



E-BULLETIN #251

18-Dec-16

"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 470

sons of Pallotti in France **together to listen to Jesus and follow Him**

Ironically the composition of the Pallottines in France, traditionally a very catholic country, is made up of members who all come from elsewhere – Poland, Cameroon, Rwanda [and too, France's Pallottine sisters are from Poland]. So their lives are interculturalism and internationality in real time – they have to become friends and learn together.

Paradoxically the witness they provide through the unity in their diversity represents great wealth, both as an example to the general population and especially to the church they serve. And while that church suffers from a lack of priestly and religious vocations, there is now evidence of a new generation bursting through confusion of the recent past and asserting themselves as christians out of conviction!

A hunger and thirst for God are clearly evident in eucharistic celebrations and in the catechesis of children and adults. I am personally amazed to see so many lay people generously offering their services in many areas of parish life, so much so that one can genuinely speak of a **Christian community** – at least in the parish of Osny where I am for this sabbatical year.

It goes without saying of course that the priest must be a good coordinator, able to take advantage of all these gifts and talents so that each individual (lay person, religious, priest) can realize his/her own calling received from the Lord. Obviously a Pallottine should feel at ease in this context and the charism find fertile ground.



The apostolates of our men in France are quite diverse: education of youth [ref #210], dialogue between cultures, the apostolate of Divine Mercy, developing a centre of spiritual animation and parish ministry. All these fields invite collaboration. Happily those who work there feel supported by the general council to take time out, to find moments to fraternize and coordinate their planning so that they can offer their charism to the people of God.

Which leads to one of the yearly highlights in their ongoing formation, the spiritual retreats in which they jointly share.

"Together to listen to the voice and the life of Pallotti who invites us to follow Jesus, the Apostle of the Eternal Father" was the theme of the most recent such retreat [14-18 Nov], guided by a member of the *Holy Family* Province – Fr François Harelimana sac.

Except for the few who were prevented, everyone came together at the *Centre du Dialogue* [pictured above] in Montmorency. As well, two confreres joined them from Belgium. There was great togetherness in which, along with Pallotti, we contemplated Jesus in our midst. We then reviewed the just concluded XXI General Assembly and listened to the church through the voices of the popes, encouraging us to persevere on our journey with joy and hope, committing ourselves as a Pallottine Family, in order to participate fully in the mission of the church.

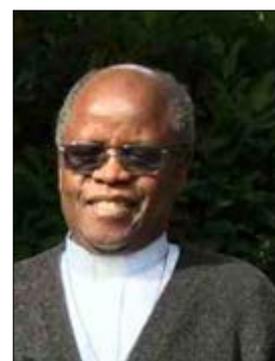
Significantly this charismatic and spiritual event was held in the last week of the *Holy Year of Mercy* – a great moment to honour our French *Region of Divine Mercy* and a reminder to reconsider the implications of just what that identity embodies. Just as Divine Mercy is a paradigm for new evangelization, so too the imitation of Jesus the Apostle of the Eternal Father implies committing oneself to becoming the 'face of the Father's mercy' and always remembering Pallotti's words:

"the fundamental rule of our smallest congregation is the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to imitate him with humility and confidence, with all possible perfection, in all the works of the hidden life and of the public evangelical ministry". (*Opere complete* III, p. 40).

The previous spiritual retreat happened in October 2014, also led by a member of the *Holy Family* Region – then rector Fr Romuald Uzabumwana sac, who took up the theme of the spirituality of Pallotti.

In such ways a spirit of collaboration is cultivated. And, beyond retreats, also through meetings of superiors and the common celebration of St Vincent's feastday etc.

Starting afresh from the founder and listening together to Jesus, the incarnate Word of the Father, is a sure foundation for discovering a future according to the expectations of the church that we serve!



François Harelimana sac [SF] – Osny – FRANCE
04.12.16
fharelimana@gmail.com

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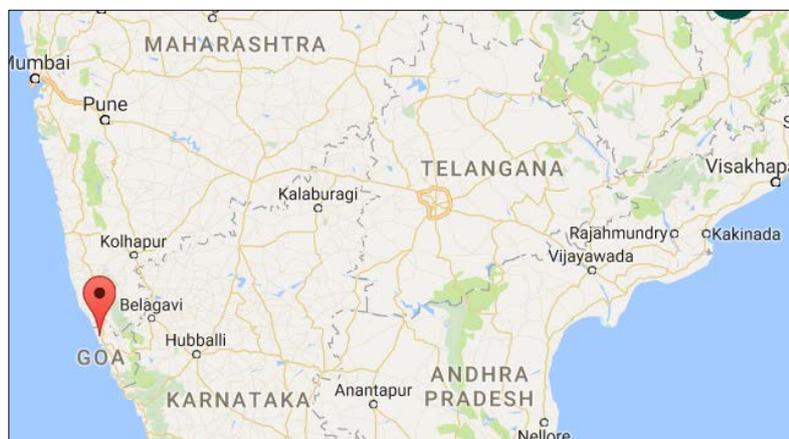
'a courageous and authentic missionary'

Until 1985 there were no Pallottine Missionary Sisters in India. So the task of opening a house and appointing a community leader was entrusted to **Sr Magdala Schneider sac**, a German Pallottine, at that time a General Councilor of the congregation in Rome. Magdala willingly accepted the pioneering challenge of travelling to India, paving the way to begin a new mission of Christ in Goa. Because of visa complications she had to regularly go back and forth from Italy to India and to Germany. However strong in faith, courageous in spirit, and convinced of God's will, she gave her entire self as best she could to begin the foundation, as well encouraging her sisters to be authentic in their vocation and self-confident in their apostolate. She became the first Delegation Superior of the Assagao community in Goa.

In herself Magdala was a well integrated person in both her contemplative and active life. She trusted in providence and the protection of God very much. She lived a truly simple and humble life. She was very affectionate and had a generous heart which welcomed everyone without distinction, rather with much warmth and special care. People always felt at home because of her hospitality.

She was a true missionary who used to walk and climb the hills to clean the wounds of the sick and thus bring relief to their pain. Enthusiastically she found ways and means to be of service to the migrant group from Tamil Nadu especially giving them the spiritual, psychological and, when needed, financial help. She became part of them in the eucharistic celebration along with the sisters and Pallottine priests.

One of Magdala's great concerns was that we sisters obtain professional qualifications for our various apostolic works. She extended her full support to us, through her presence and encouragement, challenging all to do their best for the growth of the delegature and to spread the mission and vision of St Vincent. She had a humorous personality and used this gift to see the lighter side of things when life and mission were tough. Very comfortable with any age group – children, youth, adult or senior citizens – at the same time she lived her religious vows to the core, obeying higher authority even in things that were unpleasant. She had a deep understanding of the UAC and she did what she could to build it up.



Our beloved Sr Magdala, born on 8th February 1932 and arrived in India in 1985, suffered for a week with cerebral malaria before reaching her eternal home on 5th August 1994. She is buried in Goa and, to those of us who knew and lived with her, she will always remain dear to us. We believe she is already enjoying eternal bliss!

Magdalena Pinto sac – Rome – ITALY
14.12.16
mariamagdalenapinto66@gmail.com

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you commented...

on #250 Reading last weeks E Bulletin and reflecting on the life of the young at World Youth Day and the older generation, both of whom live the charism of St Vincent in their particular calling, I thought of the richness of the stories brought to us each week and the fact that this week's Bulletin is the 250th edition. I know that the E Bulletin is widely read around the English world, keeping us in touch with important Pallottine events and experiences. So our thanks

to those responsible, Frs Jacob and Ray, for their untiring work in keeping the editions coming. I look forward to reading many more articles into the future.

CS 12.12.16

Warmest congratulations on the 250th issue of your e-Bulletin! No mean feat! Like so many of its predecessors, it has offered something of the breadth of the Pallottine world, something practical as well as something inspirational and reflective. You do us all a great service.

MB 11.12.16