

# *News of the Director General*

## *Volume 10*

**2019 – 2020**

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# *News of the Director General*

*Volume 10 ♦ Number 1*

*July 2019*

## *New Technologies and Evangelization*

Dear Friends,

The Church, for some time now, has considered the importance of using the new technologies within the realm of evangelization. Pope Francis himself has more than 44 million subscribers to his Twitter account in nine languages (English, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Arab, Italian, French, Polish and Latin). While being aware of the usefulness of these social networks, the Pope nevertheless invites Catholics to be cautious in the way they use them: « I invite all those who use these new communication technologies, in particular the young, to use them in a positive manner and to exploit the potential of these means to create bonds of friendship and solidarity that can contribute to a better world. » The Pope again urges in saying: « To the young, particularly, I appeal to you: witness to your faith throughout the digital world! »

We are in a world where the new technologies are in full expansion. All sectors of activity use them in profusion, be it the simple internet account, Instagram, social media (i.e. Facebook), YouTube, blogs or websites, just to name a few. As individuals living in society, it becomes difficult to ignore the use of these new technologies. We use them to send messages, photos or to communicate with members of our family, friends or members of our Institute. Unfortunately, there, as elsewhere, the human race can use them as much to do evil as to do good.

However, as members of a secular Institute, there are so many good and beautiful things to do with these new technologies: first, to learn to use them well. The learning process is not always easy, and it costs many of us to use these new methods of communication. But, since we are the leaven in the human dough and the salt of the earth, we are called to use these means for the cause of evangelization in order to advance good where evil has done its damage. We have our specific way of using these new technologies that can be very useful, among other things, with the youth, and wherever Christ has his rights. Whether it is to encourage a good work, to comfort a person, or to invite people to consider the good side of events, these are situations where we can act positively.

Let me give you two examples of the use of new technologies for evangelization that concern us more: the first, you probably already do, and that is to use videos or the images that people share with you on the social network by adding to them either a biblical verse or a thought of Father Parent or of another Christian author. The image or the video already speaks for itself. However, by adding a biblical thought or a verse from the Gospel, we enhance to a certain degree the impact of this image or video: we add to it a spiritual dimension. It is not necessary to write long commentaries. People do not have the time to read everything. However, a simple phrase, a small thought well placed will connect with the heart of the readers to improve their day and turn them toward Christ.

The second example is a project that we are trying to articulate here at the Central House, a project to which we invite you all, whatever your district or region is. Indeed, we are in full development of our website. We invite you to send us photos or small videos of your local activities within the Institute. This can come from a member who has a particular project, or from a team, or from an entire district. Whatever is your project, send us your videos (2-3 minutes) or photos of events that you hold in your district / region telling us the date, location and purpose of the activity so that we can add this information to visual support on our website.

This is not only a means of evangelization but also a way of making known the Institute in all its facets. Even among us, members of the same Institute, this will allow us to know each other better and to *create among us an atmosphere of peace and fraternity.*

## *Thought of Father Parent*

« To admire others, is to solidify my serenity and peace. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

## *News of the Director*

We are very happy to have among us at the Central House his Eminence Cardinal Louis-Marie Ling for the month of June. The Cardinal is accompanied by another Laotian Voluntas Dei priest, Father Thomas Kandavong. The two are taking advantage of this time in Canada to meet the Canadian members as well as friends, benefactors and the adoptive family in the case of the Cardinal.

We are also happy to welcome into our ranks at Central House, Mrs Rubrian Molina (Ruby), originally from Colombia but now a Canadian citizen. Ruby is secretary/receptionist acting especially in regard to the technology and archives. Violaine is the administrative secretary supporting the administration. The e-mail address to reach Ruby is [secretariat@voluntasdei.org](mailto:secretariat@voluntasdei.org) and the e-mail address to reach Violaine is [administration@voluntasdei.org](mailto:administration@voluntasdei.org). The two secretaries share the task of the secretariat, both part time. Their roles are complementary.

## *Birthdays*

On July 2, *Voluntas Dei Institute* will celebrate its 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary of foundation. On this day, let us think of one another. On the same day, that you undoubtedly know, the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate will celebrate their 67th anniversary of foundation. Let's be united in thanksgiving for the foundation of these two Institutes.

On July 4, *Manuel Cornejo*, Director of the District of Chile will celebrate his anniversary.

On July 12, *Father Louis-Marie Parent*, our Founder would celebrate his birthday. Let us, on this day, think of him in a special way since this year marks his 10th anniversary of departure to heaven.

On July 22, *Paul-René Lavigne*, friend and volunteer for a long time at the Central House will celebrate his anniversary. Thank you, Paul, for everything that you do to facilitate our work at the Central House.

On July 23, *Frank De la Cruz*, Deacon and member of the Central Council will celebrate his anniversary.

On July 25, *I, James Dunstan*, present Director General of the Institute will celebrate my anniversary. Thank you for praying for me.

## *Anniversaries of Ordination to the Priesthood*

On July 5, *Jacky Stinckens* of Canada, will celebrate his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination to the priesthood.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as for all the members who will celebrate whatever anniversary in July. May God bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# *News from the Director General*

*Volume 10 ♦ Number 2*

*August 2019*

## *Rejoice that your names are written in heaven*

Dear friends,

The major spiritual event of August for us *Voluntas Dei* as well as for Catholics around the world is the feast of the Assumption of our Most Holy Mother, the Virgin Mary. As we all know, our founder, Father Louis-Marie Parent O.M.I., bore in himself a continual devotion to the Virgin Mary, and he transmitted to us his love of Mary and the importance each of us should give to the feast of the Assumption. She is now walking in the presence of God with her soul, her spirit and her resurrected body, following Jesus, her Son, firstborn from the dead. She alone, Immaculate in her Conception, could thus obtain such grace now and forever. Let us remember that we are also called, in her wake, to live this same grace in blissful eternity.

Reflecting upon this holiday, I remembered Jesus' words: "However, do not rejoice because spirits submit to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Lk 10:20). Indeed, according to the Gospels, the Virgin Mary, during her stay on earth, never performed exorcisms or great miracles as the apostles did. She remained discreetly in the shadow of her son, and that was enough for her because she knew that her name was already written in her son's heart. In other words, her inner relationship with Jesus was more important than any form of earthly or spiritual power she could have against evil powers. And yet, since her Assumption, apart from her son Jesus, God knows that there is nothing more powerful on his heart than the intercession of Mary to obtain the liberation of souls!

The great lesson that Mary gives us here is the greatness in the humility and the importance of having a child's heart who knows that he is loved by God and who, in turn, loves God with all his strength. The child expects everything from his father; he has no doubt that his father is the strongest. He knows how to look at his father in the eye and ask him everything he needs; and above all, he believes beyond any doubt that he will obtain what he has asked for. That's what Mary does for us. She looks at our Heavenly Father straight in the eye and asks him for us, with unlimited confidence, all we need, and she gets it.

Her humble and confident heart earned her the first place in heaven after her son, Jesus. Following her in her footsteps and putting ourselves under her care, we too will be given a special place in heaven with Jesus. Following her in her footsteps, thanks to the spirituality of the 5-5-5, we too are in the process of obtaining a heavenly home of our own. Did not Jesus say, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40)? Whenever we practice the charity that is at the heart of our spirituality not only do we advance towards our heavenly home, but we also help those around us to move gradually towards the Kingdom.

That is why it is so important to live our 5-5-5 spirituality with Mary as a model. Like her, we can live in the shadow of her Son and maintain with Him an intimate relationship that goes beyond the need for earthly or spiritual powers over the evil forces. Our total belonging to Christ, with all the radicalism and requirements involved, is already a huge victory over evil, because not only are we saved by the grace of Christ and the intercession of his Mother, but we bring with us in the final salvation all those who are dear to us.

So, my dear friends, let's become indispensable and uncompromising witnesses of Christ's unconditional love because our names are already written in heaven!

### *A Thought from Fr. Parent*

«Our charity must be fiery enough to be shared. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director General*

Thank you for praying for our Central Council meeting held in July, this time in person at the Central House. We are very pleased to have promoted the following people to stability:

*From Sri Lanka District:* JOE SANJUTHAN, Soundaram, ANTONY MARIYATHAS, Alosious Croos, and JUDE RAVINDRAN, Santhampillai.

*From the United States District,* our first German member, SPRINGOB, Sebastian.

Two districts held respectively and recently their District Assembly. Each of these districts, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, has elected a new Council. Here are the names:

*For Dominican Republic:* Fr. Vicente Sánchez Burgos as District Director, Fr. Andrés Solano Sosa, as Assistant Director, Fr. Julio César Gómez Beras, as Councillor, Fr. Alejandro de la Cruz Vásquez, as Councillor, Mrs. Giselda Altigracia García de Saviñon and her husband Mr. Angel Tonis Saviñon, as Councillors.

*For Haiti:* Fr. Evens Francis as District Director, Fr. Faustin Louis as Assistant Director, Fr. Iradin Louis, Fr. Salomon Jérôme and Fr. Didi Horace as Councillors, as well as Mrs. Marie-Lude Pierre-Louis and her husband Mr. Evens Pierre-Antoine as Councillors.

We congratulate the members of these two newly elected District Councils and keep them in our prayers.

### *Birthdays*

August 5, *Fr. Yvon Carpentier*, from Canada, former Director General, will celebrate his anniversary.

August 8, *Mrs. Ynocencia Ozoria*, from Dominican Republic, actual Councillor as Associate Member on Central Council, will celebrate her anniversary.

August 19, *Fr. Jomanas Eustache*, from Haiti, actual Councillor on Central Council, will celebrate his anniversary.

August 26, *Fr. François Hamel*, from Canada, former Director General, will celebrate his anniversary.

### *Aspirancy Anniversaries*

August 1, *Fr. Michel Charbonneau*, from Ecuador will celebrate 50 years in the Institute.

August 6, *Fr. Gilbert Doddatto*, from Canada will celebrate 25 years in the Institute.

August 27, *Mrs. Maria Altigracia Reyes*, from Dominican Republic will celebrate 25 years in the Institute.

August 27, *Mrs. Saturnina Sosa*, from Dominican Republic will celebrate 25 years in the Institute.

### *Stability Anniversaries*

August 2, *Fr. Jaime Alberto Heano Arroyave*, from Colombia, will celebrate 25 years of stability in the Institute.

August 2, *Fr. Robert Lebel*, from Canada, will celebrate 25 years of stability in the Institute.

August 3, *Fr. Rafael Meija*, from Dominican Republic, will celebrate 25 years of stability in the Institute.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as for all the members who will celebrate whatever anniversary in August. May God bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# *News of the Director General*

*Volume 10 ♦ Number 3*

*September 2019*

## *To Create Peace*

Dear Friends,

We sometimes wonder how we could bring more peace to our family circle, to our work team or to any other milieu where we evolve. Of course, we can continue to scrutinize how we personally experience our 5-5-5 spirituality, how we try to build peace, cultivate a positive language, and accomplish inclusive and fraternal acts.

However, I would like to situate our spirituality on the main line of two major orientations of life which should constantly animate us as Christians. Indeed, the Bible reminds us that we have been created for two goals: to render glory to God in all things and to do good to others. Our 5-5-5 spirituality details for us how to accomplish these two orientations.

Most often the two attitudes that prevent us from creating peace where we work are self-centeredness and fear. For example, instead of seeing events in the perspective of the common good or the growth of others, we look at them in terms of what they are going to bring us personally or what they will remove from us. Thus, we look and anticipate things according to ourselves rather than the whole situation. Consequently, we constrain our generosity and free contribution: we begin to count the hours devoted to this project rather than contemplating the glory that it will bring to God and the good that it will provide to others.

Then, there is the fear that paralyzes us and prevents us from taking risks sometimes necessary to be able to exit a “dead end” issue. Once again, fear arises when we are centered on ourselves, on what is going to disturb us, to upset us or to diminish us in one way or another. Instead of looking at the loss objectively as a long-term gain, we consider the loss as an enemy to be fought. Also, our desire for an immediate solution to plug our fear or our need of comfort may prevent us from adopting a solution that will have greater results in the long run and will facilitate things throughout the years even if at the present moment it seems to serve us less.

Again, let's look at our favorite models, the Virgin Mary and Father Parent, our Founder. Mary preferred the discomfort and insecurity in traveling to help her cousin, Elizabeth. She forgot herself in order to render service to the other, despite all the questions that she may have had concerning her future. God understood her questioning and responded to her through the mouth of Elizabeth. Father Parent also responded generously to God's call from a young age even though the prognostics of the doctor were not so good. Instead of looking at himself and at his own health, he placed full trust in the Lord and committed himself to follow Him. In time, his health improved.

It went the same way for Abraham in his prayer. In the recent liturgy, we have seen how he did not think about himself in his intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah. He even bargained with God to obtain that no righteous person be destroyed by God's punishment for those two cities. God listened to his prayer; no righteous person was destroyed by this punishment.

And us? Can we put aside fear and self-pity when the time comes to be generous, committed, to give more of ourselves and, above all, to better keep peace in our environment? Thus, let us give more than we expect from others; the more we give the more we shall receive, and the more there will be peace.

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« Let us give to others the kindness we have received from God and with which they will leave without taking anything from us. We will remain just as rich, while they will become less poor.»  
(*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

Our next meeting of the Central Council will take place via videoconference on September 23, 2019. We thank you in advance for your prayers for the success of this meeting.

### *Birthdays*

September 1st, *Innasi Mudiyanpan* of Tamil Nadu, Councillor at the Central Council, will celebrate his birthday.

September 6th, *Renée Croteau* of Canada, associated member and volunteer at the Central House will celebrate her birthday.

### *Anniversary of Ordination*

September 9th, *Fr. Grégoire Lapointe* of Canada will celebrate his 60th anniversary of priesthood.

### *Anniversary of Incorporation in the Institute*

September 11th, *Fr. Yves Dionne* of Canada will celebrate his 25th anniversary of incorporation in the Institute.

### *Anniversary of Stability*

September 9th, *Fr. Ramon Antonio Araujo Tejada* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate 25 years of stability in the Institute.

September 9th, *Fr. Andrés Solano Sosa* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate 25 years of stability in the Institute.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as for all others who will be celebrating an anniversary in September. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# News of the Director General

Volume 10 ♦ Number 4

October 2019

## *I am a mission*

Dear Friends,

On the occasion of the centenary of Benedict XV's Apostolic Letter, *Maximum Illud* (November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1919), on the mission of the Church, Pope Francis has just written a particular message for the World Mission Day which will take place on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019. This annual day was instituted by Pius XI in 1926; its goal is to encourage the faithful to pray for the missions and to get involved personally when possible. This day also recalls the essentially missionary character of the Church and of every baptized person who is part of it.

The message of Pope Francis, for its part, leads us to consider the whole month of October as a time for reflection on the missionary role of the Church and on our personal call to mission. The Pope stresses the strong points of *Maximum Illud* which he considers visionary and prophetic, and he translates them into understandable words for our present context. Among other things, the Pope reminds us of the importance of reviving our personal missionary commitment through the mission of the Church by bringing forth a new evangelical thrust in the work of preaching that brings the salvation to the world by Jesus Christ who died and resurrected. He also reminds us that our faith is not something private whose dynamic extends up and down between God and oneself alone; the movement of an authentic faith also spreads horizontally to all human beings, our brothers and sisters, all from the same Father. Authentic faith contains within itself a missionary impulse that pushes us towards others in order that they too may experience the charity of Christ. Here we are! Right at the core of our spirituality: *to create peace and fraternity*, to work in unconditional charity.

Faith was given to us free of charge at our baptism. It is a gift that puts us in perpetual communion with the Trinity. This divine life within us must be shared, communicated and proclaimed; it cannot remain buried in the storeroom of our inner life. Moreover, it is our responsibility to share it and to communicate it to all, without exception, since God wants to draw everyone to Himself. This dynamic inevitably leads us to live a constant conversion, to a reversal of our being that is naturally inclined to withdraw into itself. This conversion of our being opens us to all without exclusion; it transforms us so that we accept the constant sacrifice of our lives through the free gift of ourselves.

In this way, *I become myself a mission always on the move*. Each one of us is a mission at every moment of the day, in the present moment that spreads out before us. At every moment, faith, hope and charity propel us to others around us who are in need. At every moment, *I am a constant mission*, diverted from myself to be turned towards others, because by me, God wants that each person reaches the knowledge of the truth (cf: 1 Tim 2 :4). Thus, our mission roots itself in the fatherhood of our heavenly Father, and in the motherhood of the Church. Benedict XV says in *Maximum Illud* : « The person who preaches God must be a person of God. » This invites not only the technical efficiency of the announcement of salvation, but above all, to the personal holiness that should animate all those who are on mission for God.



In closing, I cannot help but to think of little Thérèse whose feast day is October 1st. She was chosen to be the patroness of missions precisely not because of a great ability to preach or a great apostolic influence. She never left her convent and she died at a very young age. However, each day that she lived, her whole being was intensely turned toward others, in faith and charity, in the free gift of herself and even at the price of the sacrifice of her life. She was constantly in search of their conversion and their spiritual transformation. Thus, mission is for each one of us whether we are in good health or disabled, whether we have obvious or hidden talents; all of us are called during this month of October, thanks to the intercession of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary and of Saint Thérèse, to become more and more « a mission ». *I am a mission*, not isolated from others, but with all my brothers and sisters who seek together to build peace and fraternity in the Kingdom of our Father.

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« As Christians, we will have a certain radiance if we are attentive to others, if we have enough maturity to take care of others, enough respect to accept them as they are with their riches and their poverties.»  
(*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

As planned, our Central Council meeting took place through videoconference on September 23, 2019. We thank you infinitely for your prayers that supported us during this successful meeting.

### *Birthdays*

October 11<sup>th</sup>, *Anthony Ciorra*, current USA District Director.

October 29<sup>th</sup>, *Andrew Sioleti*, from USA District, Assistant Director General.

### *Anniversary of Incorporation in the Institute*

October 23<sup>rd</sup>, *Anthonipillai Tony Jeray* will celebrate 25 years.

I invite you to pray for these members as well as for all members who will celebrate an anniversary during the month of October. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei

Director General

# *News of the Director General*

*Volume 10 ♦ Numéro 5*

*November 2019*

## *Life After Death*

Dear Friends,

November is the month during which we celebrate the souls of the faithful departed and of all the saints. This is an occasion for us to reflect upon life after death. It is often said that no one has come back to tell us how life is after death. No one returned effectively; but, let's remember that the Scriptures reveal to us some fragments. This is the case of the story that Jesus tells about Lazarus and the rich man who find themselves in different postures after death (Luke 16, 19-31).

Basically, if we observe God's plan for mankind, and why He created man and woman, we will find some answers to our questions concerning the afterlife. Indeed, God created us after creating all of nature. He made us his stewards over all things, that is, God entrusted to us the care of His Creation to make it grow and bear fruit, to bring it to maturity. So, for our earthly life to be lived fully and meaningfully, each of us must ask ourselves the following question: "Am I living in fullness the purpose of my birth on earth?" The answer to this question should put us on track to better understand how our life will be after death.

Indeed, God wants to instruct us on the way we should live our life here, on earth, while there is still some time left for us to change. It's an invitation, of course, to listen to, and to live the Scriptures. These constantly bring us back to the way we should respect others, and the way we should care about nature and God's Creation in general. Jesus explains the meaning of the last judgment this way: "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me", (Mt 25, 40). If we live with constant attention for those who are on our path, for nature, for the environment, and for social justice, we will celebrate the purpose for our life on earth and we will contribute to build the reign of God.

Why is this so important? Certainly, to assure the well-being of our neighbour, but also for our own eternal life. We will continue to live in eternity according to what we experienced on earth. Have we shared a great deal here below? Then, in heaven, we will be given profusion of love and graces. Have we forgiven much here below? Then, in heaven, we will be forgiven. Have we attempted to build bridges between people here below? Then, bridges will be created between us and the Lord and His entire spiritual world. Even though, no one has ever come to speak to us clearly about life after death, our faith tells us there is something else after death, and it is here on earth that we prepare for this other life. Jesus has lifted the veil on this life saying: "In my Father's house there are many mansions ... When I am gone to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to me, so that where I am, you are, you too" (Jn 14, 2-3). The important thing is to follow Jesus now. Whoever walks in the footsteps of Jesus on this earth, can also walk with him in heaven.

Therefore, let us beware of lukewarmness and indifference to the misery of others. Let us take the road of sharing and fellowship. Let us become conscious beings of the misery around us; let us be attentive and react on the spot with a gesture of charity.

## *Thought of Father Parent*

« The neighbour is the ground where my strength of loving must land. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

## *News of the Director*

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, let us have a special thought for all our deceased members, and especially for those who departed this year. Let's think about our Founder, Fr. Louis-Marie Parent, who is already in the glory of the Father, and let us pray for the deceased members of our families.

At the end of November, I will be visiting our members in Colombia.

## *Birthdays*

November 2<sup>nd</sup>, *Richard Normandin*, from Canada, volunteer at the Central House.

November 3<sup>rd</sup>, *Patricia Blandon*, affiliate and accountant at the Central House.

November 5<sup>th</sup>, *Marie-Andrée Groarke*, archivist at the Central House.

November 24<sup>th</sup>, *Fr. Laurier Albert I.V.Dei*, from Canada, Councillor and Secretary of the Central Council.

November 30<sup>th</sup>, *Fr. Francis Evens*, Director of the District of Haïti.

## *Anniversary of Incorporation in the Institute*

November 20<sup>th</sup>, *Fr. William J. McKeone* from the United States will celebrate 25 years.

In closing, I wish to offer my humble apologies to *Mr. Denis Fortier*, our Director of Administrative Services, who celebrated his birthday on September 21<sup>st</sup>. We forgot to indicate this in the September letter.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as for all those members who will be celebrating whatever anniversary in November. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# News of the Director General

Volume 10 ♦ Number 6

December 2019

## *Peace to People of Good Will*

Dear Friends,

The celebrations of Christmas and the new year are approaching rapidly. This time of festivities allows us to spend time with family, loved ones and friends. For us, *Voluntas Dei*, these are wonderful opportunities to create peace and fraternity. Often, these happen to be real challenges depending on whether the family connections are stressed or not. However, we have a spirituality that propels us forward and exhorts us to live in peace with one another.

Father Parent made the connection between living the will of God and preserving inner peace. Indeed, doing the will of God in all things is the key to maintaining peace within and around oneself. Jesus also said: « Not everyone who says to me ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (Mt 7:21). » It is not a matter here of superficial peace that mere external silence could provide. It is rather an existential peace that lives deeply within us whatever the life situation may be. It is a certainty of the presence of God, rooted in oneself from the fact of being in the groove of his divine will. This grace one cannot give to oneself. It comes from God like a fruit that blooms following our efforts and good will: « Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do, I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (Jn 14, 27). »

The angels sang at the birth of Jesus: « Peace to people of good will! » If we are fundamentally turned toward the will of God, the Lord will know how to place us in his peace and joy. These are the fruits that the fulfillment of God’s will obtains for us in our daily lives. Yes, it is in the daily exercise of the will of God that a real and profound peace is achieved. It is in the concreteness of life, in the choices that we make each day in connection with the Gospel. Each day we must look at ourselves in truth and ask ourselves: « Am I truly in the will of God in this moment? What is preventing me from being so? Does my behavior and my choices express that I am doing the will of God? »

It may happen that we may not be sure in doing so. Let’s take as an example the magi from the East : they felt that they had seen in the celestial constellations a sign of the arrival of a future king in Israel. They were not at all a part of the Jewish culture or religion. And yet, they listened to the truth of their hearts and allowed themselves to be guided concretely by leaving their land to reach a foreign country, a long journey that they accomplished on the same roads as Abraham did, and not without some inner questioning. Their journey realized in faith was rewarded: they found themselves face to face with the King of kings, Jesus, and they experienced a great joy. On the other hand, king Herod, filled with his ego and desires for power, was certainly not « of good will » and much less « in the will of God ». We can note what he did and where his actions and decisions led him.

Am I like Herod, letting myself be guided by my superficial feelings, or am I like the magi who allowed themselves to be guided by the truth of their hearts and their « good will »?

To live concretely what the angels announced: « Peace to people of good will, » how am I going to prepare myself for this Christmas? Let the truth of our heart guide us and we will find or maintain peace within ourselves.

### *Thought of Father Parent*

«Do you want to be the sower of a day, sow flowers. Do you want to be a sower of a life, sow a tree. Do you want to be a sower of eternity, sow peace, love and joy. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

Our next meeting of the Central Council will take place from December 1-6 in Colombia. We thank you in advance for your prayers throughout this meeting.



*Let me offer you my best wishes of joy, peace, love and good health at this time of Christmas and the new year. May God bless you and all of your loved ones!*

### *Birthdays*

December 12, *Roger CORNEAU*, of Canada, volunteer at the Central House.

### *Anniversaries of Marriage*

December 6, *MARIATHAS, Arganchippillai* and *Mary Josephine* of Sri Lanka, will celebrate their 50th anniversary of marriage.

December 8, *CHERY, Justin Harry* and *VALCOURT, Marie Carmelle* of Haïti, will celebrate their 25th anniversary of marriage.

### *Aspirancy*

December 1st, *Jean Dubé* of Canada will mark his 25th year of incorporation in the Institute.

I invite you to pray for these members on the occasion of their anniversaries as well as for all who will be celebrating whatever anniversary in December. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# News of the Director General

Volume 10 ♦ Numéro 7

January 2020

## *May the Lord Bless You and Keep You!*

Dear Friends,

The liturgy with which we begin this new year proposes to us to offer and to welcome the blessings of God in our lives and exhorts us not only to give blessings to others, but also to make of *our whole person a blessing* for others (Numbers 6).

Each time we start a new year, we desire the best for ourselves and for our loved ones. That is why we try to make resolutions to begin the year on a good footing. Whether it is spiritually, physically or otherwise, we try to turn the page on the past which has not been always shiny, in order to get back on track with better dispositions. But with time and experience, we quickly realize that sticking to your resolutions is not always easy!

The Lord still invites us to cultivate « our good will », as mentioned in the December letter. He invites us to make daily efforts to listen to the truth from our hearts regarding our relationships with others. Of course, it is easy to bless those that we love and are favourable to us. But, to love and bless those who have taken us in dislike is another story.

And yet, this is where our blessing is required and can bear unsuspected fruit. Perhaps you will ask me: « How can we bless someone? » The answer is in the book of Numbers in chapter 6, verses 22-27. The Lord said to Moses: « Say to Aaron and his sons, thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them: “The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you! The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace!” So, shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them. »

It is a matter of putting ourselves in the presence Of God and symbolically placing before us any person to whom we wish to grant a blessing, particularly if it is a person with whom the relationship has been broken. We could simply proclaim this biblical excerpt while thinking of this person while desiring ardently the best for him or her. The blessings given in faith and in charity will create a spiritual bridge between us and this person; in doing so, the Lord will grant in His time the necessary graces to allow us, if possible, to rebuild any broken relationship, at least by granting us inner peace regarding this person.

It is an act of faith and charity to be performed and, according to several testimonies from people having experienced blessing others, this is an approach which gives real results.

At the dawn of this new year, I invite us to make it a habit of blessing in the name of the Lord Jesus all those who are around us and with whom we live. By this very fact, we will become beings of forgiveness and reconciliation. Pastors, please bless your parishioners. Parents, bless your children. Children, bless your parents as well as your brothers and sisters. Bosses, bless your employees. Employees, bless your bosses. May we all be a blessing according to the heart of God! In this way, the reign of peace will remain upon us.

For myself as Director General of the Institute, I ask your forgiveness if I have wounded anyone among you. Also, I bless you abundantly in asking God to fill you with His graces in all of your needs. Happy and holy 2020!

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« The human being builds him/herself more through forgiveness than through hatred or through accumulated and rehashed grief. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

At our last Central Council meeting held in Colombia at the beginning of December, we accepted to stability Louis Arockia PRADEEP of Tamil Nadu (India), as well as Juan Alberto GOMEZ MORALES (Cuba). We also met the members of the Region of Colombia, and after consultation with them, we named a new Director of the Region and a New Regional Council. The following is them:

Jaime Alberto HENAO ARROYAVE, Director; Esmaragdo de Jesús TAMAYO MÚNERA, Assistant Director; Guillermo PÉREZ MONTOYA, Councillor, Mr. and Mrs. Edward RENGIFO DORADO and Marta VELÁSQUEZ, Councillors.

We are planning our next meeting of the Central Council for February 24, 2020 via videoconference. I am planning a canonical visit to Ethiopia and Vietnam towards the end of January and the beginning of February. Rory Murphy, Councillor, is going to accompany me.

The statue of the Holy Virgin coming from the first house of the Voluntas Dei founded by Father Parent in Sri Lanka that was brought to Quebec during the civil war and kept at the Central House at the request of Father Parent. It is now returned to Sri Lanka to its original location.

### *Birthdays*

January 13<sup>th</sup>, *Lloyd SHANTI KUMAR I.V.Dei*, Director of the District of Sri Lanka.

January 27<sup>th</sup>, *Vicente SANCHEZ BURGOS I.V.Dei*, Director of the District of Alta Gracia in the Dominican Republic.

I invite you to pray for these members on the day of their birthdays as well as all others that will be celebrating whatever anniversary in January. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# News of the Director General

Volume 10 ♦ Number 8

February 2020

## *You Are the Light of The World!*

Dear Friends,

For 22 years already, thanks to Saint John Paul II, we open the month of February by celebrating the World Day for Consecrated Life. This celebration takes place on February 2, the same day as the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the temple. Indeed, according to the Hebrew tradition, 40 days after the birth of a firstborn male, he was brought to the temple to be consecrated to the Lord. In carrying out this requirement, Joseph and Mary were not only performing a rite of their tradition, but they were allowing God to manifest Himself in His Son, which made the old Simeon say : « Sovereign Lord, as You have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light which is revealed to the nations and gives glory to Your people Israel » (Luke 2, 29-31).

That is why this feast is also known as *Candlemas* or *the feast of candles*. By the blessings of candles lit in processions and then brought back to the homes, the Church underlines both that Christ is the light in our daily lives and that, therefore, we too, baptized in Him, are "light of the world " (cf : Mt 5, 14). In proclaiming this, Jesus spoke of all those who would follow him as disciples over the centuries.

Among those who follow Christ, there are especially those consecrated to God by vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. This consecration can be lived in religious, monastic or hermitic life, but it can also be lived in the midst of the world as members of a secular institute do. « To be consecrated » means « to be set apart » for a mission or for a particular role. In this way, consecrated persons have a special role or mission in the Church. The Feast of February 2 represents, for each of these consecrated persons, an opportunity to review the state of their consecration in relation with God, and to present themselves again before the Lord to renew their commitments, allowing them to radiate even more the light of Christ in the world today.

How do we express through our being and actions that we are the light of Christ? Saint John indicates it in his first Epistle, chapter 4, through the love the we have for one another. Furthermore, Saint John states in this same Epistle: « God is love; God is light. » Therefore, if we love one another, we carry the light of God within us. The more we love, the more we shine forth the light of Christ in us and around us. Love becomes the expression of the presence of God, of the divine light. Let us remember that our 5-5-5 spirituality and our charism become essential instruments to help us surpass ourselves in love.

Also, for consecrated persons, the expression of God's takes on a special colour through the lived experience of the three evangelical counsels. Father Parent liked to underline, more particularly, the importance of the evangelical counsel of the obedience to a conscience enlightened by the



Gospel and by the *Constitutions* of our Institute. The challenge experienced in the world today by members of secular institutes is very real. Invitations to follow other ways than that proposed by the Gospel are numerous. Consecration to God in the midst of the world requires both a centralization on God and on the Gospel, as well as a capacity to apply and integrate these values in the prevailing context where the opportunities to surpass oneself in the love of others arise from all sides. These opportunities become the places allowing us to become the light of Christ in the world.

Dear brothers and sisters, as consecrated persons, let us take advantage of this great feast in the Church to review the state of our consecration and to renew our eagerness to follow Christ, first served in our lives. Thus, with Christ, we will surely become "light of the world".

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« As Christians, we will have a certain influence if we are attentive to others, if we have enough maturity to take care of others, enough respect to accept them as they are, with their wealth and their indigence. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

We will hold our next meeting of the Central Council via videoconference on February 24, 2020. Again, we ask for your fervent prayers for the success of this meeting.

### *Birthdays*

February 6<sup>th</sup>, *Father Guillermo Pérez I.V.Dei*, translator at the service of the Central Administration.

February 19<sup>th</sup>, *Mrs Violaine Couture*, Oblate Missionary of Mary Immaculate, secretary of the Central Administration.

February 22<sup>nd</sup>, *Father Marc-Arthur François I.V.Dei*, Councillor on the Central Council.

### *Marriage Anniversary*

February 11<sup>th</sup>, *Mr. Arokiyanathar and Mrs. Maria Fatima JERUBIN* from Sri Lanka will celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of marriage.

I invite you to pray for these members on their anniversaries as well as for all others who will be celebrating whatever anniversary in February. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

## For an Effective Missionary Life

Dear Friends,

As you know, the month of March is punctuated by two important Church celebrations: first, we have just begun Lent, then on March 25th we will celebrate the feast of the Annunciation, our patronal feast day within the Institute. The month of March will be for each one of us, in a way, a launching pad for Easter that will arrive this time on April 12th. So, here we are now in a period of the liturgical year that represents a favourable time for personal revision, for the revitalization and the energization of our baptism.

This time, I invite each one of us to reflect on how to make our missionary life effective. Of course, I could dwell for a long time on the importance of prayer life seen as the first motor for an effective missionary life. Indeed, *the presence of God* is the first of the five life attitudes to be privileged. There is also the testimony that we must give as Christians and as members of the Voluntas Dei Secular Institute. This witness will manifest itself more specifically through the way we put into practice, personally and collectively, the 5-5-5 spirituality.

Here again, our spirituality and life attitudes are once more underlined as important means to become effective in our missionary life. However, today I would like to focus more specifically on the importance that we should give to the *team life*, to the *balance of life* and to the *style of pastoral leadership* that we exercise.

First, *team life* : who has not experienced in their life this proverb saying that “two or three heads are better than one”? Experimenting *team life* in depth and with total trust is an essential key to become effective in our missionary life. Everyone's ideas are added to our personal ideas making collective projects more effective. Isolation, on the other hand, closes access to new possibilities. Developing and strengthening our relationships within the team becomes an asset for the mission.

Then, how to achieve a *life balance*? Often, we get so wrapped up in our projects that we forget our first objective which is to make Christ known. We are turned more on our own ideals and on our personal success than on the evangelical ideal. The *review of the day* becomes an unavoidable means to allow us to recover a balance in our missionary objectives, from day to day. Revisiting our day before the Lord in the light of the Gospel and our spirituality helps us to refocus on the essentials of our mission and not to stumble on "accessory" elements. Again, seeking advice from our team can help to rebalance and refocus what needs to be.

The same is true for better developing our *pastoral leadership style*. To review everyday our manner of directing, advising and animating the groups for which we are responsible, and this, in the light of the Gospel and our spirituality, is an essential priority for the well-being of our missionary life. Should we ask for forgiveness for being too directive, too negative or too abrupt in an approach? Let's not hesitate to do so with humility and with the joy of the Gospel at heart. Are we bothered by a decision to take for whatever situation? Let's turn to our *life team* but also toward our *work team* to find the necessary ideas that will open the way to positive changes.

Dear brothers and sisters, as priests, consecrated or affiliated persons, and committed couples, let us profit well from this month when the liturgy of the Church drives us to personal and collective transformation. Let us turn to Christ who suffered his passion, who died and rose again, to regain the strength every day to allow us to be transformed so that our whole missionary life becomes more effective. Thus, with the Virgin Mary who has always been present at her Son's mission, we will undoubtedly become "missionary disciples with a hearts of fire".

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« Trust propels you onto the route of success and you cannot fail the mission. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

We had our Central Council meeting by videoconference on February 24th. Thank you for your fervent prayers that supported us during this meeting. Here is some news:

- Mr. Efrain HILDAGO ABREU from the Dominican Republic was accepted to stability.
- In Haiti, a new Voluntas Dei priest was ordained on January 18: he is Father Laurent HECTOR. Congratulations to our new priest! Let's keep him in our prayers, as well as his ministry.
- Our visits to Vietnam and Ethiopia were fruitful and we thank you for your prayers which supported us during this journey: we ask you to continue to pray for the development of the Institute in Vietnam.
- Our next meeting of the Central Council will take place on May 4. Again, thank you for carrying us in prayer. We ask the regional and district councils to send us their requests at least fifteen days in advance.
- A simple reminder: March 25 is our patronal feast. Thank you for enhancing this day not only with your personal prayer, but also, if possible, under the gaze of the Virgin of the Annunciation, to make it an occasion for fraternal meetings, intercession and thanksgiving for our Institute.

### *Anniversary of Stability*

March 11<sup>th</sup>, Fr. *Philippe DÉSIÉ* of the Canadian District will celebrate his 25th anniversary of stability.

I invite you to pray for him and for all others who celebrate whatever anniversary during the month of March. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

## Temporal Alert vs Spiritual Alert

Dear Friends,

We live in an era where alerts are numerous! Everyday, in the newspapers or on the news we see: *alert* to a bomb, weather *alert* or yet, « amber » *alert*. In addition, our laptops or cell phones furnish us also with *alerts* indicating to us the arrival of important messages. Among all of these alerts, some have greater priority than others and our spirit must incessantly sort out what is urgent and not so urgent.

Lastly, more specifically, we are on the look out for the rise in the COVID-19 (coronavirus) now becoming a pandemic. Each day, we have the reflex to verify the extent of the harm and the consequences to the world economy and social life in general.

In light of all these *alerts*, we often experience a certain stress or anxiety. However, as Christians, as members of an Institute of consecrated life, how do we live the *spiritual alerts* in relation to all the *temporal alerts* that we must face? What are we hearing in regard to *spiritual alerts*? I would like to speak about all those calls that the Lord addresses to us in the Gospel, calls to conversion and to believe in the Good News of salvation. This is what Jesus says in the Gospel of Mark (1 :15) : « The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel. » If the time was already fulfilled when Jesus was in this world, what about now? Jesus wanted to draw the attention of his contemporaries to the urgency of conversion and change. Today, more than ever, we have need to listen again to this message that keeps us alert, stimulates us to do good and causes us to turn away from evil.

We are, at the present, in the season of Lent, a time to question ourselves, a time to review our attitudes, habits and priorities. Easter is at our door leading us to reflect and meditate upon the mystery of the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ. Are the *temporal alerts* taking so much space in our lives that there is no longer any space to deal with the *spiritual alerts*? In other words, are we allowing ourselves to be overcome by anxiety and fear in light of the present challenges to the point that we are forgetting that God dwells within us and invites us to trust in Him? Certainly, there are precautions to be taken in the face of an eventual danger: for example, in what regards the COVID-19 (coronavirus), it is important to follow the advice of the civil, ecclesiastical and medical authorities in each region and to see that the most vulnerable are protected. At the same time, it is important to moderate the panic that could arise and risk creating harm rather than helping the situation. A balanced reaction is necessary! But also more necessary and important, daily attention to the *spiritual alerts* that the Lord is sending through all of these events!

What is the Lord saying to us today through the COVID-19 (coronavirus) or all other dangers that surface? What are His calls through these events? Once this virus is conquered, will we return simply to our former habits of life or will we be transformed by this event that invites us perhaps to be more in solidarity, to pray more and to have more trust?

Among other things, here is what I propose to us in order to make place to *spiritual alerts*: particular attention to the Sacrament of Reconciliation lived from a biblical text. This sacrament is given to us as a gift from the Risen Christ. Each time that we engage in it in faith, humility and in complete truth, the Lord recreates us through His grace. He does not only remove our faults, he comes to change little by little our

*spiritual ADN* tarnished by the wounds of life. The Lord wants to make everything new (Ap 21, 5). He is not content with just doing a clean-up, but He wants to uproot in us all evil. He wants to heal the fundamental wounds that are the source of our evil tendencies.

Dear sisters and brothers, if we have the possibility of approaching the sacrament of reconciliation; let us do so with complete trust, with a true desire of conversion and humility. If we cannot do so because the present circumstances of the pandemic, let us follow the guidelines of the Holy Father who invites us to confess directly to God, to our Heavenly Father who welcomes us with goodness and joy. Let us go there rather with a spirit of faith and also with hope in the One Who gave His life that we may live a new life with a spiritual ADN renewed!

To all, I wish a good and holy Lent lived in faith, hope and charity!

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« Confidence propels you on the road of success and you cannot fail your mission. » (*Louis-Marie Parent o.m.i.*)

### *News of the Director*

At the approach of the Easter Triduum, I would like to offer all of you my best wishes for an Easter lived in faith, hope and love. May the resurrected Christ grant you His blessings and peace! Let us pray during this time that the Holy Father reminds us that prayer unites us more to God and at the same time gives us the comfort we need.

### *Birthdays*

5 April, His Eminence, Cardinal Louis-Marie LING, of Laos.

10 April, Joseph SENGOL, Director of the Region of Tamil Nadu.

14 April, Cécile DAVIDSON-CORNEAU of Canada, in charge of the archives at the Central House.

29 April, Eduardo FONSECA PONCE Director of the Region of Cuba.

celebrate the birthdays

### *Anniversaries of Priesthood*

4 April, John CAMPOLI of the United States will celebrate his 50th anniversary of priesthood.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as all other members who will be celebrating an anniversary in April. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

# News of the Director General

Volume 10 ♦ Numéro 11

May 2020

## *Present Portrait : Today's Reality*

Since mid-March, the entire world has been plunged into an unprecedented pandemic. A small virus, invisible to the naked eye, without warning came to disrupt our lives, to paralyze the world of work, to take by storm our hospitals, to affect persons most vulnerable of our society and to confine us indefinitely within the four walls of our houses, or at least partly, until we have found an immunization vaccine. Overnight, we have found ourselves dismayed and rendered helpless by an enemy greater than us, and yet smaller than us.

The benefit of this time of retreat, if there is any, finds itself in the fact that not only are we obliged to re-do differently and rapidly our overall management of services but we have arrived hopefully at a necessary introspection that turns us toward God and His Word in order to find some meaning in all that is happening.

Personally, it gave me the opportunity to search and to find among certain prophets of the First Testament and in the Gospels a meaning to this event. For example, in reading the prophet Isaiah (26 :20) : « Come my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until the wrath is past. » There I have perceived our present and obliged confinement in order to protect all and also for interior freedom.

Through the life of the prophet Jeremiah whom God had isolated and alienated from the rest of the society as a prefigurement of the exile that the people would be subjected to, I see there again what we are now living: «. . . I sat alone, because thy hand was upon me, for thou had filled me with indignation.»(Jer 15, 17).

Later in chapter 16, it is like reading a journal about what is happening today especially in certain countries less fortunate : « Both great and small will shall die in this land; they shall not be buried, and no one shall lament for them or cut himself or make himself bald for them. » This is difficult to read and hear, however, it is nonetheless a reality very present that exists in certain countries where the bodies of the dead are piling up so rapidly where no one has either the time to bury them or to offer them a decent funeral eulogy : « Great and small will die in this country without burial . . . No one shall break bread with the mourner to comfort him for the dead . . . (Jer. 16 :6-9) We know very well funeral homes on account of security for all are no longer offering funeral services in the same way : persons in mourning must social distance for the dead and the living that come to comfort them. Now, we have to turn to technologies available in order to find together at a distance a certain consolation.

From his point of view, the prophet Isaiah describes that situation that we are living in this way : « The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the pride of men shall be humbled; and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. » (Is 2 : 11). Indeed, since this pandemic, we have been forced to realize that we are not as powerful as we thought we were. Our pretensions have been reduced to nothing. We thought that we were in charge of our destiny but now the Lord comes through this event to call us forth and pose to us a number of questions. A reflection is required. As a society and as individuals have we given Him the proper place in our hearts and in our lives? Are we more turned toward Him or to our own ego?

Thus, through this worldwide event, we can listen to God calling us to *repentance* and to *conversion*. Here are two spiritual responses that we can offer to God through what we are at present living. God wants to sustain us in our personal transformation and He invites us to have confidence in Him. Jesus said to Martha at the time of her brother's death; « I tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God. » ( Jn 11 : 40). To trust completely in God is the act of adoration that is absolutely necessary to adopt to pass through this time of test.

The three young men that Nebuchadnezzar had confined to the furnace also challenges us to trust God completely by giving Him alone our adoration (Dan. 3 :17). Then, we will be able to see how God can bring us out of the « furnace » of this pandemic, how He can stabilize, calm down and gather us together again and accord us the salvation of soul and body.

I conclude with this text from the prophet Hosea who calls us to repentance and to conversion : « Return, O Israel to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity . . . I will heal their faithlessness : I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them . . . his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like this olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. » (Hosea 14 : 2-6).

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« Let us open the great book of life of God, and we will find there mercy, power, kindness . . . »  
(Louis-Marie Parent omi)

### *News of the Director General*

As you know, on May 17th, we will mark the 11th anniversary of the death of our Founder, Father Louis-Marie Parent. On this special day, let us be united in prayer for the repose of his soul and for the strengthening of the spiritual heritage that he left us.

### *Birthdays*

May 3, *Ruby Molina*, secretary of the Central House at Trois-Rivières.  
May 18, *Johny Puthenveetil*, Director of the Region of Kerala (India).  
May 18, *Mario Laroche*, of Canada, former Director General.  
May 28, *Rory Murphy*, United Kingdom and Councillor of the Central Council.

### *Anniversaries of Marriage*

3 May, *M. Heriberto Batista and Mme Vidalina Santana* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate their 50th anniversary.  
6 May, *M. José René De la Rosa and Mme Irma Jimenez* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of marriage.  
10 May, *M. Soosaithas Gonsalves and Mme Malathy Gonsalves* of Sri Lanka will celebrate their 25th anniversary of marriage.

### *Anniversary of Aspirancy*

7 May, *Alain Bisson and Mme Sylvie Brochu* of Canada will celebrate their 25th anniversary of incorporation.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as for all those who will be celebrating whatever anniversary in May. May God continue to bless them and to accompany them in their life journey.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General

## *The Grace of the Present Moment*

It has already been more than two months that our confinement has been lasting. Certain places are opening up and others are not. The measures of social distancing and the wearing of masks are in force especially for areas where social distancing is practically impossible in order to observe respect like on public transit or in shops for example. A lot of deaths have been added to our list and for some even loved ones. We are all plunged into mourning, if not at the loss of dear ones at least at the loss of our very cherished freedom, habits of going out and family gatherings, religious and others. The rhythm of our lives has been transformed in a way that for some this reduction in going out and meeting others weighs heavily on their psychological state of health. The simmering discontent and impatience threatens us and at the least extra requirement we risk exploding or otherwise complaining or criticizing. We are witnesses of this in grocery stores or in other shops : The clients exasperated by the health and safety measures put into place take it out on the clerks, often young students, pouring out aggressive language.

What is worse in all of this is that we do not know when we can return to a normal life since a vaccine will probably not be ready for this year. The measures will have to be in force for a good length of time and all of us must exercise patience, listening to others and empathy. Ghandi said : « Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, but it is about entering into it to learn how to dance in the rain. » In other words, we will have to exit our home at a given moment and it is important that we learn well how to do it in order to learn how to live with this virus. Father Parent had this good recipe for himself, that of *opening oneself to the grace of the present moment*.

We often hear spoken « live with the present moment. » Even the sages of various sapiential designations give praise to it. But what Father Parent added in addition was firstly and especially to live our present moment « in the presence of God. » There it is, a nuance that is important to underline. To open oneself to the present moment while being totally aware of the presence of God. To know how to toss into the heart of the Father for the time being of our lives supposes a conscious and constant intimacy with Christ, a strong connection that starts and returns from the depths of the being, from Him to us and from us toward Him. The present moment, certainly, it is important to be attentive to it : but it is a matter of detecting the divine touch that is incorporated there, discerning the grace of the Spirit that is hidden there. Without that, the present moment risks becoming again what we should avoid at all cost, to know the routine : routine in our meetings, prayers and services, etc.

To rediscover the present moment by remaining in the presence of God is to open oneself at each instant to the God who looks at me with infinite mercy. It is to believe that He is more intimately connected to me than I could ever be with myself. Then, the present moment is lit up with all of His fires and graces. The Spirit passes, but we do not know from where He comes nor where He goes : however, if I am opened to His grace at each moment, I am in a position to harness Him in what is happening to me and to better accomplish His will where dwells peace, gentleness, absence of complaint and criticism and understanding of the other.



The present moment lived in this way is disturbing since it pushes to constant conversion. It pushes to going beyond oneself in love. If this pandemic has had the effect of intensifying in us conversion and transformation of being, let us not be too pressed to see go this little virus. Certainly, it is important to return to normal life. But if this makes us lose our advantage of conversion and transformation, perhaps would it not be better to await the wisdom of God in the total rhythm of this pandemic? Let's train ourselves to live our present moment in the presence of God and train ourselves to live with the same patience of God and God will know how to come in His time.

### *Thought of Father Parent*

« The present moment, the slogan for connecting assiduously to the will of God. »  
(*Louis-Marie Parent omi*)

### *News of the DG*

We are happy to welcome to stability the following couples from Sri Lanka and Chile : M. Christian and Mme Jeyanthini CHRISTY, M. Arokiyanathar and Mme Mary Fatima J. JERUBIN, M. Thambirasa and Mme Christabela J. JEYAKUMAR, M. Asirvatham and Mme Manogaraseeli VARAPIRAGASAM.

### *Birthdays*

6 June, *René Désilets*, former Director General.

8 June, *Andrew Mayer*, translator at the service of the Central Administration.

25 June, *Gildardo Noreña*, Director of the Region of Colombia.

27 June, *Marc-André Lafrenière*, Director of the Canadian District.

### *Anniversaries of Ordination*

3 June, *Andrés SOLANO SOSA* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate his 25th.

4 June, *Gerard J. STEFFENER* of the United States will celebrate his 60th.

6 June, *Ramon ARAUJO TEJADA* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate his 25th.

13 June, *Michael CRONIN* of the United States will celebrate his 25th.

29 June, *Benedict S. KIM* of the United States will celebrate his 25th.

29 June, *Philippe DÉSIÉ* of Canada will celebrate his 25th.

### *Anniversaries of Marriage*

10 June, *M. Velliebore and Mme Judita MARIAWILLIAM DIAS* of Sri Lanka will celebrate their 25th.

24 June, *M. Silverio SANTOS DISLA and Mme Maria GUTIÉRREZ* of the Dominican Republic will celebrate their 25th.

I invite you to pray for these persons as well as all other members who will be celebrating an anniversary in the month of June. May God continue to bless them and accompany them in their journey of life.

S. James Dunstan I.V.Dei  
Director General