



Diary of the Chapter

31th General Chapter of the Augustinians of the Assumption
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The New General Team Is Almost Complete



The Superior General has been elected and the Assistants as well. The General Officers will come later. The Superior General, **Richard Lamoureux**, (NA) was re elected Friday.

One of the General Assistants, **Julio Navarro** (Chile), was re elected Saturday morning.

Today, Monday, two new Assistants were elected: **Andre Brombard** (South Belgium) and **Emmanuel Kahindo** (Africa).

To complete the team, two General Officers need to be elected: the Secretary General and the Bursar General.

In fact, on Saturday, the Chapter decided that the General Team would be composed of "three full time Assistants and two General Officers, who could also be Assistants".

The suspense is about to end... tomorrow or the day after.

"Many Gifts in one body"



“The Superior General must be an agent of unity.”

Your reelection is not quite a surprise. Did you expect it?

It is true that during the past six years I have sensed a certain amount of sympathy from the Congregation but in an election there is always in one way or another, a judgment. I wanted this Chapter to feel free and I was happy that some ballots went to other religious.

Speaking of the six years (1999 – 2005) of your first mandate as Superior General, you said that these were for you a “positive experience”. Can you be more explicit?

During these years I discovered cultures I did not know well or not at all. For example, I had never been either to Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo) or Madagascar. As time went by, I became aware of the complexity of the situations. Moreover, I had but a vague perception of what the Oriental Mission could be. I remember a visit to Plovdiv, Bulgaria. During the whole trip by car, Petar Ljubas, the superior, told me what the orient and what the oriental liturgy, spirituality and theology meant for him. I am “structurally” a Westerner. But I am more and more convinced that we have to learn how to “breathe with both lungs”.

Another richness of these past six years has been all the encounters I had with the religious. They were humanly and spiritually very profound. Sometimes I asked myself, “Why are they telling me all this? Their pains, their trials, their convictions and their hopes?” “Because,” they would answer, “You are the Superior General and you have a right to know.” The seniors as well as the younger ones. Also I was happy to discover anew this relation through dialogue that I had tried to cultivate in Worcester. ▶

Julio Navarro (62) **A passion for formation**

Julio Navarro was born June 23, 1942 in Santiago, Chile. He was ordained in 1966. After his studies in Philosophy at Louvain, Belgium, he taught philosophy in various institutes, universities and



seminaries in his country. At the same time, he was very involved in ministry to the poor. He became interested in popular religiosity and tried to understand its diverse aspects and many manifestations as observed in the Marian shrines, with fishermen, in song and poetry.

At the age of 33, he was appointed Provincial Superior and remained at that post for 15 years: nine from 1974 to 1983 then again for another six year term from 1989 to 1995. During that time he maintained contacts with the young in the houses of formation. These years were especially difficult under the Pinochet regime and

with some mistrust from Rome. Nevertheless, Julio assumed a number of responsibilities on the national level as President of the Conference of men and women Religious and on a continental level as Vice President of CLAR, the Latin American Confederation of Women Religious.

Elected Assistant General at the last General Chapter of 1999, he admits that it has been “a rich experience of internationality with some moments of exaltation and frustration.” Nevertheless, he accepted to serve once more. “I would like,” he says, “to be involved in formation and with the lay people.”

Andre Brombart (63) **An Unusual Itinerary**



Born in Belgium on April 2, 1942, Andre Brombart did not follow the usual itinerary of the Assumptionists of his generation. He was brought up in an agnostic milieu. After receiving his Doctorate in Law at the age of 22 from the “Universite libre” of Brussels, he worked as legal counsel ▶

◀ **What are your best souvenirs?**

Lunch with Pope John Paul II in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, in May 2002 on the occasion of the beatification of our three martyred brothers.

But what I think struck me most, were the Canonical Visits I made throughout the world. Apart from a few cases, I have met all the religious (about 800) at least once for profound conversations of more than one hour often two. I think that the Canonical Visits took a quarter of my time (1.5 years full time over six years).

It is an enormous investment.

I also appreciated the team work. It too took quite a long time. We had two months of council meetings per year, that is altogether a full year on a six year mandate. These periods were often both agreeable and intense. Particularly when we started to speak about fundamental questions: Africa, the Oriental Mission, Formation, Vocations, requests for the final vows or priesthood, the preparation of the General Chapter.

What about your most difficult moments?

When I felt that the exchange was in a deadlock. That I couldn't understand the other person and that he couldn't understand me. Then I would feel really alone. It is true to say that the responsibility in itself presupposes a certain solitude. The relationships may be good but with the Superior General there is always some distance.

On some projects, would have liked to go further and quicker?

I feel that the Provinces are still too separated. There is still too much hesitation, too much fear. At the same time, I feel the will to go further. I have observed that two situations favor transparency: when you care for the other and when you need the other.

After six years of experience, what do you think a Superior General is?

He is someone who animates, that is, someone who cares about the soul, who reminds the religious and the communities what is their *raison d'être*, the one which gives meaning to their lives. That is how we will be agents of unity.

We have done 2/3ds of the Chapter and are about to start the third week.

It is a very important moment. I am expecting much from the work of the Commission for Synthesis to help us discern the red thread which has been formed throughout the preparatory work and these two weeks so that we can inform the whole Congregation.

I think that we have adopted the right process. We have taken time to listen to each other, to work on the questions and to be attentive to the results.

The week with the lay people was also very rich. We have to take them into consideration on all levels. In fact, it is the meaning of the [message](#) I have just sent them.

for a major Belgian insurance company. An avid reader and traveler, he never ceased his search for spiritual meaning. Having come almost by chance to pray at the Maranatha community in Brussels, he was touched "by the simplicity and the fraternal attitude of the people". He contacted the Assumptionists at the Maranatha community and was baptized in 1980 at the age of 38.

The following year, he became a member of the Maranatha community and a few months later, entered the novitiate. He studied phi-

losophy and theology at Brussels and at the Catholic University of Lille, France. He was ordained in 1987.

He was soon named Assistant to the Provincial of South Belgium and remained an active member of the Maranatha community. He is currently the director of the house of prayer of Banneux, Belgium, and Editor in Chief of the journal, "Bonne Nouvelle". He is one of the few Assumptionists who is fluent in the four official languages of the Congregation: French, English, Flemish and Spanish.

Emmanuel Kahindo (40) **The youngest**

Emmanuel was born a few days before Christmas, December 21, 1965, in the Diocese of Butembo, in the eastern section of the



Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). After studying Philosophy and Theology, he was sent as a missionary to the Ivory Coast (1989-1990). He then began his studies in Rome (3 years) and in Jerusalem (almost one year) with a specialty in Scripture. Upon returning to his home Province of Africa, he gave courses and was in charge of formation. In the latter position, he traveled extensively in Africa and

abroad to participate in various international meetings with young people as well as with formators, especially with reference to the "Ratio".

Somewhat intimidated but aware of the encouragement from his brothers and sustained by a team, the youngest Assistant was overheard saying: "I'm going back to school."

One of his passions is, believe it or not, ancient languages!