



Digital News Service SJ

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## Father General

**Visit to Canada.** On May 22, 2011, a large and representative group of Jesuits from both Canadian Provinces travelled to Port Royal, where the first two Jesuits, Pierre Biard and Ennemond Massé, landed on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1611. Led by their Provincials, they have decreed a year of Thanksgiving and Renewal that starts May 22, 2011 and ends May 12, 2012. The Jesuit Novices from Montreal re-enacted the Biard-Massé landing and then a special exhibition was officially opened. It had been prepared by the new joint Jesuit Archives in Montreal to illustrate with precious and rare artifacts, books, and documents of the major ministries of the two Provinces over the centuries since 1611. The major event, however, to commemorate the 400 hundred years of Jesuit presence in Canada, will be the five-day Congress called by the English-speaking Province at the Martyrs' Shrine in Midland, from July 27 to July 31, which will bring together more than 200 people, out of which 197 Jesuits and 43 lay associates. A delegation of Jesuits and lay collaborators from the Canadian French speaking Province will also be present, together with few Hungarian Jesuits working in Toronto.

This is the occasion of the **trip of Father General to Canada**. He will participate to the two initial days of the Congress whose motto is: *Jesuit Relations: 1611 - 2011 - Remember. Renew. Without Counting the Cost.* Father Nicolás will take the opportunity of the trip to meet civil and religious authorities, to participate to a reconciliation service at the Martyrs' Shrine. He will also take part in a contemplative pilgrimage with other Jesuits and friends and receive a guided tour of Ste Marie-Among-the-Hurons, the village that was rebuilt according to the style of the ancient indigenous houses. The last day of his stay in Midland an interview is planned, with questions and answers previously submitted.

Father General will take advantage of the Congress to visit some works of the two Canadian Provinces. He will arrive in Montreal on July 22 and that same day he will participate in a meeting with the Jesuits on the theme: *Identity and Mission*. Three Jesuits will introduce the reflection and then Father General will express his impressions. On July 23, apart from official encounters and the visit to some works of the Society, there will be an exchange with a group of Jesuits and lay collaborators on the theme: *Mission and Collaboration*. July 24 will be dedicated to Québec where the main event will be the meeting with the Jesuits, collaborators and professors of the theological Faculty of Laval with a debate on *The spiritual research and the search for meaning in our environments*. On July 25, after a visit to other Jesuit works and to the old town, Fr. General will leave for Toronto where he will visit the many centers of activity of the Society and where he will meet the brethren and their lay collaborators. Then he will move to Guelph, to visit the Jesuit works in this town: the residence, *Ignatius Jesuit Centre*, Holy Rosary Parish, etc. On July 27, after a meeting with the archbishop and the visit to our infirmary, he will leave for Midland. His return to Rome is scheduled for July 30.

**Trip to Spain.** On the occasion of the World Youth Day Father General will be in Loyola from the 6th to the 7th of August. He will attend *Magis*, the coordinating committee for the youth initiatives of Ignatian inspiration. On August 7 he will preside at the Eucharistic celebration for the youth in front of the Basilica of St. Ignatius.

## Appointments

- Pope Benedict XVI has appointed **Father Jean-Claude Hollerich** Archbishop of Luxembourg. Father Jean-Claude currently Vice-Rector of the *Sophia University* of Tokyo (Japan), was born in 1958 at Differdange (Granduchy of Luxembourg), entered the Society of Jesus in 1981 and was ordained a priest in 1990.

- Father General has appointed **Father Gerald R. Blaszcak**, of the New York Province, **Secretary for the Service of Faith**. "In this position," writes the New York Provincial, "Gerry will advise Father General and his Council on a number of important topics facing the Society and Church today. Gerry will coordinate the Office for Inter-religious Dialogue. He is

being asked to foster dialogue and reflection on the relationship between faith and current culture, as well as between Church and society, within the context of our more traditional disciplines." Father Gerald, currently university chaplain at Fairfield University, was born in 1949, entered the Society in 1967, and was ordained a priest in 1979.

## From the Provinces

### **CHAD: The Relations with Southern Sudan and Libya**

The CEFOD ("Study and Formation Center for Development"), directed by the Jesuits, is a platform for critical reflection, dialogue and exchange of views behind ethnic, political and religious divisions that may occur in Chad. The purpose of this institution is to promote civil education and participation towards achieving a peaceful, democratic and developed society ([www.cefod.org](http://www.cefod.org)). In an interview with Entreculturas, the NGO of the Spanish Jesuits, Jesuit Father Antoine Bérilengar, director of CEFOD, explains the country's current political situation and how this is connected with the independence of Southern Sudan, the Libyan situation and the riots in Arab countries. "The situation in these two countries, says Fr. Bérilengar, influences daily and directly the future of Chad. In Southern Sudan a referendum has taken place recently which led to the independence of the territory after decades of conflict and confrontation with Northern Sudan. However, the government of Chad did not officially recognize this result because it is afraid... there are similarities between Southern Sudan and the southern part of Chad... in both regions there are Christians, oil, and both suffered the brunt of war. So one thinks that southern Chadians may be inspired by the southern Sudanese to achieve their independence. Time will give the answer... we will have to see if Southern Sudan remains truly independent and will proceed on or will continue to be unstable with respect to the north (...). The revolution in Arab countries is another matter."

### **CHINA: New Book Tells of Old Friendship**

The descendants of two Italian Jesuit missionaries to China and a Chinese imperial official have jointly published a book about their ancestors and the friendship they enjoyed over 400 years ago. The book: *The Stories of Our Ancestors*, launched in Shanghai on June 19, is the Chinese edition of *Un Libro a sei Mani* ("a book with six hands"), originally written in Italian by Paolo Sabbatini, Luigi Ricci and Xu Chengxi. The ancestors of the three authors were close friends more than four centuries ago: Father Sabatino de Ursis (1575-1620), Father Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) and Paul Xu Guangqi (1562-1633). The two missionaries and Xu worked together conducting astronomical research at the imperial court during the Ming Dynasty. They also worked on the translation of Euclid's Elements into Chinese. Xu was the first Catholic convert from Shanghai. The new book tells the stories of the three men, highlights their friendship and reveals some of the history of the three families in later generations. The book also bears witness to long-standing cultural ties between China and Italy. Xu Chengxi, Paolo Sabbatini and Luigi Ricci wrote the book together to mark the 400th anniversary of Father Ricci's death in Beijing in 2010. The book comes a year after Shanghai diocese began pushing for the beatification of Xu Guangqi and Father of Xu Guangqi and Father Ricci.

### **EUROPE: The "European Alliance for Sunday"**

The "European Alliance for Sunday" has been officially launched in Brussels. It is a network of "ad hoc" organizations, trade union, religious communities and civil society's associations engaged in promoting the perception of time synchronization as a fundamental value for European societies. The Jesuit European Office (OCIPE) is among the supporters of the initiative. During the press conference held on June 20 at the European Economic and Social Committee, there was the presentation of the main points of the campaign for Sunday rest. They include the balance between professional and familiar life, the importance of the weekend for communitarian life, the respect for voluntary work, the need for adequate time of rest for the welfare of workers. In the context of the revision of the "European Guideline on working time" the Alliance focuses on the importance of a time of common rest not only as an aspect of European tradition, but as an important factor of social cohesion, for a communitarian Europe really aware of the needs of its citizens. Among the members of the Alliance there is also COMECE (The Commission of Bishop's Conference of European Community).

### **INDONESIA: Film on a Jesuit Bishop**

A film is being produced on Mgr A. Soegijapranata SJ, the first native Catholic bishop in Indonesia, appointed in 1940. The film will focus on his life during the revolution after the independence of Indonesia. He was closely involved in the nation's struggle to defend its freedom against a second foreign occupation. When the central government moved from Jakarta to Yogyakarta, he also moved his office so that he could fight alongside the country's leaders - the then President Soekarno and Vice President M. Hatta - to preserve the sovereignty of the republic. "Behind the idea for the film is a courageous group of people who believe that in this world of intolerance and religious fanaticism, Indonesia is hungry for the spirit of pluralistic and peace-loving figures. Mgr Soegijapranata is one of those figures and one of the many unsung heroes of Indonesia's struggle for independence," said Fr. Greg Soetomo SJ, chief editor of HIDUP, the national Catholic magazine based in Jakarta. Filming begins in mid-2011 and the film is expected to be ready by Christmas.

### **MEXICO: Summit of Communication Coordinators**

From 1 to 6 August the V Summit of the Provincial Coordinators for Communications of Latin America and the Caribbean will be held in Guadalajara, Mexico. There will be five main objectives: 1. To evaluate the implementation of the commitments made during the IV meeting of two years ago; 2. To come to know the new projects of communication of the various Provinces; 3. To reflect on how to respond from the communication point of view to CAP (Common Apostolic Project); 4. To study the social network: benefits and risks; 5. To organize the future of the interprovincial communication in Latin America. This V Summit is part of a long journey begun in the '70s. Since 1979 the Jesuit communicators asked the Provinces to implement a formation plan in social communication. When the CPAL was founded (1999), its president, Father Francisco Ivern, asked the implementation of that document. The plan was introduced in the book *Disponer la vida para la Misión* (CPAL, 2009, pp. 67-100) during the IV Summit of the Coordinators held two years ago in Bogotá (2009). At the same time a Common Communication Project (*Proyecto Com Com*) was developed: much more theoretical, indicating what kind of communication we wanted and that was useful to plan and take into consideration the communication during the IV Summit of Bogotá in 2009. At that time emphasis was given to the usefulness of having provincial commissions for communication following the Mexican positive experience; and commissions were born in different Provinces. At the same time three options were chosen with their plan of action: formation for communication, communication for faith and justice, and the improvement of our communication. The V Summit it will examine to what extent the implementation of these three options is going on.

### **NEPAL: The New Mission of Tipling**

In our Digital Bulletin of June 20th we referred about the new mission of Tipling, in Northern Nepal, at the border with China. Here one of the Jesuits describes the beginning of their activities. "Soon after our arrival, some of us got into the act of getting the house liveable while others looked around for something to eat. By evening the news spread that the Fathers had finally arrived and visitors began to pour in. The same afternoon, Jiju began his pastoral ministry by praying over a sick child. Since our kitchen things were still on the way, we had plenty of invitations to eat in various houses on the following days, a firsthand experience of the fabled Tamang hospitality. The next day being Saturday, we had the Sunday liturgy which was attended by 30 people or so. It was held in a dark and cold room of one of the parishioners from Baniyatar. Since it was crowded even for thirty people, we decided to shift the Saturday Mass to a bigger house. We now have our Saturday Mass in that house which is attended by around 60 people. Our daily evening Mass is attended by a crowd of around 30, half of whom are not Catholics but still seek spiritual blessings through our prayers. We have begun the house blessings in the evenings. Once we finish blessings, we hope to begin catechism classes for children, adults, and elderly. In the meantime, we had one child baptism in Lapdung and five in the Thulogaon for infants whose parents are already practising Catholics. The day after our arrival, we were welcomed warmly in the school by the leaders from the villages and the government teachers there (...). The heart touching hospitality of the people here, the enthusiasm of the children to learn, the simple faith of the people who stop us on the by-lanes to pray over them, make us feel that we are where we desire to be and we are doing what our hearts always wanted to do".

### **SIERRA LEONE: The First Missionary**

On July 25, 1605, feast of St. James Apostle, Father Balthazar Barreira, the first missionary of Western Africa, landed in Pogamo, Sierra Leone. This Jesuit influenced strongly the history and undoubtedly shaped the course of events. He came from Portugal, after an experience in the Reign of Congo, with a royal mandate. The Superior General of the Society of Jesus assigned him to the archipelago of Cape Verde. Together with three other brethren they had the task to organize a college and to take care of the inhabitants of those lands. When one member of the group failed, Father Barreira decided to explore the coast and to visit the settlements. He finally arrived in Sierra Leone where he remained for three years. In these lands, described since ancient times by the explorers, he found the brilliant heirs of Mani conquerors (a warrior people, coming from the empire of Mali). They welcomed him with enthusiasm and made themselves particularly available for the Christian religion. Quickly, many kings, relatives and authorities of those communities received baptism. A new era of happy life and particularly intense Christian influence began for these people living on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. Father Barreira, with his annual reports sent to his superiors, told and spread rumors of the wonderful transformation of those African kingdoms into open and dynamic Christian communities.

### **SPAIN: The Society of Jesus and the WYD**

"Since in July 2008 Pope Benedict XVI announced in Sydney that the 2011 World Youth Day (WYD) was going to be held in Madrid, the Society of Jesus in Spain began to study what would be the best way to pastorally contribute to it and at the same time put itself at the disposition of the archdiocese of Madrid." These are the words of Father Abel Torano, who sums up the contribution given by the Spanish Jesuits to the organization of the event in this way: "The provision of four churches for the catechesis, the offering of five spaces for the reception of pilgrims and a range of activities to be inserted in the program of the WYD." Among the activities there is an exhibition on the *Reductions* of Paraguay (see below); the seminars on the mission of the Christian university student and the Ignatian prayers, a proposal of the Pontifical University of Comillas in collaboration with UNIJES (the Jesuit universities of Spain), and the third edition of TIFF, the Iñigo short film festival

( [www.tiffestival.org](http://www.tiffestival.org)), promoted by the Conference of European Provincials of the Society of Jesus. All these activities are coordinated by MAGIS 2011 ( [www.magis2011.org](http://www.magis2011.org)), an Ignatian pastoral experience for young people from all over the world in the days preceding the World Youth Day and organized by the Society of Jesus in Spain and Portugal together with other religious congregations and groups of laymen of Ignatian spirituality.

#### **SPAIN: Exhibition on the *Reductions* of Paraguay**

On the occasion of World Youth Day to be held in Madrid next August, the Jesuit parish of San Francisco de Borja in the Spanish capital city will be the venue for "The Jesuit Reductions of Paraguay. A fascinating adventure that lasts over time". The building facilities (1,200 m2 of rooms, cloister, halls) will expose the panels, photographs and models which will illustrate the adventure of the *Reductions* the Society built in Paraguay. The exhibition will be open from 26th July to 9th September, with two official openings, the first on San Ignatius' day, July 31st and the second on August 15th .

### Jesuitica

**Ignatius and witch-hunts.** False allegations and malicious rumors featured large in Jesuit history from St Ignatius' time. He responded to a witch-hunt by facing it down. Because of his focus on the interior life of the individual, he was variously accused of being immoral, a heretic, an Erasmian, a Lutheran, or one of the *Alumbrados*, who claimed private illumination from God. He was imprisoned by the Spanish Inquisition for 42 days in Alcalá and 22 days in Salamanca. The same slanders followed him to Rome, so Ignatius asked the pope for a formal investigation of all accusations against him, and a judicial sentence. When the judges formally declared him kosher, he asked that the names of his calumniators be suppressed, but had several authentic copies made of the sentence, to be used whenever God's work was threatened by slander (*AMDG Express*).

### Notice

*The next issue of the DIGITAL SERVICE will be published in September.*

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