



N. 396

02 · 2024

OCD

COMMUNICATIONES



9th Assembly of Conference of Carmelite Superiors of French-speaking Africa and Madagascar



From January 21 to 26, 2024 the Conference of OCD Superiors of French speaking Africa and Madagascar held its annual assembly at Kinshasa (RDC). The two Definitors for Africa, Frs. Jean-Baptiste Pagabeleguem and Philbert Namphande, attended. The first official act of the Assembly was the election of a new President of the Conference, Fr. Judicael Rakotoarimanga, Superior of the Madagascar Commissariat. Afterwards the major

part of proceedings was dedicated to the restructuring of our Order in Africa. We now face the reality of a strong increase of the Order that calls for the establishment of new Circumscriptions that one day could become new Provinces. These Assemblies are also important for their informal meetings, both among ourselves and with the Carmelite family in the host country, in this case the huge community of our brother Carmelites at the Theresianum Centre and the Nuns of the nearby monastery.





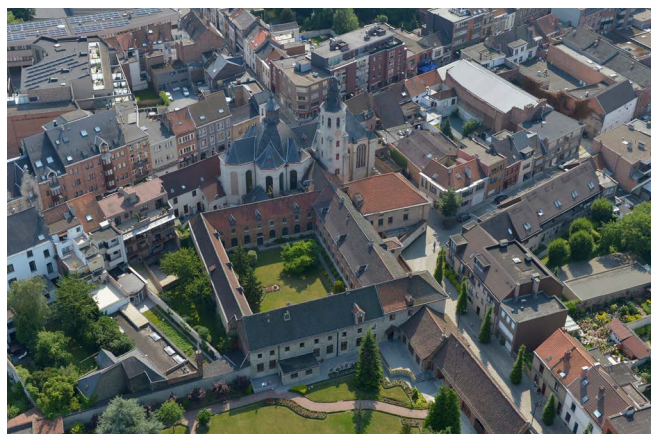
BELGIUM: OLDEST COMMUNITY OF CARMELITE NUNS IN THE WORLD MARKS 555 YEARS OF FOUNDATION

The Carmel of Our Lady of Consolation in Vilvoorde is the 4th and last foundation of Blessed John Soreth. It was canonically erected on 11 February 1469. The Sisters fled from Liege during the “Siege of Liege” in 1468. Their monastery was destroyed. Through the efforts of the then Prior-General of the Order, John Soreth, they found a new home in Vilvoorde.

In March 1966, the Carmel of Vilvoorde, after a period of discernment and preparation, took an important step: the transition from the Ancient Observance (O.Carm.) to the Teresian Carmel (OCD). The Sisters were given the freedom to choose whether to join a calced Carmel in the Netherlands or to pronounce their profession as discalced Carmelites.

In May 7, 2006 the monastery church, because of its spiritual, historical, and cultural significance, was elevated to a minor basilica by Pope Benedict XVI, upon the recommendation of His Eminence Godfried Cardinal Danneels.

Since the 550-jubilee year was not yet so long ago, the community has decided not to celebrate publicly this year but rather sing with their hearts at prayer God’s praises and hymns of thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity and Our Blessed Mother.





Avila: Meeting of European Formators



The annual meeting of OCD European Formators was held in CITEs from 29th January to 2 February 2024. About thirty Formators from all the European OCD Circumscriptions, as well as Fr. Roberto Maria Pirastu, Definitor General, were in attendance.

Fr. Carlos Martinez Oliveras, Claretian, presented the theme chosen for this year's meeting: *"The most important current guidelines of the Church's Magisterium on the question of formation in consecrated life and priestly ministry. Guidelines for an understanding of the most important problems in the current context."* One session was spent in discussion about the revision of our Ratio and on an auto-evaluation scheme prepared by one of the Formators.

Participants also had the opportunity of visiting some Carmelite places of interest: St. Teresa's birth place and museum, St. Joseph's monastery and the convent and tomb of St. John of the Cross in Segovia.





Argentina: 125th Anniversary of arrival of Discalced Carmelites

“**I**n 1899, the Discalced Carmelites came to make a foundation in Argentina. Fr. Fernando of the Immaculate, Provincial of Castile, sent three of his religious: Frs. Agapito of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Eulogio of St. Teresa and Justo of the Virgin of Carmel. They disembarked in Buenos Aires 10 February 1899. From the port we went to our Nuns’ Monastery of St. Joseph. The Sisters welcomed us with bells ringing and with their Church doors open for us. On entering the choir, Fr. Agapito intoned the Te Deum, accompanied by the Nuns with great solemnity and the church organ music. For all of this, we thank the Lord and praise Him for His infinite mercies. May the Queen of Carmel continue to protect

her sons, so that her promise that her Order would remain until the end of the world might be fulfilled. May our Blessed Mother (Teresa) who, like a Divine Cavaliere, never hesitated when it was a matter of installing a new tabernacle, have her sons continue to build tabernacles in the entire Argentine Republic, so that the sons of the Virgin may find a home in its numerous provinces and territories. May great missionaries arise from its youth who will carry the faith to the most remote corners of this Land of Fire.”

History notes on the arrival of our first Fathers in the Argentine Republic



Burkina Faso: Foundation Stone of Future Noviciate is laid



On Friday 9 February, in Pabre (Ouagadougou), with a temperature of 35 degrees under a red sky full of sand from the harmattan wind, the foundation stone of the future Noviciate of the Edith Stein OCD Delegation of West Africa, was laid.

The Delegation has been in existence now for over 25 years. During this time, 35 vocations from this region have persevered and, having taken the place of the original missionaries, these have now assumed a great amount of our pastoral and social apostolate.

Thanks to these numbers, the Delegation is experiencing a period of notable expansion: older communities are being strengthened while new ones have been founded. Many new projects are envisaged and these should permit us, in the near future, to attain the necessary autonomy regarding personnel and finances, to advance these initiatives. May Our Lady of Carmel continue to accompany us in this challenge.





Germany: Centenary of Carmelite Monastery in Munich

On Tuesday 23 January 2024, we opened a Jubilee Year for the centenary of our Monastery and Church with the celebration of a Solemn Mass.

The first Carmelites actually arrived in Munich in 1629, 395 years ago. With the secularization of 1802, the Carmelites had to abandon their convent. Today, only the ex-Church of that convent is partially conserved and used by the Archdiocese. In 1922 the Carmelites returned to Munich. A convent was inaugurated on 23 January 1924 and its Church was consecrated on 14 December 1924.

To make the present occasion more special, the Prior invited all the Major Superiors now residing in Munich to the celebration. During his homily, the Capuchin friar, Fr. Jan Bern encouraged all of us to live in the presence of God and let our life of prayer be a witness for the world today.

This Jubilee Year will conclude on 14 December 2024 with a Mass presided over by the Cardinal of Munich, while in the meantime numerous activities are being organised: conferences, concerts, exhibitions etc.



Malawi: Annual Meeting of OCD Friars



The Carmelite Friars of Malawi have held their annual meeting. This is usually held at a Spirituality Centre in Salima, but this year it took place in our Community of Nyungwe, better known as the St. John of the Cross Spiritual Centre. It meant that some of our Religious had to travel a few more Kilometres (hundreds), but it was considered more convenient to hold the meeting here this year.

Here are some of the themes discussed during our meetings:

1. The community programme of each community, with particular attention to prayer, fraternal life and the apostolate.
2. Protection of minors and vulnerable persons.
3. An analysis of the present situation of every community.
4. A presentation of the situation in the Delegation by Fr. Bafuta, Regional Delegate and complemented by the experiences of other Religious.



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