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## Father General

**Visit to Egypt.** Father General visited Egypt from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> of December. His visit was limited to Cairo, where the Jesuits working in the country gathered. In the afternoon, after his arrival, he met the novices and their *formatores*. On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, feast of St. Francis Xavier, he met the *formatores* to religious life and the Coptic-Catholic Patriarch, Antonios Cardinal Naguib at the *Collège de la Sainte-Famille*. The Patriarch presided the Eucharist in the Coptic rite and Father General pronounced the homily. The Mass was open to all, especially to youth movements, Christian life communities, men and women religious and collaborators. In the afternoon Father General met lay collaborators, associations and movements working with the Jesuits in the college's theatre: a presentation in power point was introduced for every organization with the opportunity to respond to three questions: what motivates one's work inside the movement or association; what is the role of the movement or association in Egypt's society; and, what are the challenges one perceives for the existence, action and future of one's movement or association. The day ended with a cultural celebration.

The next day, December 4, was dedicated mainly to the *Collège de la Sainte-Famille* and to the education in Egypt (with delegates of the *Jesuit Father School* in Minia). First, there was a meeting with the teachers and an introduction of the college and its educational project. Many questions and expectations emerged and Father General answered offering some points on the importance that education has for the Society of Jesus. A spontaneous conversation followed. Then it was the turn of students' delegates who expressed their point of view on the college and its educational goals. Likewise, Father General answered questions previously submitted. Then the alumni/ae of *Collège de la Sainte-Famille* (Cairo) and the students of *Jesuit Father School* (Minia) presented some examples of their artistic talent. The last meeting of the morning was with alumni/ae and representatives of college's activities. The afternoon of December 4 and the morning of December 5 were devoted to the Regional Assembly. The many Jesuit apostolates were introduced to Father Nicolás, and there were some discussions on "the challenges of our mission in Egypt (Islam, ecumenism, poverty, education)." Father General, on his part, spoke on the Society worldwide, its problems and its challenges. The Eucharist celebration and a community lunch closed this short but full visit.

On his way to the airport Father Nicolás stopped at Matariyyeh, the Jesuit church where our brethren are buried; this is a site of pilgrimages since the tradition says that here is the place where the Holy Family stopped during his flight into Egypt.

## From the Curia

Organized by Edward Mercieca, S.J., of the Secretariat for Ignatian Spirituality, Curia-S.J., Rome, this year's **meeting of the Spirituality Area of the Assistency of Africa and Madagascar** is held in *Mwangaza Jesuit Spirituality Centre*, Lang'ata (Nairobi, Kenya), from the 7<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) to the 11<sup>th</sup> (Saturday), December 2010. The central theme of the encounter is *The African Bishops' Synod 2010 in the light of Ignatian Spirituality and particularly of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Invited speaker is Paul Béré, S.J., Consulter of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican. Besides directors of spirituality centers and houses of retreats, other Jesuits including some of our theology students at Hekima College, Nairobi, will participate.

## Appointments

Father General has appointed:

- **Father Thomas Lawler** new Provincial of the Wisconsin Province (USA). Father Thomas was born in 1964, entered the Society of Jesus in 1987 and was ordained a priest in 1999. He earned a degree in Social Work at Loyola University-Chicago, and then was missioned to work at the Sioux Spiritual Centre near Plainview, South Dakota. In 2005, he joined the Province staff as Assistant for Pastoral and Retreat Ministry, and became Vocation Director for the Province in 2006.

- Father **Miguel de Oliveira Martins Filho** new Provincial of North-East Brazil. Fr. Miguel was born in 1960, entered the Society of Jesus in 1982 and was ordained a priest in 1994. Until now he was Superior of the residence P. Manuel Da Nóbrega in Recife.

- Father **Alberto C. Luna Pastore** new Provincial of Paraguay. Fr. Alberto was born in 1960, entered the Society of Jesus in 1979 and was ordained a priest in 1990. Until now he was superior of "P. Ignacio Ellacuria" community in Asunción.

## From the Provinces

### **AFRICA: Fifty years of the Central Africa Province**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of December the Province of Central Africa remembered 50 years since its' erection. It was the 8<sup>th</sup> of December of 1961 when the then Superior General, Fr. John Baptist Janssens, wrote: "The Divine Goodness blessed and gave a wonderful growth to the seed of faith in Christ in the regions of Lower Congo and Kwando that were entrusted to our Society of Jesus by the Supreme Pontiff in 1893. They are the Fathers and Brothers of the ancient Province of Belgium who started it up, and then watered with their sweat and their blood, and then nurtured the field with an assiduous work for about 60 years...This is why we believe that the Vice-Province of Central Africa has now reached the point of maturity required by the Society to become a Province without further delays." In 1962 the young Province had 330 members: 222 priests, 74 brothers and 34 young scholastics in formation. Now there are 372 members, of which 208 priests, 31 brothers and 134 scholastics. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, 2010 the Mission of Angola belongs to this Province. "The apostolic challenges for the future - we read in a letter from the committee for the celebrations - are numerous, especially in front of a social, political and economic environment that continues to deteriorate...But relying always in the same Divine goodness that allowed the erection of our Province, we commit ourselves with all our strength, our intelligence and our will, through a "creative fidelity", to carry on even further the torch of a province that someone consider, rightly, as the eldest daughter of all the Jesuit Provinces in the African Assistancy." Unfortunately, at the last moment, we learned with sadness, that a scholastic from Togo, Nicolas Eklou Komla, from the Kimwenza philosophate, was killed by armed men, the night of Sunday, December 5. The funeral will delay of one week the inauguration of the Jubilee Year.

### **AFRICA: AIDS Day**

This year the world AIDS Day, celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, was held in Africa in a worrying scenario: the one of the decline of international engagement in the fight against the pandemic, reflected in the lack of funds for the life-savings drugs for antiretroviral therapy. According to the message of *Jesam* (Jesuit Conference of Major Superior of Africa and Madagascar), released by the *African Jesuit AIDS Network*, the pandemic is no longer perceived as an emergency. However, in 2008 in sub-Saharan Africa there have been 1.9 million new infections and 1.4 million deaths due to complications from the disease. The majority of the countries, according to Fides news agency, still depends on foreign aid for health care and funds in recent years have not been adequate. The invitation of the Jesuits during this day was to reflect about this chilling reality and to redouble efforts to contain its spread and to support the sick. In a very broad apostolic context, which involves parishes, schools and universities, community centers, hospitals, Jesuits and lay people are offering support and assistance to HIV infected people and their families, and they strive to raise funds for prevention. The research and theological reflection offer information and insights that enable to carry on this apostolate in a more effective way.

### **AUSTRALIA: Sevenhill wine for Vietnamese churches**

The cost of wine subsequent to the imposition of new government taxes and the scarcity of sacramental wine in Vietnam led the local Major Religious Superiors Conference to seek how to supply the more than 3,000 catholic communities. An agreement has been finalized with *Sevenhill Cellars*, the Jesuit owned Australian vineyard, under which Sevenhill will provide Mass wine for all Religious communities, with requirements ordered at a single time and distribution will be done in association with the communities to keep costs as low a possible. "With the cooperation of the Conference of the Major Religious Superiors Conference, we are able to keep costs low so that we can pass on the savings to the communities," said Neville Rowe, General Manager of *Sevenhill Cellars*. "We do similar things for dioceses and congregations all over Asia and the Pacific." *Sevenhill Cellars* supplies Mass wine in Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Japan and in the Pacific to Papua New Guinea, Fiji and to the Federated States of Micronesia. Founded in 1851 by Austrian Jesuits, it is the oldest winery in South Australia's Clare Valley It also produces a range of award winning table wines that are sold in Australia, parts of Europe and through various commercial outlets in Asia.

### **INDIA: Tribal People Need More Than Words**

Geographical and social exclusion, high poverty rates and a lack of access to appropriate administrative and judicial mechanisms. These are the consequences of the lack of infrastructure development in tribal areas that have brought more than 70 million tribal people to lag far behind other communities in social and economic advancement. This is what Vice President

Mohammad Hamid Ansari told recently to a conclave of state chief ministers in New Delhi. Father Marianus Kujur, who heads the tribal unit in New Delhi's Jesuit-managed *Indian Social Institute*, welcomed Ansari's concern but said the vice president should match it with concrete action. Tribal people continue to languish in India even 63 years after the country gaining freedom: industrial and development projects in their area have threatened tribal people's lifestyle, culture and identity, and separated them from their ancestral land through displacement, migration, trafficking and other dehumanizing processes. What Ansari said proved that the government is aware of this sad plight, but nothing is going to change until the funds meant for tribal development will continue to be diverted to build infrastructure in other areas.

#### **INDIA: Xavier shrine struggles to cope with crowds**

The historic basilica of *Bom Jesus* in Old Goa is struggling to cope with thousands of pilgrims thanks to land grabs by local property developers and government indifference, the rector of the popular shrine says. The basilica, home to the relics of Saint Francis Xavier, attracts some 50,000 pilgrims during the nine-day prayers in preparation for the Saint's feast. On December 3, the feast day, more than 100,000 people flocked to the church. On normal days it has some 5,000 visitors. Pilgrims find shelter in nearby convents, and the poor either sleep in the open or in buses, since there are no permanent infrastructure to host them. Three years ago, the government drew up plans for a pilgrimage center and earmarked land for it near the basilica, but nothing has been heard about it since then, and in the meantime builders bought property around the complex. The shrine would run out of parking space if builders continue to grab the land around it. The government has also shelved plans to declare the shrine area as a heritage zone, but the plan has not yet taken off. "If the government cannot execute the plan, we will do it," the Jesuit, rector of the sanctuary, Father Savio Barreto, said. "Let the government give us the land."

#### **PERU: Solidarity with Mons. Pedro Barreto**

700 people and more than 100 institutions expressed their solidarity with Mons. Pedro Barreto Jimeno, S.J., Archbishop of Huancayo, after the attacks and insults he received for his commitment to protect the environment, health and human rights. The bishop, always at the forefront to defend the right to work and environmental protection, defying the greed of companies and the inaction of government had argued in favor of children and families infected with poison poured into the air for a long time by the Doe Run company for treatment of impure metals during a press conference for a legal action against the U.S. multinational. Mons. Alberto Campos H., OFM, Apostolic Vicar of San José de Amazonas, in a letter recognizes the value of what the bishop is carrying out on behalf of the life and health of people, supports his socio-pastoral commitment and asks respect and support for every person and institution that strives to provide a dignified and healthy life to people, while quoting the words of Benedict XVI in his message for 2010 "if you want to promote peace, protect creation." In the meantime CNDH, an organization linked to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, decided to honor Father Barreto with the "Premio Anual de Derechos Humanos Angel Escobar Jurado".

#### **PHILIPPINES: Tribal People Frozen Out of Peace Talks**

They don't have a "sacred book," as do Christians and Muslims, and for this reason they have been left out of the ongoing peace process. "The absence of a book has become a reason for discrimination," said Father Albert Alejo of the *Ateneo de Zamboanga University*, speaking of Indigenous peoples in the southern Philippines. The Lumad, a collective label for various indigenous groups in the southern Philippines' Mindanao island, are also excluded from the inter-faith *Bishops-Ulama Conference* (BUC), the conference of Catholic and Protestant bishops and Muslim religious leaders that aims to promote Christian-Muslim dialogue toward the goal of peace in Mindanao. The Lumad in recent years have been lobbying to be included in the peace process and have been seeking the help of other indigenous leaders to help convince Philippines' President to make them an equal party to the peace talks. They may not have a Bible or a Qur'an "but every part of our ecosystems and surroundings comprises the pages of our sacred book," they said.

#### **USA: Jesuit Peace Activist Honored for his Advocacy**

Jesuit Father John Dear, a nationally known peace activist, was recently honoured with the *Pacem in Terris Peace and Freedom Award*. The award, presented since 1978, is named after Pope John XXIII's 1963 encyclical, "Pacem in Terris" ("Peace on Earth"), which calls on all people to "secure peace among the nations." Previous award recipients include the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Blessed Teresa of Calcutta and Catholic Worker co-founder Dorothy Day. During the award ceremony, in front of an audience of people gathered, Father Dear, whose efforts for peace took him even in jail, declared "War is not the will of God; war is never blessed by God. War just doesn't work; it never leads to peace."

### **Jesuitica**

- Recent News From Brazil: "The Provincial Curia of Brazil moved to the following address: *Provincialado Jesuita do Brasil, Rua Prof. Alfredo Gomes, 28 (Botafogo), 22251-080 Rio de Janeiro - R.J. - Brasil*. We are now in a wonderful house belonging to *Colégio Santo Inácio*, renovated and put at our disposal. We are here at your service. Warm greetings, Fr. Lico

Klein, Provincial's Socius.

- The Province of Central Africa has a new website: <http://www.jesuitesace.org>

### New in SJWEB

- A *slide show* about the visit of Father General to Egypt (from 2 - 5 December 2010). Click on "sjweb Media".

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