



Ministers of the Infirm

# Newsletter

Camillian world seen from Rome, and Rome seen from the world

N. 93



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Message of the Superior General

**May 25:**

**Anniversary of the birth of St. Camillus and Day of the Camillian martyrs of charity**

Dear confreres,

Peace and joy in the Risen Lord!

The Easter period we are experiencing reminds us that Jesus has conquered death. This good news that has revolutionized the world and gives us all hope of eternal life, transforms us in such a way that our entire existence becomes an Easter experience to the praise and glory of our Risen Lord Jesus.

Our Camillian ministry is also an expression of the Easter experience: when pain and suffering abound, we become faithful companions on the journey and humble witnesses of hope.

Strong in our fourth vow, “to serve the sick even at the risk of our own lives,” we do our best to open the hearts of men and women to the Easter light. Our Institute is, as St. Camillus said, a foundation “very necessary to Christianity, very much in line with the holy Gospel and the doctrine of Christ our Lord; he underlines this mission so much in the



Old as in the New Testament also with the example of his most holy life spent caring for the sick and healing every kind of disease” (Testament Letter).

Therefore, blessed is the one who will consume their life in this holy service. It is not merit but only pure grace that has fascinated many of our predecessors whom we commemorate on every May 25th as martyrs of charity. In fact, the charism recognized by the Church in St. Camillus and which we profess with that special vow, carries within it that special grace to assist the suffering neighbour even to the point of giving one’s life.

Since the beginning of our history, Camillus and his companions have distinguished themselves not only by serving the sick but above all by serving them in difficult and prohibitive circumstances such as in plagues. With great courage, many of them lost their lives translating that fourth vow into action. Throughout the history that has been passed down to us, the Camillians, in the Church and in the world, have always held in honour that “so precious talent that our Lord has placed in our hands” and that we also profess and live as one of the most important treasures of our Order.

It must be guarded and transmitted with the necessary enrichments specific to our time, just as we have received it. This belongs to the conviction,

responsibility, and generous testimony of each of us who, “moved by the Spirit and believing in the love of God, embrace the charism of mercy towards the sick,” according to our formula of profession.

Dear confreres, on the anniversary of the birth of our founder and the commemoration of our martyrs of charity, my personal gratitude and that of the entire Consulta go to each of you for your Camillian consecration and for the daily commitment you undertake for the holy service of the sick.

To each of you, to the lay collaborators, and to the young people who continue to embrace our charism, St. Camillus continues to send his “thousand blessings.” May his intercession and the protection of the Virgin Mary, health of the sick, sustain in you the strength and joy of being simply and convincingly Camillians.

Fr. Pedro Tramontin MI  
Superior General

Rome, 30th April, 2024

## A significant relic “returns home”!

By **Fr. Walter Vinci MI**  
*General Postulator*

**T**he relics of the Saints have always been held in great veneration by Christians, and the Magisterium has always been concerned with promoting and ensuring the cult of the Saints and their relics.

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, on December 8, 2017, published the Instruction on Relics in the Church: Authenticity and Conservation, which states: “Relics in the Church have always received particular veneration and attention because the bodies of the Blessed and the Saints, destined for resurrection, were on earth the living temple of the Holy Spirit and the instrument of their holiness, recognized by the Apostolic See through Beatification and Canonization.”

“Relics direct us to God Himself: it is He, indeed, who, with the power of His grace, grants frail beings the courage to testify to Him before the world. By inviting us to venerate the mortal remains of martyrs and saints, the Church does not forget that, ultimately, they are indeed poor human bones, but bones that belonged to persons visited by the living Power of God.

The relics of the saints are traces of that invisible but real presence that illuminates the darkness of the world, manifesting the Kingdom of heaven that is within us” (Benedict XVI, Address to the Youth at World Youth Day,



***This relic tells the love story of St. Camillus De Lellis for his Lord, whom he encountered daily in the face of the sick brother.***

Cologne, August 18, 2005). Relics tell a story, narrate the plots of lives lived in the image of Christ, for the founding saints narrate the story of a charism. They are not objects of collecting, nor are they objects of exchange, nor “trophy” to be raised as a sign of victory, but the story of men and women madly in love with God, who gave their lives for this immense love.

Relics are for us a “provocation”, because they refer to the lives of the saints who lived in such a way that

their lives would make no sense if God did not exist. Sanctified by the Love that possesses their hearts, their activities in favor of humanity are not so much proof of their love for God as the Love itself that comes from God, which uses the energies of their humanity to pour itself out into the world.

Also for us Camillians, this relic tells the love story of St. Camillus De Lellis for his Lord, whom he encountered daily in the face of the sick brother.



In the mid-1970s, one of our Camillian confreres, Fr. Arturo Gionta, transferred from Messina to Bologna, brought with him this important relic: an original habit of St. Camillus De Lellis, kept in the third right altar in the chapel/sanctuary of Our Lady of the Rain, at Via Tanari Vecchia No. 7, right in the heart of the city of Bologna. In 2007, the community was suppressed, and this important relic was left inside the aforementioned church.

This year, as an Order, we remember the third centenary of the foundation of Santa Maria Maddalena, where the relics of St. Camillus De Lellis are venerated, a favorable time to welcome this relic, which reminds us of the journey of St. Camillus, from dissolute man to saint of the sick.

Therefore, we deemed it appropriate to formally request from the Archdiocese of Bologna



the transfer of this relic and its relocation to Rome. A careful conservatory restoration of the relic was carried out, which presented slight dust infiltrations, altered color due to exposure to light and washings.

The fabric was wrinkled due to the folds acquired during the period it was stored, in some areas it had decomposed leaving gaps, some seams were completely torn.

The restoration was preceded by a careful study of its packaging to verify that it had not been tampered with or readapted in the subsequent period. In this case, no posthumous interventions are visible. After careful removal of the dust using a micro-aspirator, efforts were made to restore the original shape by moistening the fabric with distilled water vaporization and subsequent ironing and laying flat of the fabric.

The consolidation of degraded areas was carried out by repairing all the gaps, inserting fabric similar to the original, the detached fragments were reinserted with the help of a canvas support on the inner part fixed with thermal fabric glue, all the edges of the gaps and inserts and the sewn parts were fixed with needle and thread stitching and darning. Finally, the Latin cross in red fabric similar to the original was reinserted. Lastly, a general “fitting” was performed with careful ironing and composition of the garment so that it could be displayed on a mannequin.



This relic can be further enhanced with its new location (inside the museum of the General Curia), it integrates our founding heritage, continues to narrate the love story of St. Camillus for the sick, and can be venerated by the many pilgrims who visit and entrust themselves to our “giant of charity”.

The relic of St. Camillus’ habit derives its meaning from what Paul affirms in the letter to the Colossians “Clothe yourselves

with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Col 3:12-14). Without this reference, the same charity of St. Camillus would not be explained: “a charity that proceeded from God and returned to God through the love of neighbour, especially the poor sick whom he saw as the very image of his Lord”.

The hope is that this relic invites us to be and to become saints. “Holiness is the most beautiful face of the Church” (Pope Francis) and St. Camillus De Lellis testifies to us the beauty of this holiness, as even today, he highlights some dimension of the beauty of the Lord Jesus and points out to us a path of holiness, a true prophetic gift to the Church.





## Gathering of the Superior Generals and General Councilors of the Camillian Religious Institutes

**A significant moment of synodality as an expression of our common desire to witness to Camillian charism and spirituality**

By **Fr. Medard Aboue MI**  
*General Councilor for Ministry*

**O**n Saturday, April 20, 2024, we experienced a significant moment of synodality at the community of La Maddalena in Rome as an expression of our common desire to witness to the charism and spirituality.

Fr. Pedro Tramontin, the Superior General of the Camillians, took initiative for the gathering of the Superior Generals and General

Councilors of the four religious institutes of the Camillian Charismatic Family: Camillians, Ministers of the Sick of St. Camillus, Daughters of St. Camillus, and Handmaids of the Incarnation. Except Mother Lurdes Calderon Flores, Superior General of the Handmaids of the Incarnation, who was absent due to pastoral visit in Latin America, all Superior Generals were present leading their respective councils. Sister

Delina, the Vicar General, led the delegation of the Handmaids.

The meeting was primarily conceived as a moment of mutual knowledge, inspired by the great gathering celebrated in 2019, the implementation of which was significantly slowed down by the COVID-19 pandemic. We enthusiastically resumed the journey of fraternity within the same Camillian charismatic family.



During the gathering, we addressed some matters of common interest such as charismatic formation initiatives, the jubilee year of the conversion of St. Camillus 1575-2025, the concretization of the Camillian study center, etc. Interesting ideas emerged from the discussions to give more concreteness to our common identity as children of St. Camillus de Lellis. Ad hoc committees are already working to develop concrete proposals to be implemented. The next meeting is scheduled for August 31, 2024, at the general house of the Sisters Ministers of the Sick of St. Camillus.



Before the fraternal lunch that concluded the day, together with the La Maddalena community, we experienced an intense moment of spiritual communion during the prayer of the Sext Hour in the Cubiculum, where St. Camillus ascended to heaven, a place that keeps alive the relic of St. Camillus' heart and his spiritual legacy.



# The Heart of St. Camillus visits the 46th National Convention of the “Renewal in the Holy Spirit”

By **Fr. Medard Aboue MI**  
General Councillor for Ministry

The days from April 26th to 28th were marked by a strong spiritual communion between the Renewal in the Holy Spirit Movement and the Camillian Charismatic Family.

The 46th National Convention of the movement, held in Rimini (Italy), welcomed the sacred Relic of the heart of the heavenly Patron of the sick and healthcare workers, surrounded by his spiritual sons and daughters, religious, and lay people together. In praise and thanksgiving, we entrusted to God, through the intercession of St. Camillus, all the sick and those who lovingly care for them.

In the opening Mass of the Convention on April 26th, Father Medard Aboue, General Councilor, read to the Assembly the Message of greetings and encouragement sent by the Superior General, Fr. Pedro Tramontin. It was an occasion shared by the Camillians and the movement to raise awareness about the cause of the sick, so that no sufferer is left alone but has hearts that welcome, hands that heal, ears that listen, and words that comfort beside them.

In front of the crowd of more than eight thousand people present at the event, the emotion was immense to see the great attention given to the charism and spirituality of St. Camillus. Together, we prayed and enjoyed the insights shared by distinguished speakers on the theme of the Convention: “When you pray, say: Father!” (Luke 11:2).



***The National Convention, held in Rimini, welcomed the sacred relic of the heart of St. Camillus surrounded by his spiritual sons and daughters, religious, and lay people***

Indeed, true prayer - in its various forms: praise, request, lament, rebellion, silence, listening, abandonment, etc. - always leads us to the merciful Father (Luke 15:11-32), and from Him, we recognize ourselves as brothers and sisters (Matthew 6:9-15). Thus, we become capable of enlarging the space in the tent of our hearts (Isaiah 54:2) to build the kingdom of God, a kingdom of peace and brotherhood that our world so desperately needs.

In the concluding Mass, drawing from the gospel of the vine and the branches (John 15:1-8) appropriately interpreted in the current reality of the Church, Cardinal Angelo De Donatis

concluded the Convention by entrusting to everyone's meditation this reflection: “In the current Church, it seems to me that the Lord is pruning some dry branches. Three in particular: the branch of large numbers; the branch of the heaviness of structures; the branch of current protagonism. The Church bears fruit not when it promotes its structures, but when it makes known the Lord Jesus, calling for conversion and holiness.” In doing so, it becomes small, agile, and synodal to testify that God is the Father of mercy.

All the moments experienced during the Convention: prayers, teachings, confessions, Eucharistic



celebrations, meals, rest, travels, etc., were truly special moments of grace of the Holy Spirit for all participants.

A heartfelt thank you to the Sicilian Neapolitan Province, its Provincial Superior Brother Carlo Mangione, and the Charismatic Healing and Deliverance Group of Naples who organized and coordinated this beautiful initiative of Camillian participation in the Convention perfectly.

## In the Shadow of the Spirit with the Heartbeat of St. Camillus

By Fr. Mariano Pio Servadei MI

**W**e cannot help but give thanks to God for all He has given us! We cannot help but share with everyone the joy that has filled our hearts in these days! From April 26th to 28th, in Rimini (Italy), the 46th national gathering of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit took place.

This year, this gathering, which saw 8000 people gathered, had a distinctly Camillian flavor! In the

shadow of the Spirit, wrapped in the jubilation of praise and intercessory prayer, the relic of the heart of our beloved St. Camillus was enthroned. A great grace, which allowed many to discover the beauty of this Giant of Charity who, inhabited by the Spirit, made his life a praise and a living intercession for all the suffering! Camillus, in the power of the Spirit, is always alive! Alive and active through all those who still follow in his footsteps today.



This Convention brought together the Ministers of the Sick of Italy and the young people in formation, with representatives from the three religious provinces of the Peninsula, the Daughters of St. Camillus, the Sisters Ministers of the Sick of St. Camillus, and the Secular Institute Missionaries of the Sick Christ Hope. This presence was a concrete testimony of the love that heals and restores. Many were the sick who approached us, who asked to touch the Relic and receive a blessing! Many curious young people entered into dialogue with us! But not only that! It was a grace for us, sons and daughters of St. Camillus, to rediscover ourselves united in one body, animated by the same Spirit!

Truly the Spirit urges us to spread our sails and run with joy in the service of the sick, showing the face of the Father God who has been announced to us repeatedly in these days. We return invigorated by this experience. May the Lord Jesus grant us to be shaped by His Spirit to be traces of Heaven, traces of His Kingdom, as we were entrusted at the end of the Convocation, for all the men and women we encounter. Jesus is Lord. Alleluia!

## XXVI Alzheimer's Day

By **Juan Pablo Hernández**

The Health Humanization Center of the Camillian Religious in Madrid (Tres Cantos) became the focal point of a major event on April 10th and 11th, 2024, bringing the importance of providing empathetic and compassionate care to Alzheimer's patients and support to their families back into the public spotlight. With the participation of over 600 people, the XXVI Alzheimer's Day concluded with overwhelming success.

The event commenced with an emotional act. Brother José Carlos Bermejo, provincial superior of the Camillian religious, challenged the authorities present, including the counselor for social services of the Madrid community, Ana Dávila, and the Director of IMSERSO, Mayte Sancho, to join forces to better enhance the health and care offerings of nursing homes for the elderly, promoting "trust rather than suspicion."

The inaugural conference, presented by geriatrics specialist Dr. Alejandro Javier Garza, provided a crucial update on the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's, setting the tone for the rest of the event.

Subsequent activities addressed various areas of care and support, from managing behavioral disorders to accompanying families in the acceptance process of the disease. Specialists such as Dr. Pablo Posse and Dr. Belinda Arévalo shared their experience and knowledge, providing valuable insights to participants.



Dr. Gracia Valiente, a psychologist specializing in neuropsychology and psycho gerontology from the Parkinson Cuenca association, held a workshop on Parkinson's and mental health, offering a deeper understanding of this disease and its impact on mental health.

Emphasizing the importance of spirituality in caring for people with Alzheimer's, Dr. Xabier Azkoitia led an optional activity, emphasizing the human aspect in caring for people affected by this disease.

The session on residential and coexistence models for people with Alzheimer's disease, led by Dr. Josep de Martí, Director of Inforesidencias, provided a space for the exchange of ideas and best practices among healthcare professionals.

The second day of the meeting began by focusing on the importance of Life Story in welcoming an elderly person with mild Alzheimer's (represented by a resident of the Care Center), emphasizing the need to welcome and care both the sick person and their family: through an interactive session with the audience, the discussion addressed the ethical dimension in care and the importance of emotional enhancement in conflict situations.

After a short break, the day continued with a focus on caring for people with severe or advanced dementia and supporting their families and professionals, highlighting the importance of coordination with liaison units and support in end-of-life situations.

The event concluded with an interactive activity through electronic voting with Kahoot, followed by other sessions with conclusions that consolidated the various deliberations of the day.

The day ended with the reading of the manifesto by the Director of the San Camilo Center, Dr. José Manuel Martínez, followed by a

touching tribute to people with Alzheimer's and their caregivers, highlighting the importance of their dedication and free and supportive love. Participants were honored with the book "My Loved One Has Alzheimer's" by Brother José Carlos Bermejo: a contribution aimed at humanizing the care for those suffering from this disease.

With renewed commitment and a collaborative approach, these days reaffirmed the determination of the medical community and caregivers in the fight against Alzheimer's, offering hope and support to those affected by this devastating disease.

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## **Saint Camillus de Lellis: A Legacy of Compassion and Service**



A conference on Saint Camillus de Lellis and the Order of the Camillian Religious was held in the Archdiocese of Valencia (Spain), on Wednesday, April 13, 2024. The organizers of this important conference were the camillian religious Agustín Bado and Casimir Olivier Guezo, chaplains at La Fe Hospital in Valencia. This event is part of the ongoing training cycle for pastoral caregivers, organized by the diocesan delegation for the pastoral care of the sick and the elderly, under the direction of Father Luis Sánchez Ruíz, the

episcopal delegate.

During the conference, participants had the opportunity to learn more about the figure of Saint Camillus de Lellis, the founding of the Order, as well as Saint Camillus' significant contributions to the world of health and humanization. Additionally, the religious shared their vision on the relevance of the Order in the current context.

At the end of the presentation, Father Luis Sánchez highlighted

the fourth vow of the Camillian religious, which consists of serving the sick even at the risk of their own lives: an extraordinary vocation deserving recognition. Furthermore, he expressed his gratitude for the service that the Order has provided over the years in religious assistance at La Fe Hospital and the commitment of the Camillian religious in the pastoral care of the Archdiocese of Valencia. He emphasized the importance of instilling more humanity in the world of health, stating that "the world needs more heart in hands."

## Blessing and Opening of *Daivalayam*, a care home for children

By Fr. Tinto Valamparackel MI

Camillians in India, alongside clergy and religious sisters from nearby communities, and well-wishers, gathered on April 8th, 2024, to witness the momentous blessing and inauguration of *Daivalayam*—a newly established home dedicated to children with multiple disabilities. This event was a major step forward in the mission to provide care and support for the differently-abled, reflecting the compassionate service of Camillians.

The ceremony was gracefully led by Fr. Bijoy, the provincial superior of St. Camillus province of India,

whose efforts have been central to the mission's success. In addition to Fr. Bijoy, key figures such as Fr. Shiju, the Superior, Fr. Jaison, the Administrator, and Fr. Bobit also played crucial roles in bringing *Daivalayam* to its function. Their hard work and dedication were highlighted throughout the event, acknowledging their significant contributions to this mission.

The day started with a Holy Mass presided over by Fr. Bijoy. During the homily, Fr. Bacil underlined the inherent dignity of each individual and the Christian duty to serve all, particularly those in greatest need as the Word became flesh

among us. This message resonated deeply, setting a profound tone for the inauguration.

Following the Holy Mass, Fr. Bijoy led the blessing of *Daivalayam*. Fr. Teji opened *Daivalayam* by cutting the ribbon and Fr. Bacil and Bro. Madhu unveiled the inscription table. The inauguration ceremony showcased *Daivalayam's* state-of-the-art facilities, which are designed to meet the diverse needs of children with multiple disabilities. The home is equipped with emphasizing accessibility, safety, and comfort.

Fr. Bijoy, in his address, expressed



heartfelt gratitude towards donors, volunteers, pioneers and community members whose generosity made *Daivalayam* possible. He emphasized the ongoing need for community support to sustain and expand the home's operations. The parish priest, Child Welfare Committee (CWC) chairman, District Child Protection Officer, and Assistant Government Pleader shared

the words of blessings and appreciation. The presence of Camillian fathers and brothers from different communities doubled the joy.

The event concluded with a community meal, providing a chance for attendees to connect and discuss future collaborative efforts. The overall sentiment was one of joy and communal

commitment to the success of *Daivalayam*.

*Daivalayam* now stands as a testament to the strength of faith and community in action, offering a nurturing environment where children with disabilities can flourish with dignity as children of God. It represents hope, care, and the unyielding belief in the potential of every individual.





## Canonical erection of the Indo - Irish Delegation

By **Fr. Russel Tharappel MI**

**April 28,2024- Kilucan, Ireland:** The canonical erection of the Irish delegation of the Indian Province and the official installation of the new Provincial delegate and the council members were held in the chapel of St. Camillus monastery, in Kilucan. The ceremony started at 3.00 p.m. with a prayer service in the monastery chapel where all the members of the Irish delegation gathered. Rev. Fr. Bijoy Kuliraniyil, the Provincial along with Fr. Teji Anikkattuvayalil, the Vicar Provincial and Fr. Jofree Nakuzhikattu the councillor led the prayer service. During the prayer service the new Provincial delegate Br. John O'Brien and the delegation council members Rev. Fr. Vincent Kakkadampallil and Rev. Fr. Jaison Narikuzhiyil took oath as the new team.

After the prayer service the members moved to the seminar hall adjacent to the chapel for the formal meeting. Fr. Bijoy in his address welcomed everyone and congratulated the new Provincial

delegate and the council members. Fr. Bijoy gratefully acknowledged the service of Fr. Stephen Foster as the animator of the Anglo-Irish Province for the past 17 years. Some of the points he mentioned in his address encompassed the following: unity in mission, openness to new ministry, embracing diversity, commitment to Camillian values, collaboration and partnership, nurturing the spiritual formation, culture of hospitality and trust in the providence of God. He finished on a gratitude note stating the dedicated service of the Irish Camillians in the healthcare ministry in Ireland while also emphasizing the need for renewed vision and zeal for the future of Camillian ministry in Ireland.

Bro. John O'Brien the new Provincial delegate while giving his maiden address thanked his predecessor Fr. Stephen Foster for guiding the Anglo-Irish province in the past. He noted that this is

a new beginning and a real sign of hope. "Together we can move forward", commented Bro. John as he concluded his words.

Rev. Fr. Stephen in his words of appreciation congratulated the new team and thanked Fr. Bijoy and the council members for their time and availability. He acknowledged the history of Irish Camillians especially those pioneers, and expressed his hopes that the delegation would remain faithful to its immemorial past.

Fr. Jofree thanked all the speakers and invited everyone to furnish the gathering with comments and suggestions. Appreciation and comments from the members ranged across a spectrum of areas. Before the meeting drew to a close, Fr. Jaison proposed a formal vote of thanks. Prior to the refreshments everyone visited the cemetery of our Irish confreres and prayed a decade of rosary as one community.

## General Assembly of the Camillian Delegation in France

By Fr. Emmanuel Zongo MI

The first general assembly of the Camillian Delegation in France took place with good participation of the Camillian confreres from February 19th to 21st, 2024, hosted in the Camillian community of Bry-sur-Marne.

It was the first synodal experience of its kind. In fact, until a few years ago, France represented an autonomous Camillian province; then it became a 'general delegation under the authority of the superior general,' and then it received the status of Delegation of the Camillian Province of Burkina Faso. Fourteen Camillian religious and a moderator, Dr. Bruno Durochat, participated in this assembly. Father Edmond Yanogo, representative of the provincial superior of the Camillian Province of Burkina Faso, intervened as an observer. It was a beautiful moment of reflection, planning, projection towards the future, and fraternity.

The Camillian Delegation of France, in light of the Word of God, the Constitution of our Order, the teachings of St. Camillus, and the indications of the General Consulta, sought in this assembly context to discern the future of the Delegation with an attitude of faith and hope. It was a precious opportunity to propose strategies to be a faithful and creative Camillian delegation that walks to follow Christ the Good Samaritan



and to always make His merciful Love present for the sick.

The main objective of these very rich days was to develop the strategic plan. This objective was achieved thanks to the contribution of everyone and the

guidance of the moderator. In addition to the strategic plan, we addressed together important issues of our fraternity and community life, such as the issue of incardination, financial and property audits, etc.



## Novitiate house opened in Vietnam

By Fr. John Toai MI

**O**n April 29, 2024, for the first time, Camillians in Vietnam have novitiate house in Việt Nam. We have welcomed 6 new novices for the academic year 2024-2025, with Fr. Joseph Hùng serving as the novice master.

This event marks a fresh start for our delegation in Vietnam, as previously, we sent our postulants to Thailand for their novitiate. However, due to recent changes in the Thai government's visa policy, we are no longer able to send candidates there. Nonetheless, this situation has presented a new opportunity for us. Consequently, following approval from the Thai Provincial and the Superior General, we have established a new novitiate house in Vietnam, marking our inaugural group.

Additionally, on April 29th, 14 brothers renewed their vows, while four candidates were admitted to the postulancy.





## Inauguration of the Vi Hoang Elderly Care Home: “Love - Health - Happiness”

**O**n March 16th, in the city of Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam), the Vi Hoang Elderly Care Home was inaugurated under the theme “Love - Health - Happiness”. This new center will accommodate 100 needy elderly individuals.

Bishop Pedro Nguyễn Văn Khảm, bishop of the diocese of Mỹ Tho, presided over the inauguration ceremony of the elderly care home, accompanied by three Camillian brothers and the parish priest of Tân Hưng. Several elderly individuals, religious figures, and benefactors who supported this initiative from the beginning were also present.

Before the inauguration

ceremony, the Bishop emphasized the commitment of the Camillian religious in the Church of Vietnam: to work and serve with the spirit of the Gospel of love, following the example of Jesus Christ, to dispense the love of God and bring peace, joy, happiness, and life, especially to the neediest.

After the ceremony, attendees visited the facility, fostering interaction with the elderly and highlighting the spaces within the structure. Subsequently, participants gathered in the courtyard in front of the Vi Hoang Elderly Care Home building for the ceremonial ribbon-cutting, officially marking the beginning

of activities at the new care home. Provincial delegate Father Phương Đình Toại, representing the Order, expressed gratitude to Bishop Pedro, the religious, local authorities, and all those who supported this project.

Father Toai also explained that Vi Hoang is named after Dr. Trần Vị Hoàng, who accompanied him on his travels to Cambodia and the central regions of Vietnam to assist the neediest. Before his passing, the doctor expressed a desire to help as many people as possible, especially the sick: this legacy motivated the Camillian delegation to dedicate the new facility in his honour.



*In this way, we manifest in us that faith which in Camillus worked in charity, by means of which we see the Lord himself in the sick. In this presence of Christ in the sick and in those who serve them in his name, we find the source of our spirituality (Constitution, 13).*



## The Lay Camillian Family is expanding

**At the parish of *Santa Maria Immacolata* in Pescara, run by the Camillian religious, a new group of FCL (lay Camillian family) is emerging**

By Fr. Medard Aboue MI



**A**t the parish of *Santa Maria Immacolata* in Pescara, run by the Camillian religious, a new group of FCL (lay Camillian family) is emerging. For almost two years, a group of volunteers in the parish has requested to form as FCL, and they began

their formation according to the statutes. Last Wednesday, April 10th, was the second time I had the opportunity to participate in their formation.

I am very pleased to know that soon the volunteers will make the

promise of affiliation, and thus the group will become official. They are very enthusiastic volunteers eager for this formalization because they are already very active in visiting and serving the sick. We wish them the best of luck.



## **Bro. Michel Marie André MATHIEU [1935-2024]**

**M**ichel MATHIEU was born on 24 October 1935 in Pont-à-Mousson, Lorraine. His parents Marie-René Mathieu and Simone Fanny Frappier had him baptised on 3 November. He made his First Communion on 19 March 1944 in Toulouse.

On 7 July 1955, he entered the Novitiate in Lyon, and made his temporary Profession on 7 September 1956. He replaced Brother Jérôme on the 3ème floor of the retirement home until the spring of 1957. Following a primary infection, he had to go to Niderviller to rest, while helping Brother Pierre with the nursing service. He did his military service in Bar-le-duc, then in Toul, Colmar and Dijon, where he obtained the diploma of Nurse steriliser dresser.

After working at Strasbourg hospital, he continued his military service in Algeria, earning the rank of corporal. He was awarded the *Croix de la Valeur Militaire* with Bronze Star for fetching wounded soldiers under enemy fire. He also obtained the *Brevet de Parachutiste*. On his return to France, he worked as a supervisor for the older children at Niderviller, then in the same role at Marbach in 1961. He made his Solemn Profession there

on 19 March 1962. On 24 April 1963, he left for Bry-sur-Marne to replace Brother Maurice in the surgery department of Hôpital Saint-Camille.

He returned to Antwerp in January 1970 to successfully complete his diploma in tropical medicine and prepare for his mission. He arrived in Dahomey on 8 January 1971 with 2 other colleagues. He ran a dispensary in Dogbo while waiting for the hospital to be built. He was expelled in July 1975, at the start of the Marxist revolution.

After a short stay in France, he returned on 29 November 1975 to Ouagadougou (Upper Volta at the time), to work with the Italian confreres. Tireless, he looked after the sick in 2 bush dispensaries (Kossiam and Boulbi). In 2008, he and his well-trained team took charge of a dispensary built by CANDAF for people in sector 30 of Ouagadougou and the surrounding area. In 2009, he joined the Bry-sur-Marne community, then the Lyon community in 2013.

He then put himself at the service of his elderly colleagues, some of whom are at the EHPAD Saint Camille. Very manual, a hard worker, he looked after everything. From 2013 to 2022, he was Provincial Councillor.

He was also an active member of the Board of Directors, being well informed about the running of the EHPAD. For the last 3 or 4 years, he had been feeling tired, then suffering from a long illness, which he endured with great courage, putting his life in God's hands. After a highly invasive operation on his abdomen at the end of 2023, Michel had regained some weight and kept in close touch with his family and friends. But severe pain and complications led to further hospital admissions, which became increasingly trying, and he passed away at the Clinique Charcot on the afternoon of 16 April 2024, assisted by colleagues and family members.

Michel was always a religious, assiduous in prayer and scrupulous in his vow of poverty. He was a model for all as a Servant of the Sick. He was always very conscientious, whether as a nurse at Bry, in Benin and Burkina Faso, or in the other communities where he lived. As a leader by temperament, he was not afraid to speak his mind when he saw behaviour that needed correcting.

His life as a missionary is recounted in the book *Frère Michel, le Nassara d'Afrique*.



April 22:  
**World Earth Day**

“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein”  
(Psalms 24:1).

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