mission in the world as members of a secular institute.

At the beginning, though all was unformed and diffused, *the Spirit of God* hovered over the waters to start the great adventure of creation (Genesis 1 :2), thanks to *Father-Creator*, Who is the explicit instigator and through His *Word* pronounced, that John, the evangelist, considers as being Jesus Himself (John 1). *The three in one God* were already together in a proactive way to create a unique world, a world made at their image.

Thus, the pronounced Word brought about what it said: « Let there be light . . . and there was light! (Genesis 1:3) » This creative voice of the Father is identified with the Saviour Son, fulfillment of the Father, Who, when the time came, was incarnated in the world that He Himself had created for « all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. » (John 1 :1`).

The incarnated Son will want to live in fulfillment as a human the experience of the Holy Spirit more specifically, on three occasions: from His conception (Annunciation), at His baptism and at the Transfiguration. After His resurrection, He will announce and wish peace upon the Apostles. In breathing upon them, He says to them: « Receive the Holy Spirit » (John 20:22). They themselves will be awakened more concretely to the life in the Holy Spirit at the time of Pentecost and will transmit to us, to this very day, the awareness of this life in the Holy Spirit.

Our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary also lived, in the shadow of her Son, this complete openness to the Holy Spirit. Even throughout the challenges that she lived, certainly questioning, however, she knew how to open herself to the Spirit of the living God, to allow herself to be enlightened and transformed in order to continue her journey without putting up barriers to the divine plan. A big thank you for her openness to the Holy Spirit! This allowed her to discern the will of God and accomplish it (Annunciation). From that moment on, she was open to the Spirit and helped others to receive this same Spirit. For example, with her discreet and very effective accompaniment, she guides the Apostles to open them to Pentecost. Mary is Mother of the Church. She is our Mother and she knows how to guide us to live the experience of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Our Father Parent was open to the Holy Spirit throughout his life. For example, when he was a child, when he was at the seminary, and when he was sick. In all circumstances of his life, he maintained openness to the Holy Spirit. We know all that he lived until the venerable age of 98 thanks to his openness to the Holy Spirit, for God wanted him to give more.

Thanks to openness to the Spirit, Father Parent gave three foundations to the Church: prayer is indispensable as support to all human work (**Recluses**). Then, he will discern that grace is in all of the baptized throughout the world where Christ has His rights (**Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate and Voluntas Dei**).

Openness to the Holy Spirit for Father Parent was always declined as follows: first, for all believers through the Word of God; then, for all consecrated persons, through the way of the Constitutions, then for all through the signs of the time, that is *through each person, each event and each experience*, good or bad, that we live or encounter in the present moment.

As *Voluntas Dei*, we are called to live this openness to the Holy Spirit through our diversity. On the one hand, we are involved in varied missions and through our different statuses as priests, celibate laymen or married couples, and all of this according to our talents, and respective abilities. On the other hand, we are called to work together *in unity* through our cultural and ethnic differences! However, wasn't this the same challenge that the first Christian communities during the apostolic times lived, at the time of Pentecost, people of diverse languages and cultures invited through the voice of the Apostles to constitute *in unity a one and same assembly* of believers?

It is in this spirit that I invite you to live our 11th AG in July through an attitude of openness to the Holy Spirit that creates unity where there is diversity. Through our differences, may we allow Him to work at the interior of ourselves to better understand the Word of God, to better live according to the Constitutions and that we might better discern the signs of the times through each person, event and experience that we are living in the present moment.

I invite all to live profoundly the very beautiful feast of Pentecost. Let us pray with our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, in the Cenacle of her heart, and with Father Parent who has entered into heaven. May we be rooted in the presence of God as *Voluntas Dei*.

News

We are already in the month of May, the month of Mary. We are invited each day to pray to our Mother in heaven while meditating upon the rosary.

7 years ago, on May 17, Father Parent left us for heaven. On this day, we are invited to have a special intention for him who gave us an immense spiritual heritage. May he continue to watch over us!

On this occasion, I invite the priests of the Institute to celebrate a Mass for his intention and I invite all other members to participate in the Eucharist to thank God for our founding Father.

Gratitude

As you know, we are completing our financial year in the month of May in the districts/regions as well as in the Central Administration. This is a good occasion for me personally and also on behalf of the Central Council, to thank the directors of the American, Canadian and Dominican Republic as well as their councils and members for their generous financial support. Your contribution is a great help to the

Meeting of the Central Council

The meeting of the Central Council took place April 11-13, 2016. Here are a number of decisions that were made: the Council granted to a number of members Stability and Incardination and granted to certain members authorization for ordination to the diaconate and priesthood.

The Council will hold its next meeting July 4-6, 2016.

The Assembly General will be held July 11-21, 2016.

Annual Report and Budget Forecasts

This is reminder to district/region directors: the annual report must be sent to the Central Administration as well as the financial statements and budget forecasts from mission countries by June 30, 2016. These documents and reports will be presented and studied at the plenary meeting of the Council in July.

Thought of the Month

«Since the day of our baptism, the Holy Spirit dwells in us through his holiness» (Father Parent omi).

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Mario Laroche, Canadian priest, will celebrate his birthday on May 18th. He was the Director General of the Institute from 1980-1992.

Claire Lafrenière, in accounting at the Central Administration, will celebrate her birthday on May 27th. Please note that Claire will retire in August 2016. On my behalf and that of all of the members of the Central Council and that of all of the members of the Institute, I extend sincere gratitude to Claire for her generous services rendered to the Institute throughout 14 years.

Let us carry all in our prayers that God will bless them and grant them health and happiness.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei
Director General

News of the Director General

Volume 6 ♦ Number 12

June 2016

Formation

Dear Friends,

As we are entering into the month that precedes directly our Assembly General, I feel that it is appropriate to reflect together on Secular Consecration in its aspect *presence of God*. Father Parent always said that we could become saints while being completely in the world, that is to say, to be at the same time in the world and *in the presence of God*.

As you can observe, I am speaking about the theme of the 2016 AG : *presence of God*. On reflecting upon this theme and what Father Parent said, I have been also touched by the Gospel of John :

« I have said this to you that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. »

God wants us to maintain peace no matter the challenges or the problems encountered for He has overcome all of them. How to arrive there? By walking *in His presence*, eyes fixed on Him, or as the Bible states « by walking before the face of the Lord » (*lifne Adonai*) as Abraham was invited to do (Gn 17 : 1), day and night in the calm as well as in the storm.

This walking in faith makes the challenge not only less heavy to support but like John the Apostle says, it produces endurance and patience that allows even « to consider with joy » all of the obstacles to surmount (James 1 :2-4), and in this way, we might become perfect.

To lean on God alone, to recognize Him in everything and to trust Him with all one's heart, is this not the best way for Him to make straight our paths? (Proverbs 3 :5-6)

Our trust and our abandonment into His hands allow God to act in our lives. By walking in His presence, we give Him permission to transform us and to lift us up to Himself.

« We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose » (Rm 8, 28).

All of this takes a life-time to learn and to integrate. In the realm of a secular consecrated life, this integration is rendered possible, among other things, through initial and on-going formation.

At the age of 8 or 9, my father brought me to a pool to learn how to swim. At the beginning, he placed his hands under my body to keep me in the position of floating. Then, bit by bit and to the degree that I felt confidence and that I could maintain my balance, he withdrew one hand and then the other while remaining close to me in case I would need his help. I continued to try this experience and each time he went further away from me while keeping an attentive regard on me. One day, while keeping a certain distance from me, he told me that it was my time to swim toward him which I did asking: « Why does he leave me to manage this on my own? » However, as he trusted me, as he was my « daddy » and he was near to me, I gained self-assurance.

Is it not the same in our relationship with God, our Father, our «daddy» in the midst of initial and on-going formation? The pool is the world in which we live. The water represents the dangers and the challenges to overcome. God is our «daddy» who calls us: His hands support us at first in a palpable way in order to help us to remain in spiritual balance without which we could not swim in the water of life; this is *initial formation*.

Then, little by little, He allows us gradually to gather our own momentum while completely remaining close to us and having confidence in us. In this way, our trust in Him can grow. Then, He draws away from us a little bit and asks us «to swim» on our own: this is *on-going formation*. He is always there, ready to intervene and He always trusts us even if it happens again that we fear drowning.

God knows this world in which we live and He has overcome it; there is no reason to be afraid. In this way, He dares to place us there since all that we might live there He has already overcome in advance. That is why, He invites us ardently to remain in peace even through the turbulences of this world; He is always there, close to us, our good «daddy» ready to intervene.

We, *Voluntas Dei*, are in the world and we are called to experience the presence of God there through challenges and difficulties. It is important to note that without initial and on-going formation, it will be difficult for us to experience God in the world. When we happen to do it, this is our way of «swimming» through this world while avoiding drowning. When I have confidence that my «daddy» is there to help me, I feel at peace no matter what.

The 2016 AG must teach us how to maintain balance in this water that is the world and how to «swim» toward our «daddy» in peace of heart and spirit. In this way, will we not arrive at the holiness that Father Parent spoke so often about?

News

The Central Council will hold its next meeting July 4-6 just before the Assembly General. Also, I also indicate again the dates of the 2016 Assembly General, July 11-21. I invite you to carry this event in your prayers while not forgetting the prayer that was composed for this occasion.

Thought of the Month

« Peace is truly the summit of a spiritual journey. It is the top of the pyramid of which conscious awareness of the presence of God is the basis.» (Father Parent)

Birthdays

On June 8, **Andrew Mayer**, will celebrate his birthday. Andrew is the coordinator of the Preparatory Committee for the 2016 Assembly General and he is part of the team of translators for the Central Administration.

May God continue to bring him the support that he needs for his mission.

S. James Dunstan, I.V.Dei

Director General