

# NEWSLETTER GENERAL EXECUTIVE

## CONGREGATION OF THE BROTHERS OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

number 66, October 2021

### SADLY REMEMBERING THREE INDONESIAN BROTHERS

The Indonesian fellow-brothers, the congregation, and the general executive have had to deal, in a short period of time, with the passing of three fellow-brothers.

#### MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE, BROTHER NICO SIMANJUNTAK'S SUDDEN PASSING

Wholly unexpected, brother Nico passed away on August 14, 2021. Nico joined the congregation in 1977. He studied nursing at the university, and for many years he had a leadership role at the outpatient clinic at Desa Putera. Brother Nico got to be known as a good organizer, and as a friendly person in dealing with personnel and patients.



In the following years, he got other leadership functions, such as treasurer, secretary, and chairman of the Budi Mulia foundation. In 1998 he became a member of the general executive of the congregation, and moved to Oostakker. In 2001, he was elected for the function of provincial superior for Indonesia, and he served in that function until 2010. In that year, he was chosen as substitute for the general superior, and once again moved to Oostakker. Starting in 2013, he served as a member of the general executive living in Indonesia, combining this with being the director of the orphanage in Gentang (Solo, Java). In 2016, he was re-elected once again as a member of the general executive. He moved to Sumatra to become the director of the boarding school in Pangururan (Lake Toba). While taking part in sports with students, he became unwell, and passed away in the hospital.

Brother Nico, in addition to the Indonesian language, also spoke Dutch and English. In this way, he made many friends in Belgium and The Netherlands, and this helped him in creating an extensive network of people, among

them many expats who generously supported our social projects in Indonesia. He will continue to live on in memory as a good friend. He is buried in the cemetery of the brothers in Pematangsiantar.

#### TWO PIONEERS

With the death of Br. Hubertus Nadapdap, the congregation and the Indonesian province lost one of her prominent figures. Trained as a teacher, he moved to Brazil to reinforce the community of brothers there, among others as master of novices and member of the executive. His spontaneity, his sense of humor, also his care for the poor, were typical for him. After his return to Indonesia, this kind brother remained active especially in education and as a superior. During his final years, br. Hubertus, as a result of his sickness, became more and more restricted in his freedom of movement. He passed away on August 27, 2021.

We also had to say goodbye to brother Laurentius Sukartono. He was the second native provincial superior. He studied religion and catechesis. In addition to teaching, he was also involved for many years in

education and formation of candidate brothers. During his last years, his health left much to be desired, but he remained a person of service, a humble brother, who strongly held on to prayer and contemplation. He passed away on September 27, 2021.

*Br. Ton Houdé*

## THE NETHERLANDS

### THE PROCESS OF CHANGE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF BROTHERS

The Dutch provincial chapter of 2019 decided to change from province to district (analogous to the Belgian province that already in 2016 took the step in that direction), giving the executive of the Dutch province the authority to request this change from the general executive. The provincial executive has started this process, and the advice to set up a committee to facilitate this change-over was followed up by the provincial executive. In this process, the brothers of the Dutch province were intimately involved; also an appeal was made for the input from the KNR (Conference of Dutch Religious). After this process was completed, the general executive was informed of the request mentioned above, and also approved it as such. On December 8, 2021, the province will become a district, and the Dutch brothers will add a new chapter to their rich history of being a Dutch province for 111 years.

*Br. Ton Houdé*

### THEY LEFT US

During the past several months in The Netherlands, three brothers who have meant so much for the province, have passed away. Each one of them has left us a worthy legacy in his own distinct way and has lived his life in a unique way as a faithful brother of Glorieux. Br. Gerard Thissen died on April 6, Br. Antoine Ruttenberg passed away on July 1, and Br. Urbanus van Rooi died on August 18. An extensive "in memoriam" can be found on the congregational website ([www.broeders-olv-lourdes.org](http://www.broeders-olv-lourdes.org)).

### CORONA VIRUS AND THE CONGREGATION

During these last few weeks, normal life is coming back, i.e. in those countries where the rate of vaccination is high and the restrictions having been abolished (Belgium, The Netherlands, ...). News from Indonesia also gives hope. On the other hand, Brazil keeps fighting with high rates of infection, but vaccination is becoming a priority, finally.

	infections	death cases
<b>DR Congo</b>	57.198	1.087
<b>Brazil</b>	21.516.967	599.359
<b>Spain</b>	4.971.311	86.701
<b>Belgium</b>	1.261.102	25.675
<b>Netherlands</b>	2.021.433	18.204
<b>Indonesia</b>	4.227.932	142.651
<b>Ethiopia</b>	354.033	5.950
<b>Curacao</b>	16.684	168

*Source : World Health Organization 11 - X - 2021*

### DEVELOPMENTS ON OOSTAKKER

Preparations for the re-allocation of the former provincial headquarters are in full swing. The negotiations with *de Foyer* are ongoing to get permissions from the city administration of Ghent for the building of a full-fledged residential- and care center.

### BRAZIL

Br. Pedro Goossens passed away in Betim (Brazil) on June 26, 2021. There, he was a mainstay for the brothers for 54 years. The poor could count on him. His burial in Jordânia was touching. In Belgium, too, he



wasn't forgotten, as was shown during a touching celebration in the church of the Holy Cross in Zwijndrecht.

## ETHIOPIA

### REOPENING HEALTH CENTER

Thorough repair work was carried out in the Saint Gabriel Catholic Health Center in Addis Ababa. We told you about this in a previous message. Some sponsors (Heineken Ethiopia and some private sponsors from the USA) made this possible. The end of this job coincided with the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the health center. This was celebrated in the presence of many guests, including a ten-year old boy who was the first baby born at the center.



Representing the congregation were Mrs. Corine van Poppel, Br. Hugo Verhulst, and Br. Theo van den Boer. The latter gave the speech for this occasion. The archbishop of Addis Ababa, cardinal Berhaneyesus Demerew Souraphiel led the celebration.

### BEGINNING THE NOVITIATE, FIRST PROFESSION AND THE RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY VOWS

Wandimu Daka Kena started his first year of novitiate. Br. Dawit Abebe Shoro and Br. Yacob Zergaw renewed their temporary vows. Br. Duressa Tibebu (photo left) and Br. Temesgen Wandimu have made their first vows.



First vows.



The invited, together with the brothers in front of the brotherhouse.



## INDONESIA

### FIRST VOWS AND THE BEGINNING OF THE POSTULANCY

Two novices have made their first vows in Indonesia. This happened in the beginning of July according to tradition. Both brothers have now moved to their new location.

Meanwhile, three young men in Klepu have started their postulancy formation on September 1. They won't easily forget this time, because there are renovations taking place in the house of the postulants, and this means a lot of dust and lots of noise.



### A NEW HALL IN TUMBAJAE

Tumbajae (Mandumas) is located in the province of North Sumatra, where the brothers have an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school, inclusive a boarding school. With the support of the congregation, a multi-use hall has been built in Tumbajae. The solemn commissioning took place in the presence of the bishop. School, boarding school, parish, ... and the neighbourhood will be using this brand-new facility.



The marching band produces a musical spectacle at the festive opening of the multi-use building.



The bishop with his team, together with the brothers, in the newly painted large sports hall.

### REMEMBERING THE BROTHERS WHO PASSED AWAY

On November 1, the congregation remembers the brothers who passed away. A photo together with an in memoriam is found on the website of the congregation.

*[all translations, courtesy of Br. Henk Gal (Eindhoven)]*

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