

NEWSLETTER GENERAL EXECUTIVE

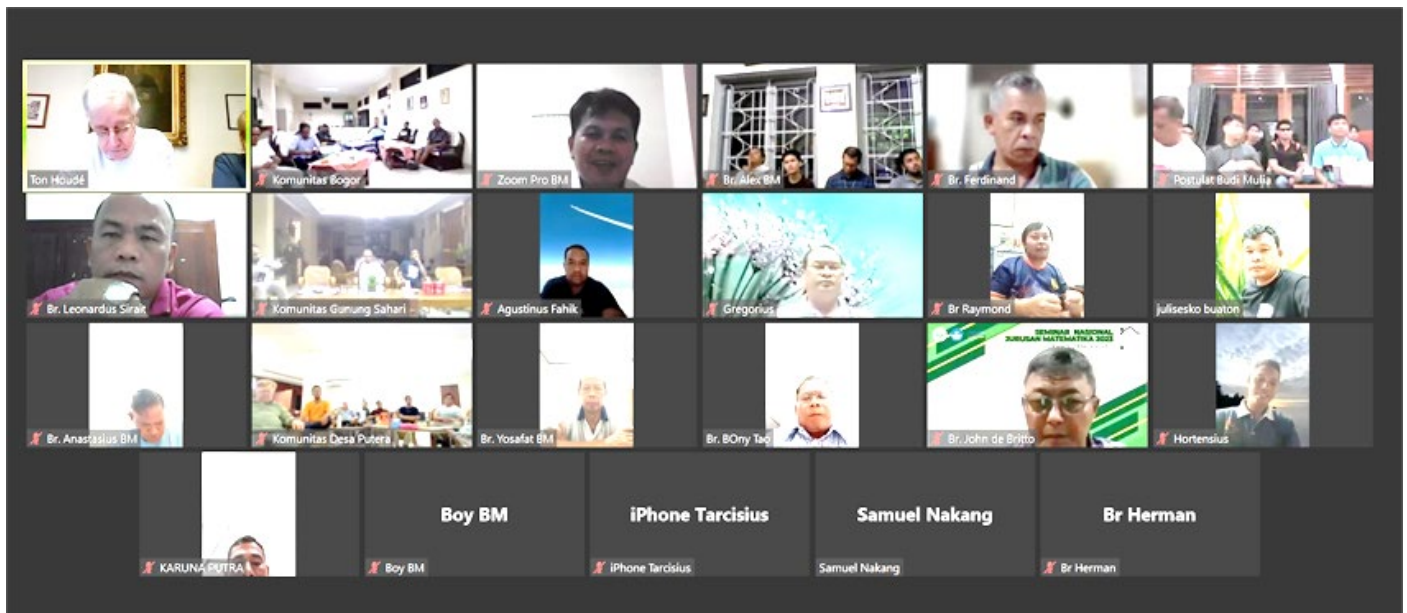
CONGREGATION OF THE BROTHERS OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

issue 77, December 2023

CELEBRATING TOGETHER (GLORIEUX)

November 25 is a special holiday for the entire congregation. Then the foundation of the congregation on November 25, 1830 is commemorated and the death of the founder Glorieux on November 25, 1872. At the request of the brothers in Indonesia, there was contact via Zoom on November 24 from the brothers there and the superior general. In addition to some inspiring thoughts expressed by Bro. Gregorius Suwardi (provincial superior of Indonesia) and brother Ton Houdé (superior general) there was an opportunity for spontaneous reactions and congratulations. A good initiative.

In Indonesia and Brazil, November 25 was mainly celebrated together with the projects (schools, social center for example). In Belgium together with the fellow residents of the Glorieux care campus and with the brothers who reside elsewhere, in the Netherlands with special attention to the brothers and sisters of the same founder, in Ethiopia with the brothers in the two communities together.



An impression during the Zoom session: all attendees appear together, shoulder to shoulder, some individually, others as a community of a convent such as Desa Putera. Whoever is speaking gets a yellow border.

ETHIOPIA



Two candidates have started an introductory period. They are given the opportunity to see whether their calling could be in our congregation. At the same time, they devote themselves to the study of English and Amharic, so that good communication with the others becomes possible.

BRAZIL



The roof of the chapel in the community of Betim was replaced, so that the chapel remains dry during heavy rainfall.

On February 2, a brother renews his temporary vows and becomes an aspiring postulant.

Two novice brothers prepare to pronounce their first vows on Saturday, 3 of February.

Br. Ton Houdé, who is going to visit the brothers in Brazil, will attend the occasion.

THE NETHERLANDS

Br. Wim van den Boom died on December 6. The funeral took place on Wednesday, December 13. It was an impressive farewell service, partly due to the content of the lectures, the homily, the short biography, the great interest and the songs, especially by Huub Oosterhuis and sung by the choir of which Wim had been a member. A very special service.

Br. Wim was the fifth brother to die this year in the Eindhoven community. A difficult task for the brothers left behind.



GENERAL EXECUTIVE IN BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS

Brothers Herman Yosef Gultom, Albert Komang and Hugo Fahik arrived at Zaventem from Indonesia on December 3 and they left again on December 17. Br. Franklin Clemencia had already arrived earlier and would later leave to and from Curaçao. Together with Bro. Ton Houdé, they form the General Executive of the congregation. Many meetings are held via Zoom, but the executive as a whole meets at least twice a year for a longer period. There are formal meetings, but there is also opportunity for informal consultation and brainstorming. In addition, the necessary visits were made and there was time for the brothers and the executives of district Belgium and the Dutch district.

The congregation's Way of Life was partially revised at the 2022 general chapter. All changes have now been approved by Rome and the revised Constitutions will be printed in four languages at the congregation's printing plant in Desa Putera, Indonesia.

The first preparations were made for holding congregational meetings in Indonesia in early 2026 and one of the celebrations of 100 years of congregation in Indonesia. (2026)



We received the warmest welcome from the sisters in Ronse. In the afternoon we visited Smetlede, the place where Glorieux was pastor in the last years of his life and where he died. The church is still there and looks good and very well maintained. The roof has been renovated, there are beautiful paintings and people regularly come to pray and light a candle. The church was in an Advent atmosphere and the nativity scene would soon be installed there. A large memorial plaque to Glorieux hangs on the outside wall. Due to a lack of priests, there are few eucharist celebrations in this church. Funerals and special celebrations are still held there. The key holder of the church is a former student of the Oostakker Normalschool.

The large parsonage where Glorieux lived and where he died still stands, but is in private hands.

In the Netherlands we stayed with the brothers in Eindhoven for four days. It was a good opportunity to get in touch with the brothers there. We also attended the funeral and burial of Bro. Wim at the brother cemetery in Dongen.

In Sint Agatha we visited the archives of many congregations in the Netherlands. It is located in an old monastery of the Crosiers. The archives of the Dutch province/district are also stored there. We received an extensive tour and had the opportunity to exchange ideas about how our archive will be handled in the future.

On December 14, the General Executive met with the board of the Good Works Glorieux Foundation. It was good to get to know each other, to indicate who does what and what questions there are about the future.

In the afternoon we met the chairman and treasurer of the Panti Asuhan foundation. The foundation is located in Utrecht and mainly tries to support projects in Indonesia. In the past, Bro. Nico Simanjuntak has a lot of contact with them. They recently visited Indonesia and came into contact with Bro. Herman Yosef in Desa Putera. The meeting was very cordial and gives hope for fruitful cooperation in the future.

The Eindhoven community organized a farewell evening for the guests. Very attentive and pleasant.



Br. Albert Alit and br. Fons van der Laan in Eindhoven.



Farewell evening in the decorated living room of brotherhouse Depoorter.

The next morning, the General Executive met with the Executive of Dutch District to learn about mutual well-being and future plans. This had already happened in Belgium with the Belgian District Executive.

In the afternoon we visited the Daughters of Mary and Joseph in Den-Bosch. Sr. Victoria Wahyu from Indonesia is the superior of the convent. She and a staff member of the sisters were able to give us information about what is involved in coming from Indonesia to the Netherlands as a religious. This can also be important for our congregation.

Br. Ton Houdé

WISHES FOR A NEW AND GOOD YEAR

A child in a manger in a stable.
A loving ox and an attentive donkey.
Joseph, a vigilant father.

Maria, a mother who wonders
what is about to happen.
The Scriptures are on her lap.
What is asked of her and her child?

Here the foundations are laid
for the Kingdom of God:
simplicity, trust, devotion, love.

**The general executive wishes you all
a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.**



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