

Le Supérieur général



El Superior General

Rome, September 8, 2009

LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY

Dear friends,

I would like to send you my greetings at the beginning of a new pastoral year and also to give you information concerning recent, ongoing and upcoming events.

EUDIST ASSOCIATES

As you already know, shortly after the meeting of the Congregation Council that was held in Rome at the end of June, there was an interprovincial meeting of delegated associates from each province and their Eudist mentors, at Douvres La Delivrande near Roche du Theil on July 6 – 14.

You have already received some information about this meeting either by mail or on the internet. It was certainly a fraternal and spiritual gathering, very enriching for those in attendance and we believe that it will benefit the whole Congregation if we are able to implement the requests expressed and the resolutions made.

NEWS FROM THE PROVINCES

The last day of this gathering was the opening, again at Roche du Theil, of the 19th provincial assembly that was attended by 26 confreres and 4 associates. The “Acts” of this assembly have already been published and now it is once again time to execute the decisions taken.

The province of Colombia will also hold an “extraordinary assembly” at the end of November in order to, in the words of the Provincial Superior, revitalize community mission throughout the province that is present in six South American countries. And certain changes need to be made today following the creation of the “Minuto de Dios” province last June.

We take this occasion to inform you that Fr. Gustavo Londono, Vicar General, conducted last August the consultations required by our Constitutions, in order to nominate the Provincial Superior of this new province.

And the Provincial Superior, as you have learned, is Fr. Guillermo Acero who was installed on August 17 by Fr. Gustavo, and then all the Eudist family residing in Bogota gathered two days

later to express their gratitude and celebrate the feast of our founder. May St. John Eudes protect and guide these two provinces!

JOHN EUDES AND JEANNE JUGAN

The feast of St. John Eudes was in prominence at the beginning of the “Year for Priests” since Pope Benedict XVI, at his general audience on August 19th at Castelgandolfo, spoke of St. John Eudes “the untiring apostle of the devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the provider of formation for priests... priests who, he added, yesterday like today, must be “witnesses of the infinite mercy of God”. Of course we know that the message of the Holy Father was meant for every one of us...

Please note that the Eudist family will again have an occasion to celebrate, since on October 11th will take place the canonization of Jeanne Jugan, the foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor, who, in her own way, was “a daughter of St. John Eudes” by sharing his spiritual experience and his way of fulfilling the Gospel. Thousands of pilgrims are awaited in the eternal city on that day, and the general quarters will have a “No Vacancy” sign because of the arrival of Eudist confreres and associates from France.

GENERAL QUARTERS

+ Speaking of the General Quarters, all or almost all its residents come and go each year. The community witnessed the departure of Fr. Gerardo Amado who completed his studies in moral theology and returned to his community in Ecuador where he is local superior. He is the pastor in his parish and offers courses at the seminary.

+ Fr. Alain David has also left for Quebec City. He will pursue his doctoral studies at Laval University, under the guidance of Professor Gilles Routhier.

+ Fr. Honore Kouassi N`Gouan, who spent three years as local bursar and host here in Rome with competence and a great smile, has also left to return to the Ivory Coast. He will become the local superior at the provincial residence and will head several projects in the vice province.

We have assured all three of our keeping them in our prayers. Therefore those who will be in residence at Via dei Querceti:

+ Fr. Jose Mario Bacci will arrive to pursue Biblical studies after improving his knowledge of English and French this summer.

+ Frs. Gustavo Londono and Michel Gerard will remain in their respective positions of authority.

+ Fr. Damien Stampers will arrive to assume the position of general financial secretary; he will also assume the position of local bursar and therefore will continue to study the dossier of the future of our properties. He will also conclude the writing of his doctoral thesis in Scripture. Fr. Stampers will sit with Frs. Camilo Bernal and Laurent De Villeroche on the financial board.

CANONICAL VISITS

In the next months, the Superior General and the Vicar General will conduct several visits:

+ I will visit Venezuela and Colombia at the end of November to meet with the new Provincial Superiors and their councils. You already know that Fr. Jose Sabino will replace Fr. Fernando Duartes on October 20 as Provincial Superior of Venezuela. I will then have the occasion to thank Fr. Fernando for his generous service to his province and to assure Fr. Jose Antonio of my support for having accepted this responsibility. I have heard that Fr. Pierre Drouin will be visiting Venezuela at that time. His presence at the celebration on October 20th will certainly be appreciated. After Caracas, I will go to Bogota where I will meet Fr. Guillermo Acero and his council in the new Minuto de Dios Province before attending part of the provincial assembly of Colombia, on an invitation from Fr. Alirio Raigozo.

+ From January 5th to the 10th, we will hold our general council at Tagaytay (the Philippines). A long distance away but worth our while to acquire a better knowledge of this first foundation in Asia, to meet the confreres and the candidates in formation, and to discuss local situations with them...

+ As already announced, Fr. Jose Angel Carrillo of the province of Colombia will in the near future join Frs. Ron Bagley and Francois Jourdan. We keep all of them in our prayers and assure them of our support. Their mission is evidently very important in the perspective of a Eudist foundation on Asian soil.

+ Following the general council meeting, Fr. Gustavo will visit a large part of the province of Colombia (Colombia, Ecuador, and Brazil) and conduct the consultations for the nomination of the next Provincial Superior since Fr. Alirio's first term will end on December 31, 2010.

+ Later I will visit the communities in Mexico, Central America and the Dominican Republic.

+ Before then (February-March), I will conduct consultations in the province of France since the first term of Fr. Jean Camus will end on August 31, 2010.

+ The visit in North America is being planned for the end of the year 2010 and another to the vice province of Africa in February-March 2011.

Following this overview of the various provinces, we wish those who are initiating a new pastoral year a renewed spirit, and those who are not, may God's grace continue to inspire you.

To all we send our fraternal greetings,

Fr. Michel Gerard, Superior General
Fr. Gustavo Londono, Vicar General