Father General

Visit to France. From September 29th to October 2nd, Father General was in Paris, base of many of our apostolic works, to visit the Jesuits of the Province of France. The main purpose of this trip was to get a better idea of the formation of young Jesuits. The Centre Sèvres, the scholastics in the Province, the communities hosting them, the articulation of the different dimensions of formation (intellectual, apostolic, spiritual), and to listen to the reflections of the Province with regard to the ongoing apostolic discernment ("towards a greater shared awareness of our mission") to react and to respond to them; to meet with the collaborators who share the responsibilities of our mission. In line with these aims, the first day was devoted almost exclusively to the scholastics: Centre Sèvres, community of Rue Blomet and a meeting with young Jesuits who live in the Province, on the theme of the encounter with our contemporaries and the world of young people; the unification of the person during the years of formation and the community as a place for mission. The main event of the second day was the Province assembly attended by some members of each community: it was the occasion to take stock of the discernment in the Province. That same day there was also the meeting with lay collaborators, prepared by a pre-meeting with about 35 of them. A prayer vigil for vocations closed this day of intense work. The third and last day was devoted to the meeting with the Provincial and the Mass with the members of the Ignatian family. As always, the visits to the religious authorities were part of the agenda.

Conference of European Provincials. From October 13th to 19th, Father General will participate in the Conference of European Provincials in Czestochowa, Poland (13-15: Assistancties' meeting, 16-19 Conference of European Provincials). The agenda is intense and rich of events. However, the main topic under discussion will be the "Strategic Plan" for the Conference, discussed already at the Assistance's level and that will be submitted for final approval during the meeting. Another important theme on the agenda will be the restructuring of the work OCIPE (Office Catholique d'Informations et d'Initiatives pour l'Europe/Jesuit European Office) has been doing in Brussels for many years: while maintaining its role of coordination with the European Institutions and of reflection on the policies of the European Community, OCIPE could take the coordinating role of the social activities of the Provincials' Conference, including the issue of migrations. Other items in the agenda will be the discussion of reports in the theology studies (first cycle) in the European centers for the formation of Jesuits; the relation of the meeting of the MixedCommission of JESAM (the Conference of African and Madagascar Provincials) and of CEP (The Conference of European Provincials); a presentation of the events organized by Magis before and during the World Youth Day in Madrid. The program will include also the visit to some works of the Southern Poland Province which will host the Conference, the Mass at the Sanctuary of Jasna Gora and the encounter with the local bishop.

Appointments

Father General has appointed:

- Father Rosario Rocha, new Provincial of the Goa Province (India). Father Rocha, up to now Professor of Theology and Indian Religions at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth of Pune, was born in 1952, entered the Society of Jesus in 1970 and was ordained a priest in 1985.

From the Provinces

AFGHANISTAN: No More Cluster Bombs
The Jesuit missionaries in Afghanistan have welcomed the ratification, announced by the government in Kabul, of the International Convention for the banning of cluster bombs, which prohibits the use, production, storage and transfer. "The Afghan people have suffered much for the use of cluster bombs. By ratifying the treaty, the Afghans will no longer be victims of these despicable weapons, but will become advocates of banning them", said Fr. Peter Balleis, the International Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in a statement to Fides. Afghanistan had signed the Convention in 2008 in Norway, but was ratified only last 8 September, giving legal effect to the measure. Cluster bombs have had a devastating effect on the country. Used since 1980 by the Soviet army, then by the rebels in the 90s and by U.S. forces in 2001-2002, they have caused more than 770 victims and thousands of wounded and mutilated, often children. The JRS has been working in Afghanistan since 2005, when a team of Indian Jesuits started programs in higher education and university field where more than 3,600 young people benefit from.

AFRICA: African Historical Institute
Many of you will recall that Father General, in a letter dated 25th February 2010 to the Major Superiors, expressed the desire to build up two regional research centers, one in Asia and one in Africa. Their function is to continue the ancient Jesuit tradition of serious research, non only in the field of the Society's history and of the circumstances that shaped its spirituality and its mission, but also in the history of the Church in general. In Africa, many decisions have been taken for the realization of this center. In May 2010 the President of JESAM (the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar) appointed Fr. Festo Mkenda full-time director of the project and Fr. Anicet N'Teba associate part-time director. Fr. Bartholomew Murphy is also a part-time associate to the project. In January 2011 the three began to work, trying to collect all the different reactions of African Jesuits. The answers highlighted the enthusiasm for this project, which offers the possibility to collect systematically historical documents and to study them seriously in the African context. From August 21-27 a group of Jesuits, from different African regions, met in Nairobi to focus the project that will be later sent to JESAM to be examined. Once approved it will be used as a guide for planning and future action.

COLOMBIA: Cartagena Pays a Tribute to San Pedro Claver
Joy and devotion were the keystones of the procession held in Cartagena in the National Day of Human Rights during the Week of Peace in the Year of Afro-descendants. Hundred of faithful of the Sanctuary of San Pedro Claver from the monument to "India Catalina" walked along the streets of Cartagena with the image of their patron saint, San Pedro Claver, just as he did in 1600. The procession was accompanied by the musical notes of a papayera (typical musical band of the coast) and the Band of Peace of the Colegio Departamental. The Archdiocesan Social and Pastoral Committee took care of the first station, the seminarians of the second, the Afrocaribe Cultural Center of the third, and the Parish of San Pedro Claver led the fourth. In addition to the traditional dances of the inhabitants of Palenque, some participants marched dressed in white and carrying on some placards containing messages relating to peace and human rights. On the notes of the song "Rebelión" of Joe Arroyo and of the hymn of San Pedro Claver, the procession finally arrived to the lobby of the Sanctuary where the remains of the saint are buried. Here was held the Eucharistic Concelebration presided over by the bishop, Mgr. Jorge Enrique Jiménez. At the end a video on the life of San Pedro Claver was shown to the faithful.

ITALY: Pavia Honors Ruggero Boscovich
With a conference held from September 8th to 10th in the Teresiano Hall of the University Library and with a documentary exhibition, University of Pavia (Italy) celebrated the third centenary of the birth of Ruggiero G. Boscovich S.J. (1711 Ragusa - 1787 Milan), professor of mathematics at the same university from 1764 to 1768 and designer of the Brera Observatory. During the meeting the results of the National Edition of the Works and Correspondence were presented: several books in digital form (DVD) that will contribute to know even better the life and works of the scientist. The sponsors of the National Edition are the Academy of XL (of which Boscovich was a founding member), the INAF-Brera Observatory (whose foundation Boscovich contributed in 1764), the Pontifical Gregorian University (the famous Roman College where Boscovich studied and taught), the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Boscovich was born in Ragusa, now Dubrovnik). The exhibition, however, was based completely on the collection of books of the University Library and on the instruments of the Museum University System and on the first draft of a translation from Latin of Theoria (1763) and of other four works that preceded it.

MEXICO: Tijuana Commemorates Father Kino
On September 21st the Iberoamericana University in Tijuana commemorated the 300th anniversary of the death of Father Eusebio Francisco Kino. The rector of the University called him "a famous man that left many traces in the educational, cultural and spiritual field." Father Kino was a great man of science. He arrived in the area north of Sonora and found the way to open new apostolic fields to the Mexican Jesuits. The celebration, presided by the Rector of the Iberoamericana University, accompanied by Father Agustín Rozada and by the Director General of the University Educational Services, was held together with the Archbishop of Tijuana Rafael Romo Muñoz and with the Italian community, represented by the Italian Honorary Consul in Baja California Camillo Magoni. The Iberoamericana University will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the return of the Jesuits in the region in September 2012.
PARAGUAY: The Bartolomé de las Casas Award Goes to a Jesuit

At the beginning of September, the Jesuit Bartomeu Melià received the XX Bartolomé de las Casas Award in Madrid, for his study of the Guaraní language (one of the official languages of Paraguay) and the strenuous defense of the indigenous populations of Paraguay, Brazil, Argentina and Bolivia. This award was created in 1991 by the Spain's Secretary of State for the International Cooperation and the Casa de América and is given every year to people who have distinguished themselves in the work for the understanding and the harmony with indigenous people, the protection of their rights and the respect of their values. Father Melià received this award for his "strong and unshakable defence of the Aché population, his work as a defender of the Guaraní through many publications and the contribution to the education of the indigenous people." Bartomeu Melià has embraced the cause of the Guaraní populations since the 1950s. He arrived in Paraguay in 1954 with the enthusiasm of the old missionaries and stayed there until he was expelled in 1977. He came back to Paraguay in 1989 after the régime had fallen down and continued his defence for the indigenous. "To know a Guaraní you have to walk in the forest with him, sleep on the ground and learn how to drink mate when the sun rises, feelings that are lost in modern societies," said Fr. Melià during the prize-giving ceremony, and continued: "To learn a language you have to practice the virtue of listening. You cannot learn if you don't listen."

SPAIN: Second Step Towards the Integration of the Provinces

Since September 6th the Spanish centers for primary and secondary education of the Society of Jesus have gone under the jurisdiction of the Provincial of Spain. This affects the 68 centers for a total of 170,000 students and 5,000 teachers. This is the second step in the transition to the integration of the five Spanish Provinces started in 2010 with the Formation sector and that will come to an end in 2016. The Provincial of Spain will implement his jurisdiction by means of a delegate, four area coordinators, one Formation coordinator and one Pastoral coordinator. Furthermore, the delegate will have an advisory commission, the Provincial Committee for Education. "It is a new and meaningful step that carries out the process of integration of the Jesuit Provinces in Spain," Father Adolfo Nicolás has written in the letter sent to the Provincial of Spain. He adds: "The Education sector keeps having a special vitality, in quantity and in quality as well"; Father Nicolás went on to encourage the Jesuits to "continue in their engagement for an education that forms a person in its totality, an education that evangelizes, an education of quality", and recalled some documents of his predecessors, Fr. Arrupe and Fr. Kolvenbach, on the "excellence in formation" and the "intellectual rigor".

TAIWAN: Fu Jen Opens an Office in Beijing

The Fu Jen Catholic University in Taiwan, the island's most prestigious university, opened an office in Beijing to recruit more students from the mainland. The academic officials decided to increase the number of Chinese students. Last year 560 students asked for admission but only 40 were accepted. This year, said Liu Zhaoming, head of the university's office of academic affairs, Fu Jen will recruit 99 mainland students. Giving the difference in living standards between mainland China and Taiwan, a specific program of scholarships has been established to cover tuition costs and living expenses. The program will include also guidance for the students' studies, internships and employment. The opening of Fu Jen to mainland students is connected with the inauguration of a university program for the welcome of seminarians and Catholic priests from the continent inside the theology faculty. For Fu Jen the opening of a representative office in Beijing is a way to return to its origins. The Catholic University was in fact founded in the Chinese capital in 1913 as a college. This was later recognized as a university in 1925. In Taiwan, in 1959, the catholic bishops, the Society of the Divine Word and the Society of Jesus laid down the foundations of a new Fu Jen University which was authorized by the Taiwan Ministry of Education in 1960.

TIMOR LESTE: Jesuits and Education

After returning to the diocese the administration of Colégio de São José, in which Jesuits have served for almost 25 years, the Society of Jesus will continue to undertake institutionally based, quality education programs at the service of the people of Timor Leste, especially the poor, through the Instituto de Educação Jesuíta. "The proposed institute, located in a rural area to the West of the capital Dili", writes Father Mark Raper, President of the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific and Acting Regional Superior, "will have two departments: a basic education department, Colégio de Santo Inácio de Loiola, and a teacher education department Colégio de São João de Brito. The first will commence in 2013 with an Ignatian school for boys and girls, teaching in Portuguese, Tetun and English media of instruction. Preparation of teachers for the new school will begin in 2012. The Colégio de São João de Brito will initiate with the preparation of senior secondary teachers in 2014. The three-year bachelor degree will focus on Portuguese, Tetun, English and Religious Education. As a Catholic institution in a Catholic country there is a need to prioritize and develop competency in religious education and faith development in the local context."

In the last issue we published the article on ASIA-PACIFIC: Flights for Forests. The link at the end of the paragraph should
New in SJWEB

A new slide show about the visit of Father General to the French Province, from the 29th of September to the 2nd of October. Click on "sjweb Media".

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