

NEWSLETTER GENERAL EXECUTIVE

CONGREGATION OF THE BROTHERS OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

number 64, March 2021

BRAZIL: BR. GUILHERME MAKES HIS FIRST VOWS

Br. Guilherme Felipe Seabra Almeida made his first vows in Betim on January 31. He is a Betim native, and was able to make his vows in the church to which he himself, his family and also the brothers belong. Due to the corona pandemic, the number of participants in the ceremony was rather small, but via a livestream, the service could also be followed outside the church.

Br. Guilherme now lives in Jordânia where he participates in the house for those needing care: “Lar Glorieux”. In nearby Almenara (75 km), he will study to become a nurse. At the moment, the lessons are via the Internet.



Br. Heládio speaks to those present.



Guilherme (3rd from left) among his fellow-brothers.

br. Ton Houdé

ETHIOPIA

BR. WOSSEN GRADUATED

With much ado, brother Wossen Kefale received his Master of Science Degree in Human Nutrition and Dietetics. For a number of years, he studied at the Jimma University at Addis Ababa, meanwhile attending to his tasks as a nurse and staff member at the Saint Gabriel Catholic Health Centre. He is also a member of the executive of the congregational district of Ethiopia, and is involved in the formation and training of the candidates for the brother vocation.



ELDERLY PEOPLE

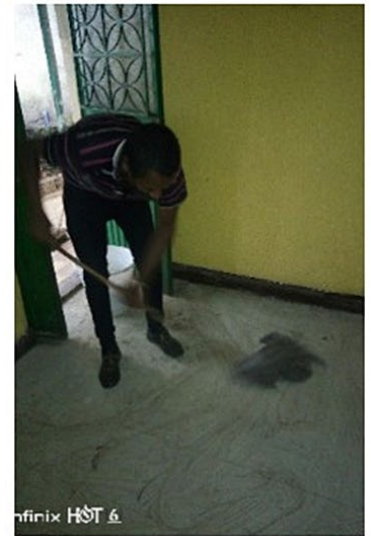
In the Centre for Elderly People in Addis, necessary changes have been implemented. To some 90 elderly people, often without (proper) a home and mostly poor, a warm meal is offered daily; they also have a chance to wash themselves or do the laundry, and also receive medical attention. Two brothers and two lay-persons act as a supervisory board, and there is a necessary staff that assists in the daily management of the Centre, among them brother Yacob Zergaw. On Saturday, br. Abebe Leykun and our novices and postulant take care of some extra cleaning, and do some haircutting for those who want a trim. If money is available, hygienic facilities (toilets) are built in poor city districts, or shacks are being renovated.



Activities
in the Elderly People Project:
Barber (l),
Hygiene (r and below)



Preparing meals (l)
Cleaning (r)



INDONESIA

LOTS OF WATER

During the past few months, many parts of Indonesia had to deal with the rainy season. This time, the “gods of the rain” were generous, very generous in the pouring out of water. Particularly, Java got to deal with a lot of water, so much so that, here and there, there was flooding with all the dire consequences that go with it: mudslides, landslides, trees torn from the soil and carried away by the swirling water. The capital city Jakarta also got a lot of water, and this water couldn’t just be absorbed by the soil or drained away via the sewer



system or waterways. As a result, the lower parts of the metropolis became flooded. The important road along which the Budi Mulia Mangga Besar school complex is located, was flooded, but the school was saved because it is at a higher location. Neighboring people found there a temporary shelter. Also, Desa Putera was able to remain dry because of its somewhat higher location. Meanwhile, the state of emergency has ended: the raining season has nearly run its course.

SHORTAGE OF WATER

Somewhere else on the island of Java, in the rural area of Pencil (Jatiporo), there is once again a shortage of clean water for the use of household needs, as well as for irrigating the fields. At the request of the villagers, via the mediation of the Indonesian brothers, and with the support from the congregational Indonesian projects fund, a real water well has finally been dug. This hasn't been an easy job, because the village is situated deep inland at an elevation of 700 meters above sea level, while the water has to be pumped up from a depth of about 100 meters. Therefore, the drilling is done by a specialized company. The villagers for their part will take care of the building of a water tower, together with the corresponding electrical pump house and laying a network of pipes. After all, as always, the involvement of the villagers is an important factor in the achievement of such a project: they have formed a cooperation for the exploitation of this project, and have made agreements regarding the functioning and maintenance of the installation, and the sharing of the costs and benefits.



CORONA VIRUS AND THE CONGREGATION

Meanwhile, several vaccines have been developed and have been approved to be used. Almost all Dutch brothers have received their first vaccination. In Oostakker (Belgium), all brothers have received their second vaccination. Brother Franklin Clemencia (Curacao) got his first vaccination on his birthday, and some brothers in Indonesia have been vaccinated as well.

In Brazil, the two oldest brothers have gotten their first vaccination. Moreover, the situation in Brazil is frightening. This can be blamed partly on the attitude of the current president. Especially, the news about Amazonia, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro is bad.

	infections	deaths
DR Congo	26.627	712
Brazil	11.051.665	266.398
Spain	3.160.970	71.436
Belgium	789.008	22.292
Netherlands	1.139.102	15.988
Indonesia	1.386.556	37.547
Ethiopia	167.133	2.442

*source : Johns Hopkins University Covid-19 Dashboard
Center for Systems Science and Engineering – 9-III-2021*

br. Ton Houdé

WEBSITE

The website of the general executive has received a makeover. This makeover was called for, since in the world of information technology, so much is happening, and is happening so fast, that a makeover of the website was necessary. This was also a good opportunity to adapt text and images to the current situation in the congregation. Blue was chosen as the basic colour of this makeover: this not only ensures recognizability, but this colour blue also ties in with the websites of other areas of the congregation (Brazil and Indonesia). This renewed website contains information about these areas, i.e. where the brothers are still present, but also where they lived and worked in the past. Also, the Newsletter of the general executive got a more prominent spot, and previous numbers are made available. One can subscribe to or unsubscribe from the digital version of this Newsletter (instead of the paper one) in the usual manner. Also, more emphatic attention is paid to the brothers who passed away during the previous few years. The website of the Dutch Province, at the request of the provincial executive, is accommodated and partly integrated in the remodeled website of the general executive.

In short, there are enough reasons to visit this website: www.broeders-olv-lourdes.org.

The makeover is not quite finished, but attempts are being made to keep the website up-to-date.

EASTER

Easter, the celebration of the Risen Lord, is near.

After Good Friday, after this great suffering, hope breaks through, and the Resurrection appears.

The disciples find it difficult to believe this.

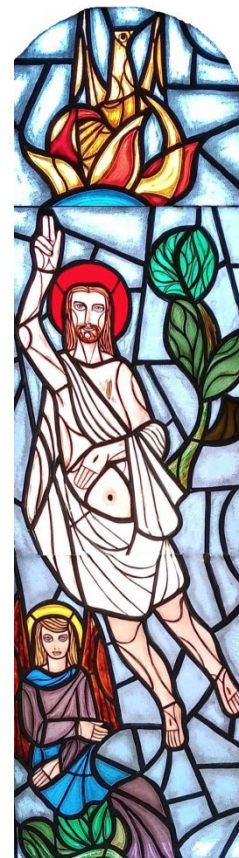
Perhaps we also find it difficult to believe that this suffering – being a part of life – and apparent failure, do not have the last word.

Let's join Mary Magdalene who saw the Lord and the "doubting" apostle Thomas, and become enthusiastic followers of Christ.

Wishing you a hopeful Easter

(br. Demetrius van de Pol, stained glass, chapel general house)

[translation, courtesy of br. Henk Gal (Eindhoven)]



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