We are approaching Christmas when we celebrate God becoming flesh and living in the midst of His People. This grammar of divine love, a love that is close and empathetic, a love that shares from within the hopes and contradictions of men and women, that makes human concerns its own, that lets itself be affected by human behaviour and choices, is more timely than ever in its political and institutional outreach. In many places, we see manifestations of violence and outrage at the absence of effective public policies that favour the most disadvantaged in health, work, education. The growing inequality between a very small sector of our societies and the vast sector that does not even have what is needed to live is outrageous. Political leaders’ speeches sound increasingly distant from the real concerns of ordinary people who work miracles to survive to the end of the month. In this picture that everyone can tailor according to the
reality of their country, I wonder personally and as a congregation: How sensitive are we to this reality? It is undoubtedly important to be well informed and alert about these situations. But how much does such information affect us in the way we live, day by day? What real contact, with a name and a place, do I have with those who are living in situations of poverty and marginalisation?

In this time of Advent when we are preparing to celebrate Christmas, it is good for us to direct our hearts and our gaze to the school that is the manger, to be at the feet of Jesus where we can learn from Him, learn from the grammar of closeness and empathy that is lived with the coherence of divine love, where deeds confirm the words.

**Our vocation is to become a people (Luke 6:12-19)**

True to his divine DNA of proximity and closeness, Jesus matures his decisions in a prayerful dialogue with God. The night is the privileged time to be in silence, alone, without masks, without many words, with your Father. Following the logic of the incarnation, Jesus becomes flesh, becomes a people. And to make visible this new people that he wants to inhabit and form, he chooses the twelve. This choice is made from among the disciples who follow Jesus wherever he goes. And without delay, Jesus begins to form this group so that they might discover the meaning of their being chosen. Jesus comes down from the mountain with the newly elected and goes first to meet the great multitude of the disciples - so that the twelve do not forget where they have come from and remember that discipleship is to be the fundamental condition among them and with Jesus, the only Teacher. And then, Jesus puts the disciples in direct contact with "the great crowd of people" who have come from different parts and who are made up of the sick and possessed. In that close relationship of the disciples with the crowd, the disciples (and the twelve in their midst) learn the simple grammar of the believing people: they have come to meet Jesus, to hear him, to touch him and thus be healed. This is a masterly pastoral lesson of Jesus for his 'elect'. He does not give them time to boast of his choosing them. Quite the opposite. In his way of acting and going out to meet the crowds, Jesus tells the twelve that the meaning of their election is that they are and will remain disciples. Their vocation is not a privilege, but implies a call to become, like Jesus, close, empathic, compassionate and attentive to this suffering crowd. As disciples and pastors, they are always called to be schooled in the simple faith of that crowd, a faith that expresses itself in an incarnate piety and not merely theoretical, and to make their own desire to listen to and touch Jesus. The good health of the people whom Jesus wants to form depends on the twelve following Jesus as his disciples and walking with the crowds.

**Shepherds close to the flock (Luke 2:8-20)**

The shepherds are sleeping outdoors and watching their flock at night. Shepherds and sheep are outdoors, sharing the same living conditions. The care of the flock and the livelihood of the shepherd depend on this closeness. Due to the requirements of this work they cannot frequent the temple as prescribed by law. They are marginal to the life of the city and also to the life of the temple. However, it is they to whom the angel of the Lord first announces the incarnation of the Son of God, God-with-us. Even the way this news is communicated tells you who this Lord is. “Today a Saviour is born for you, who is the Lord Christ”. This is not simply an apparition, but a relationship of God-with-them, God "for them", in the "here and now", in our time. He will be a joy for all the people. He is also a joy for these shepherds, who though part of the people, are not seen much in the temple or in the life of the city. They are called to discover the joy of God's closeness, though not alone but with the people to whom they belong. And to recognize the Saviour the only clue they receive is that of a child wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Nothing extraordinary apparently. But they know, from the experience of closeness with their flock, that life is a gift, a constant miracle, great and precarious at the same time. This child is not one more child-birth statistic. He is the Christ and Lord,
the one long awaited who, in a fragile state, has come close, taking on flesh amidst a people who will teach him how to be human and whose joy he will be.

For those who are not used to receiving such good news, the news must be verified and shared. Thus, the shepherds become announcers and witnesses to Mary, Joseph and the child, witnesses to the incredible news that God is in their midst, in this child full of promise and fragility. Mary, Joseph and Jesus himself would come to discover with the people the joy that God wants to bring about through them.

Carrying out God’s work as zealots

Christmas night also reminds us of the foundation of our Congregation. Shortly before midnight, our Founders took their religious vows. They made their profession in loving coherence with the mystery of God-with-us. They pronounced their vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, in the light of the Holy Spirit, and in service of the good of the Work [of God] as zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The centre is God and his works to whom, by the action of the Holy Spirit, the Founders make themselves not only available but also desirous to collaborate with God as zealots. The ardour that moves them comes from the love of God contemplated in the hearts of Jesus and Mary. And then the Founder blessed the white mantle as a sign of their dedication and devotion to Mary. Through this profession the Founders allowed the Christmas event to be become present in their lives. The love of God manifested in the attitudes, intelligence, loving and compassionate closeness of the hearts of Jesus and Mary became incarnate in them, in their religious family and in this community. In order that this mission would never be forgotten, Father Pierre, as he was then known, took on the name Marie-Joseph. Like Joseph, he became a caretaker, a lover and available for a work that did not belong to the Founders, but rather belonged to God, just as children are entrusted to their parents. Like Mary, he felt called to give himself without rest, night and day to the care, accompaniment and growth of the small family of the congregation, called to repair the social and ecclesial fabric of its time.

The white mantle, a sign for the zealots of Marian love in the Church, takes on new dimensions when we listen to the cry of the poor and of the earth and let ourselves be touched by this pain. This is what the bishops, missionaries, lay people and representatives of the indigenous peoples gathered at the Pan-Amazon Synod (Rome, October 6-27, 2019) exhort us to. We are called to be an "Amazonian, Samaritan Church", "that goes out to meet everyone, especially indigenous peoples, the poor, those excluded from society and others... A Marian Church that raises children in the faith and educates them with affection and patience, always open to learning from the richness of the peoples" (Amazonia, new ways for the Church and for an integral ecology. Final document, no. 22).

Contemplating in wonder and confidence the love of God incarnate in Jesus, whose heart teaches us to love, may the prayer that Pope Francis proposed to the religious, seminarians and catechists in Thailand, during his recent visit find resonance in us: "To those called to apostolic fruitfulness, called to struggle valiantly for the things that the Lord loves and for which he gave his life, let us ask for the grace for our hearts to beat in unison with his own. I would even ask you to be wounded by that same love; to have that same passion for Jesus and for his kingdom.” (Meeting with priests, religious, seminarians and catechists, St. Peter’s Parish, Bangkok, Friday, 22 November 2019).

Wishing you all a blessed Advent,
Fraternally in the SSCC,

Alberto Toutin sscc
Superior General
Reflections on the Amazon Synod

♦ “Toward a fraternal ecology!” by Bertrand Cherrier sscc (France)

From the 6th to the 27th of October the Amazon Synod took place in Rome. The theme was "Amazonia: New Paths for the Church and for Integral Ecology". Through its involvement in ecological conversion, the parish of Saint Gabriel (Paris) - led by a parish group called "Living Laudato si" (www.saintgab.com) - has followed with interest the work of this Synod. While waiting for the final document of Pope Francis, we can already remember two lessons and propose a path of hope.

In the first place, it is essential to say that the Amazon Synod has already confirmed what has become obvious: attacks on nature have dramatic consequences for the lives of peoples. What happens in the Amazon is a reflection of what has already happened and is happening in other countries: the taste of money and an economy in the service of particular goods is devastating. Nature is denatured and the poor become even more exploited. Undeniably, they are abused for reasons of economic interest in the service of the richest. In this situation, "the cry of the earth" joins "the cry of the poor".

Thus, Pope Francis is right to say that the Amazonian problem is as much a social problem as ecological because the attacks on nature have consequences on the lives of peoples. It is therefore easy to understand that this Synod has worked as much to solve ecological problems as those of the place of women, power in the church, ministries, intercultural dialogue and inculturation ... Let's recognize this: everything is connected. The concern for nature, justice, especially towards the poor, commitment to society and the Church, peace within the family, all is inseparable. This is the integral ecology! As Pope Francis says: "A true ecological approach is always transformed into a social approach that must integrate justice into environmental discussions, to listen to both the clamour of the earth and the clamour of the poor". The degradation of the earth as human degradation is intimately linked.

Ultimately, this Synod encourages us to keep going with our parish project that has been in place for four years in Saint Gabriel. It remains urgent to fight the race of egos for consumption, a race that leads to "a culture of waste". How are we to believe that the increase in consumption is both a source of happiness and a sign of progress? It is urgent to testify to the contrary, urgent to give witness to a freedom and a happiness that unfolds far from consumerism, in sobriety.
**Sobriety is "a way of life"** that is achieved through simplicity and the desire to lose in order to win. This is the time for “degrowth!” (décroissance). This is the time to befriend the poorest in order to better live together in our “common home”. As brothers of the Sacred Hearts, let’s meet the challenge!

♦ “New ways of being Church”, by Franck Kanyinda sscc (D.R. Congo)

The Amazon Synod has had an impact on my perception of the church and the role of faith in the lives of believers. As far as my perception of the Church is concerned, I think that such moments suggest the true nature of the Church as a people. The concerns of the different peoples of God are of great interest to the whole of the Church. The deposit of the Catholic faith is called to repeat itself in the present day lives of every nation in whom the universal Church subsists. Even though we are a particular Church, our faith, our baptism is never something particular. Our faith and our baptism always plunge us into the Universal; a universal that is lived in the particular. Thus, the universality of the Church is not the summation of the Particular Churches. The problems of Amazonia are of interest to all humanity and push the Church to take a position. In the name of the universality of faith, the Church is called to adopt and promote ecological hygiene that respects both biodiversity and the cultures of peoples. The Church must not only value inculturation. It is time to respect and promote interculturality. The historical character of cultures requires plural thinking. The genius of Amazonian cultures in regards to the value of land and forest is a key to historical reading.

On the other hand, the current challenges of the peoples call for listening, discernment and possibly decisions. I believe that the decisions that the Church is called to make must be of the order of faith. There is a call to dispense with ideologies that question whether it is permissible on the Sabbath to do good or not to do good. The responsibility of our common house is not only related to politics. Faith in a God of life asks us to act in favour of life and justice.

With Pope Francis, I feel that the Church is looking for new ways. His style of acting shows that hierarchy within the Church makes sense only from communion. The service of governing must be characterized by the listening to realities that come from the ground. The realities on the ground can question our disciplines and sometimes our way of understanding revealed truths.

Theologians and canonists, in collaboration with other secondary disciplines, are called to visit afresh the deposit of our faith and church discipline. Our faith is not rational, it is reasonable. In the face of the challenges on the ground, what is the ‘reasonableness’ of our faith? The questioning of its historicity, its fundamental aspects
and its purely disciplinary aspects can contribute to rowing towards the depths of troubled and deep waters.

Faced with the scarcity of priests, the Amazon questions the discipline and the apostolic tradition of the Church as regards the possibility of the ordination of “Viri Probati”. Given the constraints on women who lead and animate ecclesial communities, the Amazon questions the deposit of the faith of the Church in respect of the possibility of service of the diakonia of women and their place in the service of the government of the Church. Faced with the destruction and pollution of nature, the Amazon questions the sensitivity and commitment of the Christian faith in favour of ecology. Faced with the challenges of the interculturality of peoples, the Amazon questions the faith and discipline of the Church as regards the possibility of inculturated rites and interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

The Church ad gentes is a Church that never ceases to question. It is called to offer new ways to people in search of a new way of being Church. When married Anglican pastors later converted to Catholicism, an ad casum response was founded by the Church. I see in the formulation of the requests of the synodal fathers to the Pope a call for the integral conversion of the Church. The Church feels called to cum vertere, to turn to where her Lord wants her to look. Let her look, then, at the new pastoral challenges, be they theological, ecological, synodal and liturgical.

In my humble opinion, the demand for a proper Amazonian rite would not be strange to praxis ecclesiae. In our day, the Church already has more than 22 rites that contribute to enriching the work of Evangelization. Through these rites, faith is expressed in a language audible to believers of various cultures. I bless the Lord for these synodal sessions and for all the proposed reflections. May the Holy Spirit shake us so as not to settle.
Final Assembly of the Canonical Visitation to Japan

On 14 November to mark the end of the canonical visit of the province of Japan and the Philippines, the brothers in Japan assembled at the mother house of Tomobe (Ibaraki, Japan). The 14 brothers living in Japan were present, in addition to Jovi Grabato and José Maria Dumagat from the Philippines. The brothers from the Philippines took part in this assembly by videoconference. Thomas Sukotiraharjo and Alberto Toutin thanked the Province for the reception and preparation of this visit. They also valued the efforts made between the two areas of the Province to grow in mutual knowledge, cooperation and joint mission, as well as the reciprocal reception and integration service of brothers from the Philippines and Indonesia.

Having in mind the image of the “Sakura” (Cherry Blossom) the Province was urged to continue ongoing renewal day after day, taking care of the old and new branches and offering the beauty that is the SSCC charism to the poor who, in Japan, are visible in the faces of the elderly and immigrants and continue with the patient work of integrating foreigners (especially those from the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia) in Christian communities.

The Province was also invited to face certain tensions among the brothers and for communication to grow at all levels of the province so as to give SSCC life and mission greater flavor in Japan. Finally, the brothers were reminded that they are not alone. They are part of a larger body in the congregation, in the diocesan and universal church.

Photo Album of the visit by clicking this link: https://bit.ly/36j71By

Conclusion of the Canonical Visitation to Paraguay

On Thursday, 7th November, the Canonical Visitation to Paraguay came to an end with a meeting with the whole Region. This meeting took place in Presidente Franco, in the parish of Our Lady of Fatima. All members of the Region were present at the meeting. Jean Blaise Mwanda and Derek Laverty presented their ‘end of visit’ report. Our
focus was on the inner life of the Region and also on the apostolic services that the brothers render in Paraguay. We concluded our report with some suggestions that we hope will help the Region. Our presentation to the Region was followed by a meeting with Sérgio Stein, the Provincial of Brazil-Paraguay and later a meeting with the Regional Council of Paraguay.

During these last days in Paraguay we were able to visit and have dinner with our sisters in Asunción and also meet with Secular Branch members.

**Final Assembly of the Canonical Visitation to Brazil**

On Friday, 15th November, the Canonical Visitation to the Province Brazil-Paraguay came to an end in Belo Horizonte with an assembly at which all the brothers who live in Brazil were present (with the exception of Fr. Mario Smolders who is still in hospital). Jean Blaise Mwanda and Derek Laverty presented their ‘end of visit’ report.

In their presentation, they focused on the inner life and the pastoral and missionary conversion based on the reality of the Province. It is hoped that the interplay of the ‘inner life’ and the pastoral and missionary conversion will illuminate the Province for the preparation of the next Provincial Chapter which will take place in November 2020. Some pointers were proposed to the assembly: the process of preparation and the participation of all the brothers, an evaluation of the present pastoral presences that takes into account those brothers who are active, IF and OF, a clear policy for our older brothers ... All this is to be done in a spirit of apostolic and missionary discernment in order to arrive at "something new" in the spirit of mission that corresponds to the thoughts of Pope Francis and the orientations of the 39th General Chapter.

Following their report there was plenty of opportunity for an open dialogue before celebrating lunch in Provincial House.

Photo Album of the visit by clicking this link: [https://bit.ly/2JxOUju](https://bit.ly/2JxOUju)
Bringing Kalaupapa to the World

The construction of the Damien and Marianne Cope museum has featured recently in the Hawaii Catholic Herald.

The museum is scheduled to open in early 2020. Below is an excerpt from the article which can be found at:

https://bit.ly/2D4dWmM

“A need to better tell the story of Father Damien and Mother Marianne has long existed. Plans on how to do so accelerated after Damien’s canonization in 2009 and Marianne’s in 2012. A Damien and Marianne Heritage Center above the ABC Store in the building that fronts St. Augustine lasted from 2010 to 2013, closing due to a rent hike. Prior to that, a Damien Museum at St. Patrick Monastery in Kaimuki and then at St. Augustine showcased some photographs and artefacts relating to Father Damien. Father Akiona knew there was plenty of demand for a new museum since the previous heritage centre saw about 40,000 visitors a year with minimal advertising and a lot of foot traffic off Kalakaua Avenue.”

Auditorium of the Place of Memory Hubert Lanssiers ssc (Peru)

For a week in December, the Auditorium of the Place of Memory, Tolerance and Social Inclusion (LUM) in Peru will take on the name Hubert Lanssiers ssc who was an ssc priest from Belgium (1929-2006).

The announcement was made in a public ceremony held on 6th November in the presence of, among others, the director of the LUM, Mr. Manuel Burga and the Belgian ambassador Mr. Koenraad Lenaerts.

The Director noted how, in the consultations undertaken, the name of Fr. Lanssiers appeared widely. For his part, the Ambassador referred to the work of Fr. Lanssiers in prisons, highlighting that he was born Belgian and died Peruvian. It is recalled that Fr. Lanssiers presided over the Commission of Pardons for cases where persons had been unjustly detained for terrorism.
6th Meeting of SSCC family members (Poland)

From 8th to 11th of November 2019 in the “Christus Rex” Monastery in Polanica Zdrój a meeting was held for family members of our brothers. 22 people came from all over Poland: fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and cousins of our brothers. It was a very good time to know each other, to pray together and see something. On Saturday we went to Kudowa to see some attractions and on Sunday we visited the cemetery of our SSCC brothers and we prayed for them. Our meeting was prepared and hosted by the Provincial Superior, Father Wojciech Kotowski and Father Kamil Wawro.

Supplement “Charisma” dedicated to the Congregation (Spain)

On the eve of the Feast of the Good Mother, Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, the well-known supplement, “Charisma” appeared in the Vida Nueva magazine, a magazine edited by PPC and dedicated to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. This edition of “Charisma” contains 16 pages and is attractively designed in cartoon form telling the story of our charismatic family, through key words of our spirituality, highlighting the challenges presented to us by the Superiors General, the work with marginalized groups, the welcome of prisoners, the mission in Mozambique, the educational task and youth ministry. At the close of the supplement, information is provided about Father Damien and his appearances in social networks as well as a poem about the Saint by Pedro Cerdán sssc. The texts, in coordination with a team of SSCC religious, have been prepared by several brothers and sisters of the Congregation.

You can access the booklet in Spanish in PDF format, in this link: https://bit.ly/337sqNh

In addition to the regular distribution of Vida Nueva, the “Charisma” booklet will also be distributed in paper format throughout the places where the brothers and sisters in Spain engage in ministry.
Celebration of the Good Mother (Rome)

The communities of SSCC sisters and brothers of Rome met on 23 November to celebrate the feast of our Founder, Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, in the General House of Via Aurelia.

In the Eucharist we remembered the plight of countries in conflict; Hong Kong, Lebanon, South Sudan, Bolivia, Chile and many others (as the Superiors General recalled in their recent joint letter).

We also remembered the visit that the Pope was carrying out in Thailand and Japan as a messenger of peace.

In the homily, Fernando highlighted the example of the Good Mother: instead of selfishness she chose to give of herself. In the midst of a situation of weakness, she worked, together with the Good Father, to highlight a new way of being Church, trusting that “the thread is attached to a cable. We also remembered Patricia and Aurora, visiting Hawaii, and Margarita and Goyi, who are learning English in Ireland. After the Salve Regina, the two communities stayed on to share lunch.

SSCC Youth join the Pope in Tokyo (Japan)

On Monday, 25 November, Franciscus Xaverius Sri Waluyo ssc, who works in youth ministry, accompanied a group of 80 young people from the Diocese of Saitama, to a meeting with Pope Francis in St. Mary’s Cathedral in Tokyo. Leonardo, one of the members of the SSCC youth group, was chosen to give a personal testimony at the beginning of the meeting, along with two other young people, Miki and Masako. Leonardo is the son of Filipino immigrants, and they have experienced discrimination and bullying.

Leonardo told the Pope: “Please tell me, Holy Father, how should we confront the problems of discrimination and bullying that are spreading throughout the world?”.

At the end of his speech, Pope Francis concluded: “Dear young people, never lose heart or set aside your dreams. Give them plenty of room, dare to glimpse vast horizons and see what awaits you if you aspire to achieve them together”. The young people very much appreciated the Pope’s closeness to them.

More photographs can be seen by clicking this link: https://bit.ly/2OIFGTf
Publication of the doctoral thesis of Raja Sebastian (Roma)

Wednesday, 6 November marked the day the doctoral thesis of Raja Sebastian was published. The thesis was first defended on 25 March 2019 at the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Urban University of Rome. The title of the thesis is “Christian non-violence (ahimsa) in the context of the Tamils of India: Theological foundation.” Professor John Egbulefu, a student of Joseph Ratzinger, presided over the court. Kokou Atakpa and Maurizio Gronchi acted as rapporteurs. During his defence Raja was supported by SSCC brothers and sisters in Rome, by the lay staff of via Rivarone and by a large group of his friends from different religious congregations. In total, about one hundred people occupied the “John Henry Newman” classroom. Raja defended his thesis, which was approved. Now the thesis has been published and he has received his doctorate.

25th anniversary of the parish church of San Víctor (Spain)

2019 marks the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of the church of the Parish of San Víctor in Madrid. Not only the church, but also the halls and the house that complete the parish complex. The work was completed thanks to the interest and financial help of many parishioners.

Without a doubt, from the onset, the most striking part of the church are the stained glass windows, designed by Higinio Vázquez. Osvaldo Aparicio ssc  having studied them once remarked: “It is a wonderful achievement how the windows cover the entire perimeter of the church creating an atmosphere of light and color, serenity and peace that invites reflection and prayer. This atmosphere would be even more welcoming if there was also a stained glass window at the back of the altar. It is also very good how the stained-glass windows reflect different aspects of the spirit of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts: the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Last Supper, the Virgin of Peace and Father Damien”.

We celebrate the Silver jubilee of a church in the knowledge that its community first came together in San Víctor more than 50 years ago (Golden jubilee)! We hope that this church will continue to welcome many generations who want to share and celebrate their faith in this corner of Madrid.
Meeting of Pope Francis

♦ Synod Hall, Paul VI, November, 29, 2019

From 27 to 29 November 2019, the 93rd Assembly of Superiors General was held in the house of the Religious Sisters of the Virgin of the Cenacle.

The meeting was organised by the Union of Superiors General (USG). The theme for reflection during these days was: Religious life in the 21st Century.

In order to stimulate reflection, young religious from different cultures had been invited: Spain, Japan, India and Italy. For the elderly, the reference continues to be Vatican II, with its achievements, its failures and its promises, some of which are still unfulfilled. This group is also marked by the decline in the number and influence of religious life, at least in the West, and is concerned about the future. The group of younger religious, on the other hand, is more sensitive to a Church that is searching and which is not afraid of trying, a church that values deeper human community living and which prioritises presence and closeness especially to the poorest. The future paths of religious life consist in learning to walk together, in mutual listening and becoming more sensitive to the different generations that are present in our communities.

The Assembly concluded on Friday, 29 November with a meeting with Pope Francis and more than 145 Superior Generals in the Paul VI Synod Hall. The meeting consisted in two hours of dialogue between Francis and the Major Superiors. Among the topics discussed was the prophetic dimension of religious life. A question was raised as to how to discern the prophetic meaning of religious life as we journey together even if we are not sure to where and in which direction we should go. In response to this question, Pope Francis reiterated his recent exhortation to religious men and women, seminarians and catechists in Thailand: “Let us be alert to beauty, alert to a sense of wonder capable of opening up new horizons and raising new questions.” For this it is essential that we cultivate the capacity for astonishment and surprise before the living God, before the Risen Lord who makes our hearts burn. At the same time, Pope Francis invited the Superior Generals to be attentive to what is happening to so many marginalized brothers and sisters, as many founders and foundresses did. To be with the poor, working side by side with them, to know them from within their lived realities. It is out of the interaction of wonder and working together with the poor, that we may discover new paths, new ways of walking together. The way is Jesus. What we can do as religious is venture to be the path (Francis’ neologism) even if the end of the road is not clearly visible. Do we, young and old, dare to trailblaze together in our Congregation?
Priestly ordination of Don Brian Malnegro (Japan)

On Monday, 4 November, Brother Don Brian Malnegro was ordained a priest in Mito (Ibaraki) at the Keisel Hotel, Japan. This was a great event not least because the previous ordination was 22 years ago.

Don was ordained by Bishop Mario Michiaki Yamanouchi, osb, bishop of the diocese of Saitama. He was accompanied by brothers and sisters from the parishes in the Japan-Philippines Province. Japan: Mito, Tomobe, Tsuchiura, Tsukuba, Shimodate, Yamagata; some faithful came from Manila, as well as Pauline sisters and members of the Trinity congregation. Don’s parents, who were unable to attend the ordination, were represented by two of his sisters and a brother. The wife of the mayor of his town of Cebu Visayas also came. Monsignor Nolly Buco, auxiliary bishop of Antipolo (Manila) was present. It was he who ordained Don Brian as deacon. Also joining in the celebrations were some priests from the diocese of Saitama, Tokyo and Niigata (where the Yamagata community is located). In his homily, Monsignor Yamanouchi stressed the distinctive features of the spirituality of the Sacred Hearts as applied to priestly service: The wounded heart of Jesus full of compassion and the burning heart of Mary both understood as service.

Bishop Yamanouchi shared at the reception that his diocese has 13 million inhabitants, 120 thousand of whom are Catholics, many of them foreigners, especially Filipinos. Don Brian, for his part, thanked those who initiated him into the faith, especially his parents and brothers who instilled in him an understanding of faith as service. His prayer is that the Lord, through the brothers and sisters, will help him flourish as the "Sakura" or the "cherry blossom." And in the winter times that we all have to go through, he will always trust the Lord who sustains and strengthens us.

The celebration of the Mass was followed by a lunch enlivened by Japanese, Filipino, Indonesian and Mexican songs and dances.

More photographs can be seen by clicking this link: https://bit.ly/2oJ2ZmP
♦ Priestly ordination of Óscar Casanova (Chile)

On Saturday, 23 November, the priestly ordination of Óscar Casanova took place in the Parish of Damien de Molokai in Santiago de Chile. Monsignor Celestino Aós, o.f.m., the apostolic administrator of Santiago, presided over the celebration. In his homily, he invited the new priest not to forget the SSCC charism: "History, with its lights and shadows, is the sacred history of salvation. There are so many brothers to admire. May the motto of the Congregation be more than a beautiful phrase on paper, but may it become alive in you: To contemplate, to live and to proclaim to the world the love of God".

In his thanksgiving, Óscar commented how the verse of his priestly motto had gained so much strength with the passing of the weeks: "I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already on fire! (Luke 12:49), a phrase he had chosen at the end of the provincial chapter in August.

After the social unrest in Chile, this passage gained strength and became more meaningful: "In this time so complex and for so many disconcerting, I think it is indispensable to recognize something that -for me it is marvelous- has resounded with an unusual force: the voice of those who have lived constantly and for so long as victims of injustice and indifference. A voice that, in spite of violence and repression, and the pain of sights seen and lives snatched away, will no longer allow itself to be silenced, a voice that seeks to be the protagonist of its own history. Christ's passionate fire for his poor continues to be kindled. This time of awakening can be a great opportunity for us, as the Church, to renew our deepest vocation, to follow Jesus and with him, to place ourselves, with forcefulness, on the side of those whom the Father has wanted to reveal his Kingdom, whom Jesus called happy - because the fire he brings has found in their hearts the deepest heartbeat. Let us allow ourselves to be embraced by that fire. And let us collaborate with the only peace that is legitimate, the peace that is the fruit of justice. It is to this Church that I want to belong and in which I always want to serve”.

More photographs can be seen by clicking this link: https://bit.ly/34kOaGH

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π Priestly ordination of Esitio (Tio) Niuliki (US)

The Feast of the Good Mother Henriette provided the opportunity to celebrate and rejoice for a number of reasons. The parish community at St. Ann’s Church in Kaneohe, Hawaii, witnessed the ordination to the priesthood of our brother Esitio (Tio) Niuliki sscc. There was great enthusiasm in the gathering. The music was lively and charged with spiritual energy! Bishop Larry Silva was the ordaining bishop. In his homily, he spoke directly to Tio as a father would address his son. He encouraged him to be faithful to Jesus, to always have the Lord at the centre of his life. Bishop Larry also encouraged him to preach with that inner conviction that Christ is risen and lives among us today. The church was full, with many priests concelebrating. It was attended by 46 family members of the newly ordained. They came from Wallis Futuna, New Caledonia, Paris and Fiji! A very special guest, of course, was his mother!

Tio celebrated his first Thanksgiving Mass on the Feast of Christ the King in the same church of St. Ann, to which he has been appointed as parish vicar with effect from 1st January 2020.
On 7 December, David de la Torre will be ordained a bishop in the Basilica of La Dolorosa in Quito (Ecuador). The Metropolitan Archbishop will act as principal celebrant. Alberto Toutin, Superior General will also be present. David’s episcopal motto is inspired by the Letter to the Hebrews 12.2: “Fix your eyes on Jesus.”

How do you feel about the appointment?

I see this appointment in the context of my baptismal consecration and my Religious Profession. The formula of our profession: “In whose service I want to live and die” is the spiritual reference for this “yes”, a “yes” that connects my life to the ministry of the apostles. Being named a bishop is for me a continuation of and not a break with my religious SSCC identity. When the Apostolic Nuncio in Ecuador spoke with me and asked if I accepted, I said yes without hesitation. When I was 17, I left my family, left everything, and said to the Lord: “Wherever and however you like.” This is why I have been happy wherever the Lord has placed me and in each of the services that the Congregation and my brothers have asked of me throughout these 25 years of SSCC religious life.

What idea do you have right now about how to be a bishop?

My Episcopal motto is “Keep your eyes on Jesus. That is, if you like, my program: that we do not forget the One who must be the Absolute of our lives. The problem is not so much in what we do or fail to do, but in forgetting that there is no other except the Lord and Saviour. Clericalism makes us believe that we are masters of good and evil, of life and death; we can be so full of ourselves that the fetid air of our ego poisons everything we do. Only by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus will we be able to see the poor and marginalized, the suffering and the hopeless.
With this spiritual understanding and with my “yes” I will take charge of two pastoral areas of the Archdiocese of Quito, 70 parishes, about one and a half million people. In addition, I will have under my responsibility the elaboration of the new pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Quito; the animation and strengthening of the Youth Ministry, Catechetics, and the whole area of Education and Culture. As you can see, there are many reasons to pray and I won’t have time to get bored. Hopefully, there will be time to rest, although in the month and a half since my appointment I have experienced what it means to stop living for self, to truly live for others. I hope that this is how my episcopate will be, that I will never put my vanity or my selfishness above the good of God’s people.

What do you think will be your contribution as bishop to the pilgrim Church in Quito?

My experience as a teacher in the Faculty of Theology where the future priests of the Archdiocese are formed and my 11 years as parish priest north of Quito have allowed me, from the beginning, to be very steeped in the reality of this particular Church, to get close to the lives of diocesan priests, and to love the faithful people of God who continue to make God present in their lives and who continue to expect from the Church a word of light and truth. During this time, I have received very moving signs of joy, of affection, of hope. I feel very accompanied and loved by the laity, by the priests and also by my brother bishops.

Theologian, parish priest, formator, superior... now bishop. Do you think it will be easy for you to be in tune with the Church proposed to us by the Pope in Evangelii Gaudium?

"We need bishops capable of listening to the heartbeat of their communities and their priests, even from a distance", affirms Pope Francis.

With much humility I believe that our SSCC religious life, our charism, and our style of mission are in profound harmony with Pope Francis. It seems to me that one of the ecclesial places where the Pope’s word and his reform project has had a challenging and questioning resonance is right here in our religious family. In that sense I hope to be part of the dream that Pope Francis has for the Church, a Church moving out, a poor Church for the poor, a Church that despite its own wounds cleanses the wounds of the world, a Church for the world and not a self-referential Church that lives out of power rather than out of the authority of service and love.

You are already living in Archbishop’s house in Quito. What will you hold on to as a brother of the Sacred Hearts and what will be your relationship with the Congregation now?

Everything! Nothing of what I am is the fruit of some kind of spontaneous generation. I am a religious of the SSCC and I will never cease to be one.

Right now, I no longer live in a community of the Congregation, but as there are SSCC brothers in parish ministry and communities of brothers in Quito, I will stay in contact with them. I will try to participate in the meetings of the Province. Count on me, as a brother, to accompany us on this journey. Please, do not forget to pray for me.
**AGENDA OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

- **December 2 - 4**  Sessions of the General Government  Rome
- **December 5 -10**  Visit and participation to the Episcopal Ordination of David de la Torre Superior General  Quito
- **December 10**  SSCC Spiritual and Historical Patrimony Commission  Rome
- **December 12**  Sessions of the General Government  Rome
- **December 14 - 15**  Retreat of the Community of the General House  Rome
- **December 16 - 17**  Meeting of the General Government in the House “Villa Aurelia”  Rome
- **December 20**  Sessions of the General Governments of brothers and sisters  Rome
- **December 24**  **CHRISTMAS**

**CHRONICA CONGREGATIONIS**

† **Deceased**

More on our deceased brothers can be found on our webpage: [www.ssccpicpus.com](http://www.ssccpicpus.com)

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**José (Jorge) Casadesús Balderich sscc**, professed on 19 March, 1958 in San Miguel del Monte, Burgos (Spain) and died on 4 November, 2019 in El Escorial, Madrid (Spain).

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**François Querné sscc**, professed on 8 September 1955 in Montgeron (France) and died on 5 November, 2019 in Draveil (France).
Theodor (Gabriel) Simon sscc, professed on 21 April 1958 in Burgbrohl (Germany) and died on 12 November, 2019 in Münster (Germany).

Damiaan Marinus sscc, professed on 24 September 1949 in Nieuw-Ginneken (The Netherlands) and died on 28 November, 2019 in Rarotonga (Cook Islands). He was the last SSCC missionary in Cook Islands where the Congregation was present since 1894.

TEMPORARY PROFESSION
8 December Lomano FIFITA and Soane SIUA US

PERPETUAL PROFESSION
December 20 Edgar Pacheco Bárkenas Mexico
January 10 John Sawchenko US
January 11 Daniel Estrada US
January 18 William Gural US

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION
7 December David Israel de la Torre Altamirano Andean

JUBILEES
Profession
December 10 Miguel Martos Domínguez Mexico (60)
9 January 2020 Miguel Habacuc Ortega Moreno Andean Silver (25)
9 January 2020 Leonel Mora Lizarazo Andean (25)
9 January 2020 José Marzola Medrano Andean (25)

Ordination
December 8 Paulo Roberto Teixeira de Abreus Brazil Silver (25)
December 17 Gabriel Giraud Fernández Chile (70)
New POSTS in the eBlog

http://ssccpicpus.blogspot.it/

- “¿Qué está pasando en Chile?”, Sergio Silva Gatica ssc (Province of Chile) [only available in Spanish]

Reportage on SSCC IN THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS: