



Viator Web

NEWSBRIEF OF THE GENERAL DIRECTION

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Message from the Superior General

The Church as a “Samaritan” Community

The expression in the title above comes from the Superior General of the Marist Brothers, who professes it as a deep conviction after attending the last Synod on New Evangelization as a means of transmitting the Christian faith. At the same time, he admits his concern regarding the second part of the Synod’s theme. And, finally, he concludes that all of that proves to be very indicative of a new reality rooted in present-day ways of living: faith is transmitted by contagion. Do we not indeed find in that the principal idea that the Synod Fathers communicated to the Holy Father with a view to an eventual post-synodal exhortation – that is, that only an encounter with Jesus Christ makes it possible to engage in the process of a New Evangelization?

The biblical image of the Samaritan Woman is very appropriate, suggesting, as it does, certain fundamental attitudes: knowing how to sit at someone’s side; how to spend time with someone; how to listen with authenticity and interest; how to enter into genuine dialogue; how to welcome someone unconditionally without judging or condemning him or her; how to reflect with people through the witness of one’s life without coming to a final conclusion. In a word, how to let the Spirit act!

The message to the People of God coming forth from the Synod Fathers expresses those same convictions by calling the Church to humility, availability, conversion, and authenticity. Let us permit the Spirit to evangelize while we develop the conditions necessary for encountering the Living One.

A “Samaritan” community is one that recalls Jesus’ response to that thirsty woman who came to the well in search of water:

Believe me, woman, that the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. But the hour is coming – and is already here – when true believers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth (John 4:21-23).

Continuation of The Church as a “Samaritan” Community

The New Evangelization encourages people to go further in space and in time. Religions must move in the direction of men and women who are already searching for happiness and meaning and, wherever they might be, facilitate encounters with Jesus Christ.

The New Evangelization also calls upon the Church to which we belong not only to offer Christ to others, but also to meet Christ already in action in our world – perhaps even in astonishing ways!

The second challenge is that of time. Keeping God in the past means denying God. *The hour is coming ... and is already here!* God’s very best meets us *hic et nunc*. Evangelizing does not call us to speak in God’s name in the present tense, acting in the here and now, and to follow the recitation of a promise that will be able to extend the horizons of our vision to the dimensions of our history. It opens us up immediately to the future!

The Church as a “Samaritan” Community is truly dependent upon a New Evangelization.

News Briefs

Official Photo

The official photograph of the Superior General is now available. In order to reduce mailing costs, the photograph was sent electronically to the superior of each country, who is responsible for having copies printed up and distributed among the various local communities.

If necessary, you can communicate directly with Brother Claude Gariépy at c.m.gariepy@gmail.com



Election of the Foundation Council in Peru

During the Foundation Assembly held at the beginning of November, the Peru Viatorians re-elected Brother David Cuenca Chamorro as superior. At the same time, Brother Ronald Guerra Lavi and Father Bernard Paquette were re-elected as councilors. We offer our congratulations to those three confreres and thank them for their spirit of availability in assuming that pastoral responsibility.

Past, Present, and Future

- From November 22nd to 25th, Father Harry Célestin, the Vicar General, participated in the “Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation” formation workshop in Rome.
- From November 21st to 23rd, Father Alain Ambeault, the Superior General, took part in the annual assembly of the Union of Superiors General of Men. Included on the agenda were the themes of the Synod on New Evangelization, during which the participants had the benefit of training sessions given by an economist to help them

better understand the current global economic crisis as a sign of the times for the Church and the ministry that we exercise.

- From December 9th to 12th, Father Alain Ambeault and Brother Carlos Ernesto Flórez, General Councilor, will participate in the international congress on “*Ecclesia in America.*” Commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the Synodal Assembly for the Americas, that meeting will strive to go more deeply into the theme of New Evangelization on the American continent.
- The Extraordinary General Council (the Provincial Superiors of Canada, the United States, Chile, and Spain; the Superior of the Delegation of France; and the five members of the General Council) will meet in Arlington Heights from January 22 to 29, 2013. That meeting will specify the follow-up steps to be given to the Chapter Decisions made last summer.
- The General Council will make its first pastoral visit in Burkina Faso. From February 25th to March 11th, the five members of the General Council will travel to the “country of integral persons” in order to experience the evolution of that Viatorian foundation and to share with the Viatorians in that African country. In addition to meetings with each local community, the General Council intends to meet with the foundation council and with the bishops of the dioceses in which we are living and working, as well as with all the commissions that provide structure for the life and mission of the Burkina Faso Community.

Perpetual Profession

Our heartiest congratulations to Brother Cirilo Alarcón Ramos, who made his perpetual profession on November 11, 2012, in the Parish Church of Christ, the Son of God, in Collique, Comas (Peru).

Commitments of Viatorian Associates

In Canada, two new Viatorian Associates made their commitments on September 16th: Mr. Jacques Blais and Mrs. Agathe Brazeau. In Japan, on November 4th: Mr. Shinichiro Ito.

Three others made their definitive commitments on September 16th in Canada: Mr. Claude Boulais, Mrs. Wanda Batko-Boulais and Mr. Gilles Gravel. Mr. Robert Hénault renewed for three years .

To each and every one of them, we offer our heartiest congratulations!

Commended to Our Prayers

- Brother Julián Ortiz de Mendivil (Spain) died on October 14, 2012, at the age of 80 and in his 63rd year of religious profession.
- Mrs. Marie Segal (U.S.A.) died on October 25, 2012, at the age of 83 and in her 7th year of commitment as an Associate.
- Brother Juan Martín Gainzaraín (Spain) died on November 5, 2012, at the age of 91 and in his 76th year of religious profession.

For Our Reflection

We are educators.

Our history provides ample proof of that fact, given both the number and the importance of the educational institutions that we have had over the years – and for which we are still responsible. We are also educators by reason of our different pastoral commitments.

Since the beginning, our educational mission in the scholastic world has been a major part of the definition of what we strive to accomplish. Viatorians are involved in education on all of its levels.

What are the convictions that are held in the hearts of educators today. **Viator Web** has asked several of them to share with us.

Ángeles Salgado
Viatorian Associate
Spain

“We Viatorians are co-responsible for this mission and we strive to carry it out through our work at Saint Viator School and in other pastoral, professional, and domestic tasks.”

Filled with hopes and joy, I began this work at Saint Viator School in Valladolid. While, in certain circumstances, we might think that things happen accidentally, I do not believe that things happen by accident. There is always a “why.”



Beginnings are filled with hopes and dreams, with an awareness of and a responsibility for carrying out your work. It is there, in a classroom, enthused with “my children,” that I found my “why.”

Over the course of these years, realities have greatly changed in our milieux and education is an important sector that has gone from one extreme to the other. That has meant – and continues to mean – a challenge for all educators, since neither teaching, nor children, nor families are “like they used to be.”

But my reflection still travels along a single axis: if I am in the place where I am supposed to be, I must give everything that I have, whatever the reality might be. It is there that we recognize the vocational dimension of our profession. That does not mean that we will never be faced with our personal crises, but I believe that crises are important since each crisis helps us to move forward.

When all is said and done, my conclusion is that the students, the teachers, and the families that I have... are the very best.

Every day, “my school” teaches me, angers me, disgusts me, enchants me, smiles at me, and enthuses me.

Brother Carlos Peña
Viatorian Religious
Chile

I have consecrated my twenty-five years of religious life to working in education, with the last fifteen years being devoted to directing Viatorian Schools. Over those years, I have strongly founded my life on the following beliefs:

Jesus Christ, in spite of my weaknesses, has called me and invited me to be a disciple and a missionary.

Faith is a treasure in my life. I must nourish that faith, but I must also make it known, challenge it, and help it to grow in the educational communities in which we work.

The educational program of a Catholic School is a program that humanizes and helps to bring about a society that is more just and in which people live as brothers and sisters.



A Catholic School is not only a pastoral setting, but also an instrument for evangelization. Every aspect of culture must be challenged by the Gospel.

A good school makes a difference for children and young people. A good Catholic School provides its students with even more and better means for leading a good life.

Men and women need people to accompany them, to listen to them, and to hold up ideals for a “fuller” life – which, for a Christian, means life in Christ.

Schools provide a privileged means for carrying out the mission of the Congregation of Saint Viator: forming communities where faith is lived, celebrated, and deepened.

Rob Robertson
Viatorian Religious
United States

My name is Rob Robertson, C.S.V., and I have been a Viatorian educator for thirty-two years. I spent my first seven years teaching as a layman in a Viatorian school. For the last twenty-five years, I have taught as a religious.

As confirmed by a number of persons whom I have met over the course of my career, our scholastic institutions have a very special identity. That identity is reflected in the values that lie at the heart of our educational endeavors here in the United States.

I have taught in three of our secondary schools and, in each of them, those values were present. Our teachers

encourage the importance of intellectual independence, which permits students to develop their own personal identity. Both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities, they help to form a strong character and genuine confidence in oneself.

As a school community, we come together frequently to celebrate our Catholic identity and to keep ourselves centered on the Gospel. We accentuate the importance of being a community that is inspired by its educational mission, as well as by the wider community.



Thus, all are very much aware that they have been called by God as they find their roles in life. Those are the Viatorian values that can be recognized in our graduates. Those are the values that have motivated by teaching career for thirty-two years.

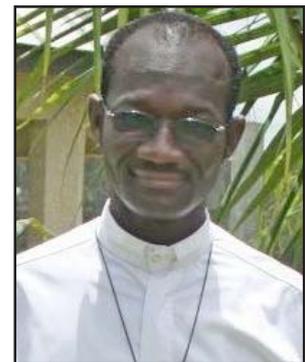
I consider it a blessing to be able to keep in contact with many graduates of our different schools. Those graduates always tell me that our mission has been fruitful, since they have assimilated those values into their own lives. Our graduates are genuine Viatorians who live out the Gospel of Jesus. Because of that, we can take pride in being Viatorian educators.

Macaire Sandouidi
Viatorian Religious
Burkina Faso

Education in general – and schools in particular – suffer from many problems in Burkina Faso. According to the government, education is free and obligatory for those aged 16 and under. In reality, however, only some 44% of children attend school.

And even fewer Burkina Faso young people receive a secondary education. While there are three universities (Ouagadougou, Koudougou, and Bobo-Dioulasso), only 2.4% of the population receives a college education.

We Viatorians cannot remain indifferent when confronted with that reality. For us, educating means building the future. That future is not only personal, but also national and continental. That is why we need Christian educators committed to a new Africa. We must respond to our identity as educators – and especially Christian educators – where we live and work. In fact, African youth are in dire need of models and of a culture of justice and peace, since many countries are experiencing socio-political tensions. The worst part is that the victims of those conflicts are poor innocent people. We must take in hand our commitment to those who are accounted



of least importance. We must fight against poverty by being sensitive to the situation of the poor in our schools. Many people would like to avail themselves of our services, but their lack of economic means frustrates their desire. Educating poor persons today means giving them a way to escape from their poverty. I believe in the future of young people. I believe that that future is dependent upon a good education. I believe that a good education demands that we Viatorians be educators committed to a new Africa.

Educating means building the future. That challenge must pay particular attention to girls and young women. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, they are still excluded from the world of education, with 65% of African women remaining illiterate. Even when they do go to school, there are still a large number of young women who fail in – or abandon – their studies before the end of the first cycle. But, women are those who educate children, who transmit to them rules, common values, and basic knowledge. Women are those who teach children social skills. Women are those who stimulate children's intelligence, curiosity, and creativity.

We must accentuate the legitimate right of women and girls to receive an education. That is a democratic principle.

Ronald Guerra Lavi
Viatorian Religious
Peru

Education – an Opportunity that we must all have

I begin by re-affirming: *“I do not know how to think; I only know how to love!”* That is why I wish to spend my life *in love* and *in service*.



The spirit of service is, in me, a constant attitude of loving all people in the same way. Without measuring time and with risking everything, so that the mustard seed can grow in every heart. In a concrete way, on the faces and expressions of children, young people, teachers, and parents, and also in each of my brothers, the Clerics of Saint Viator.

All of them teach me to raise up communities where faith is lived, deepened, and celebrated – a faith that transforms, builds up, and enriches; a faith that invites me to a love of life in order to cherish and to love in freedom.

Education is a process of maturing accompanied by learning, without there being any need to make a complex choice. It is a natural and spontaneous process. Education is a planned and intentional development, as John Dewey once said: *“Knowledge is not something that is separate and self-sufficient, but that is enveloped in the process through which life is sustained and developed.”*

Those are my convictions inspired by my faith. I continue growing in them as a Viatorian Brother and an educator.