

# NEWSLETTER GENERAL EXECUTIVE

## CONGREGATION OF THE BROTHERS OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

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### WITH THE BROTHERS IN BRAZIL

At the end of January, the Superior General left for Brazil and on 14 February he was back in Oostakker. It was seven hours later than scheduled, due to a technical problem with the plane in São Paulo. This in turn resulted in the connecting flight in Madrid being missed, etc. In the end, everything worked out.

A visit in December or January of the year is not obvious, because those are the months of the summer holidays in Brazil, we are in the southern hemisphere. Moreover, we had to watch out in Brazil. Especially in the state of Minas Gerais, where most of the brothers live, a number of dangerous diseases are emerging. Dengue fever is one of them. The causative agent is the Egyptian mosquito, which is mainly found in stagnant water. Maybe next year there will be a vaccination against it.

At the beginning of February, two brothers would take their first vows, one brother would renew his vows, and an aspirant would start as a postulant. Surely a good reason to attend.

Also on the program were: a conversation with each brother, if possible a discussion with each community, a discussion with the executive of the pro-province of Brazil, some courtesy visits, sometimes some business consultations and contacts with and conversations about the projects.

On February 2, the aspirant Jone was accepted as a postulant. He was given a year to find out if the brotherly life was something for him. He is handed the Bible as a symbol, because every Christian life should be based on God's Word.

Bro. Guilherme renewed his temporary vows for three years. He is from Betim, his family lives close to the brothers, and his parents were present. The ceremony took place in a hall of the Social Centre. The chapel of the brothers has been thoroughly renovated and is not yet completely finished. Thence. In the photo, Bro. Guilherme made the temporary vows for three years in front of Brother Ton. In the background Bro. Heládio (Provincial Superior) and the new postulant Jone.



The next evening, Brothers Arison and Fábio took vows for the first time. This happened in one of the parish churches. The parish now has six churches. Only the first vows and the vows for life are taken in such a church. It underlines the public nature of those events.

As symbols, Arison and Fábio were presented with the profession cross and the profession.



*Bro. Arison in the presence of his mother.*



*Bro. Fábio with one of his two sisters.*

It was a meaningful and stylish ceremony. Arison's mother and two sisters and a brother-in-law of Fábio were present. Long journeys are quite normal in a country like Brazil. Two days and two nights on the bus are not exceptional.

The ceremony was followed by a simple but tasty meal for the guests in the nearby Glorieux Social Centre. The party cake that you can see in the photo at the end provided the closing.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of February, Bro. Heládio and Bro. Ton visited Bro. Herbert de Gier in the village called Rosal in the State of Rio de Janeiro. When we arrived around six o'clock in the evening, the house was crawling with faithful people from the village. Homemade birthday day cakes had been brought in in large quantities: it was the birthday of Bro. Herbert (81 years old). As a priest, Bro. Herbert still takes care of the Eucharistic celebrations and other services in three villages. Given the sympathy of his parishioners, he did so to everyone's satisfaction.

Betim (450,000 inhabitants) is home to the Glorieux training house and social centre. The latter has been functioning for 22 years. Courses are given (computer science, cutting and sewing, cooking courses, painting), personal guidance (psychological counseling, among others), sports and games (movement for the elderly, dance, indoor football, volley, teak wondo, judo, etc.). In a disadvantaged neighbourhood, opportunities for development are offered, people come into contact with each other and discover their own possibilities.





In Jordânia (a small town 850 km to the north in the economically underdeveloped valley of the Jequitinhonha River) there is a permanent residence for elderly people in need of care. Brothers Vando, Guilherme and Fábio work there. Given the relatively high expenses and low income, it is quite a headache to keep this project going.



*The masked singer lives in Jordânia, and there's no escape from her.*



*Folia do Lar Glorieux, freely translated, it's going to be really mad. Obviously, there is no age limit for having a ball!*

This period also saw the fall of the carnival. February 11 was the Sunday of Carnival. In the social centre of Betim, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes was therefore postponed by a week. The feast itself was celebrated on Sunday, and on the three preceding evenings there was a triduum. There was always a Eucharistic celebration in honour of Our Lady in preparation for the solemnity on 18 February, which was celebrated in the sports hall of the social centre. After the celebration there was time to eat and drink. The proceeds went to the social centre.



*The brothers and the postulant (3<sup>rd</sup> f.l.) at the reception after the profession.*

*Bro. Ton Houdé*

## IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE ROOM?



Bro. (Polikarpus) Arifin joined the Congregation in 2008. In 2011 he made his first profession in Lawang, East Java. After his profession, he accepted a temporary work assignment in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. For a year he worked there as a pharmacist at the Health Center in Kality. As you have known for a long time by now, this health centre depends on the archdiocese. The administration is in the hands of a team appointed by the General Executive of the Congregation. The majority of the operating funds come from the Congregation, from the Good Works Foundation Glorieux and from important sponsors from abroad.

In 2013 he returned to Indonesia and started working in Desa Putera. In 2014, he had the opportunity to study medicine at Krida Wacana Christian University in Jakarta (<https://ukrida.ac.id>). There, he first obtained a bachelor's degree in medicine in 2018. He continued his medical education. In 2021, he received the title of doctor. He completed his training with a one-year internship program at the regional general hospital in Ende on the island of Flores. After completing this internship period, Bro. Arif, is the first brother with the doctor-general practitioner diploma in the congregation.

Currently, Bro. Arif works as a general practitioner at the Melania Bruderan Clinic in Bogor. Melania Bruderan Bogor Clinic is a primary care outpatient clinic, which means that you can go there for various simple medical procedures.

This outpatient clinic has a whole range of employees: four doctors-general practitioners, including Bro. Arif, along with five nurses, one obstetrician, two health analysts, a radiologist, an acupuncturist, and a family pharmacist. The secretariat consists of two people who keep the medical records, and there is also the support staff (maintenance, etc.). People can also go there for tailor-made TB treatments, and as an extra service, exercise activities for the elderly are also organised.



*Bro. Albert Komang Alit*

## NEW WAY OF LIFE (RULE)

In 2022, the General Chapter adopted the necessary changes to the Congregation's Way of life. In 2023, Rome studied the proposed changes, and after some clarifications, all the changes were approved by Rome. Then the final translations were made and the Rule could be printed. This was done at the brothers' factory in Desa Putera, Indonesia. In the end, shipping also worked.

During this period, the adapted Way of life is offered to the brothers.

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