

Communicationes N. 279

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Union of Provinces

First steps taken for the new Iberian province

Avila-Spain, February 12, 2015 (Communicationes).- The new Iberian Province is already a reality. In actual fact, the new Province is the result of a union of various Provinces: Castile, Burgos, Andalusia, Aragon Valencia and Catalonia and is made up of around 300 friars in Spain, Latin America and Africa.

Fr Miguel Márquez was elected Provincial in the Extraordinary Chapter celebrated in Avila to set up the new Province. The General of the Order, Fr Saverio Cannistrà, presided at the Chapter.

Fr Miguel Márquez asked that they do not allow themselves to “be dragged down by defeatist psychologies”, since it is far better to be connected to the sources of happiness, by being “brave souls”, in addition, “our Life does not consist in ourselves, but in what we are proclaiming”. “When there is so much talk about strategies,” he pointed out, “ the best strategy is to imitate the deep love Teresa had for Jesus”.

The Chapter also elected the Councillors as follows: Fr Pedro Tomas Navajas, First Councillor; Fr Agustí Borrell, Second Councillor; Fr Francisco Berbell, Third Councillor and Fr José Francisco Santarrufina, Fourth Councillor.

During the Chapter various commissions were created for different topics: Vocational Ministry, Formation, Mission, Government, Finance, Restructuring, and Norms of life. Various reports were prepared to serve as programmatical documents for each one of the areas.

As well, the Chapter addressed various topics concerning internal regime, the situation of the publishing houses, colleges and means of communication. There were also discussions on topics of interest for spiritual and community life.

V Centenary

Teresian Discussion in Lomé

Togo, February 12, 2015 (Communicationes).- In the Ágora Senhor in Lomé, the Capital of Togo, a Carmelite international Discussion was held from 6th to 8th February. The principal topic addressed was: "Towards reconciliation and peace in Africa, with Teresa of Avila".

In the congress, various topics and problems were discussed which preoccupy African society: how to bring about peace, national reconciliation, pardon or the different religions living peacefully together, equality between man and woman, etc.

The title of the inaugural conference, given by Maximiliano Herraiz, ocd, was "Anthropology and Teresian Spirituality."

The Discussion turned out to be the focus of very important attention with the attendance of representative from the local ecclesiastical world, the United Nations, the European Union, civil organizations, etc.

In this regard, the Ex-President of the Tribunal of Justice from Pwemoa (Bénin), Abraham Zinzindohoue, called his talk "A Teresian spirituality for African politics". As well, the President of the National Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace of the Togo Episcopal Conference, Mons. Nicodème Barrigah, spoke on Transitional Justice and Conventional Justice as a guarantee for reconciliation and peace, as did the President of the Supreme Tribunal of Togo, Gamato Patrice.

Egypt

The V centenary in Egypt

Egypt, February 12, 2015 (Communicationes).- Fr **Patrício Sciadini, ocd.**- The Carmel in Egypt is working to make known Saint Teresa of Jesus. St Therese of the Child Jesus is already very well known and loved and there are many who are devoted to her among the Muslims and Christians.

The "Saint Joseph and Saint Therese of the child Jesus" OCD General Delegation of Egypt is committed, in cooperation with the whole Carmelite family, to taking advantage of the V centenary to make known throughout Egypt Saint Teresa of Jesus, the woman who encountered God and the search for truth in the Church and in society.

From the 26th to 29th January, we celebrated our Carmelite Family in Egypt Congress. There was a good attendance from the friars, nuns and congregations affiliated to the Order, the Sisters of Saint Joseph, as well as the Carmelite Sisters of Saint Teresa of Florence. The topic for discussion was "Saint Teresa and Carmel in today's world".

From the 30th to 31st January we gathered again at the nuns' Carmel in Fayum, where, together with our nuns, we had a meeting with young people: "Saint Teresa and the youth". The participation was active and dynamic. It is the beginning of a journey which will bear fruit in the Church and for vocations.

Father Benoit, a Carmelite from the semi-province of Lebanon, who is in charge of the translation of the works of Saint Teresa into Arabic, gave a talk to the Coptic Catholic seminarians.

On the 13th, 20th and 27th February, there was a series of talks in the Cairo Theological Institute on “The message of Saint Teresa for today”, with particular reference to the situation in the Middle East and Egypt.

In Egypt, we are publishing the *Book of her Life* in Arabic and we are going to donate a copy to all the bishops, priests and religious communities.

Chronicles from the General Archives

The Carmelites in California

United States, February 12, 2015 (Communications).- In March of 1602, Gaspar de Zúñiga y Acevedo, Viceroy and Count of Monterrey, appointed Sebastián Vizcaíno to carry out exploration of the coastline. From the 5th of May of that year until 21st February 1603, he commanded three ships —*San Diego*, the flagship, *Santo Tomás* and *Tres Reyes*— with which he explored the American coastline from the port of Acapulco, then further north beyond Cape Mendocino, accompanied by the cosmographers Jerónimo Martí and the Discalced Carmelite friars: Andrés de la Asunción, Antonio de la Ascensión and Tomás de Aquino. During this voyage they plotted the corresponding place names, drew up documents and maps and prepared directions and detailed journals of the coastline, which served for navigation in these places until the end of the 18th century.

They named the main geographical features, such as Point Lobos, Santa Catalina island, Carmel valley, Monterey bay, Point Sierra or Coyote Point. Some ports and bays which had been named almost sixty years before, were renamed by Vizcaíno on this voyage, such as the ports of Ensenada in present day Mexico and San Deigo (California), which Cabrillo had named *San Mateo* and *San Miguel*, respectively. Vizcaíno renamed San Diego to coincide with the Christian feastday on the day he arrived in the bay, 10th November 1602, giving it the name of his own ship.

The explorations of Vizcaíno were collected by Martín Fernández de Navarrete in the *Colección de las navegaciones y descubrimientos de los españoles de fines del siglo XVI*.

Fr Andrés had the honour of celebrating the first Mass in San Diego (California) on 10th November 1602. Also in Monterey, the old Capital of what is now the state of California, the Discalced Carmelite priests celebrated the first Mass on 16th December 1602. Here was born the short Discalced Carmelite mission in Alta California and in the brief time they were there they tried to bring the Catholic faith to the local people.

In this old Carmelite mission lie the mortal remains of Fray Junípero Serra, the Franciscan who will be canonized by Pope Francis in September 2015.

These few lines serve to let us know about the early history of the Discalced Carmelite friars in California, and how they celebrated the Eucharist for the first time in these lands, which were then evangelized by Blessed Junípero Serra. They also show us how some of the Californian place names have a Carmelite origin.