



Ministers of infirm

# Newsletter

N. 107

The Camillian World seen from Rome... and Rome seen by the World



The Crucifix and Mercy





Ministers of the Infirm  
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Dear confreres,

The month of July opens with important promises for the institutional life of our Order and for the spiritual renewal of each of us.

In the last few days I appointed the new provincial and vice-provincial superiors who will accompany and animate the life of Camillian communities around the world during the next triennium 2025-2028. On behalf of the General Consulta, I express deep gratitude to all the major superiors who are ending their ministry: Fr. Abathan Karl, Fr. Cherdchai Paul, Fr. Gabriel Jorg, Fr. Kuliraniyil Bijoy, Fr. Marzano Antonio, Fr. Mirosław Szwajnoch, and Fr. Yanogo Pierre. I acknowledge your commitment of authority and I am grateful for the merciful patience you have shown in the past three (or six) years, certainly between lights and shadows, between projected leaps and disappointments in our Consecrated Life, especially as it is lived in our contemporary times. May God reward you for your generosity.

To the confreres appointed or reappointed: Fr. Ballena Alex, Bro. Bermejo José Carlos, Fr. Bida Coovi Jean Pierre, Fr. Kunnel Anthoni, Fr. Locatelli Mateus, Bro. Mangione Carlo, Fr. Ouedraogo Guy-Flavien, Fr. Palumbo Sergio, Fr. Phan Anh Dung Joseph, Fr. Rigamonti Giuseppe, Fr. Sengcharoen Peter Phakhawi, Fr. Tamayo Manuel (Manny), Fr. Villanueva Evan Paul, and Fr. Zajac Roman, I offer the following words that challenge and encourage us:

“In consecrated life everyone must sincerely seek the will of the Father, because otherwise the reason itself for this choice of life would disappear; but it is equally important to carry out such a search together with the brothers or the sisters because it is properly that which unites them, “making them a family united to Christ”. Persons in authority are at the service of this search to ensure that it occurs in sincerity and truth. [...] On the other hand, it is necessary to recognize that the task of being a guide for others is not easy, especially when the sense of personal autonomy is excessive or conflictive and competitive in its

relations with others. Therefore, it is necessary on everyone's part to sharpen his or her ability to see the encounters of this task in faith, in order that he or she might be inspired to have the attitude of Jesus the Servant who washes the feet of his apostles so that they might have a part in his life and in his love (cf. Jn 13:1-17)" (CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE -The Service of Authority and Obedience, no. 12).

This ideal requires from every superior a constant inner exodus, a generous giving of one's physical, mental and spiritual strength. It also offers the possibility to grow and discover, with humility, the joy of seeing God transform our time into a true *kairós* of salvation and charismatic renewal. We entrust this mission into the hands of the Father, confident that He will know how to guide us in the revitalization of our charism of mercy towards the sick. I ask the confreres to welcome the major superiors and collaborate closely with them in this mission so that we can live synodality not only in words but in practice.

July is also the month in which, in communion with the whole Church, we celebrate the liturgical memory of our holy founder, Camillus de Lellis. This year, in particular, we are called to contemplate his human, spiritual and charismatic experience from the perspective of his conversion that took place on February 2, 1575.

Although hagiography presents Camillus' conversion as a timely and dated moment, it was a slow, lifelong process. From the moment he experienced God's love, Camillus was 'wounded' "so deeply that while he lived he always carried the memory and signs of it in his heart." Camillus is given a new vision, a new way of looking at himself, through which he also discovers the presence of God.

Camillus, looking within himself, discovers the misery of his own state, but also a God who is close to him and loves him anyway: it is the moment of his "true knowing." Camillus always remembered the day of his conversion, when he began to discover the true face of God, which surpasses all human schemes. From the moment he allowed God's face to shine with its own light, he was invincibly drawn to it.

Camillus' true knowledge of God is that of a mercy beyond all human hope. Camillus' spiritual experience appears deeply marked by a new awareness of his own limitations and sins. "No more world, no more world." This is the purpose in which he condenses the program of his new life, the goal of his conversion.

Conversion requires a change in quality rather than quantity. Rather than adding something new, it involves imprinting a new way of life. It moves from the desire to "save one's life," to the desire to "lose it for God." St. Paul tells us, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is fully manifested in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). And Jesus himself clearly challenges us, "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mt. 16:25).



When these statements are taken seriously, and not merely as a figure of speech, there is a need for a love that is greater than our own. It is surrendering oneself totally and forever without conditions, restrictions or reservations. Now the horizon has changed, and changed is the criterion that moves desire and directs decision and action.

Our journey to God begins with listening to ourselves, and learning to know and love ourselves for who we are; only then will we set out to present ourselves and surrender ourselves entirely to God, so that he may transform us and his will be done in us.

I pray that the Lord will accompany you on this inner journey, enlighten you with His grace and enable you to recognize Him in the face of each person who is suffering.

I wish you a holy feast of St. Camillus and may his 'thousand blessings' always be with you.



**Fr. Pedro Tramontin MI**  
*Superior General*

# The spirit of St. Camillus de Lellis: The Crucifix and Mercy

By **Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon MI**

Following in the footsteps of St. Camillus' spiritual experience, from his conversion to the gradual revelation of his charism of mercy towards the sick, suffering, contagious, and dying, we can see the constant presence of the Crucifix: a divine experience that continually motivated Camillus and his first companions to make their lives a gift, in the image of Jesus.

**"Why are you so downhearted, O you of little faith?"**

As often happens in divine things, Camillus' inspiration, which came to him on the night of the Assumption in 1582, to "establish a company of pious and good men who, not for reward but voluntarily and for the love of God, would serve him with the charity and love that mothers usually show to their sick children" (*Life Manuscript*, 52), was contradicted by subsequent events and thrown into crisis by a whole series of tensions: everything seemed to be working against what Camillus held in his heart and which he would gradually discover to be 'God's will'.

It was precisely in the darkness of this trial that Camillus began to experience following Jesus crucified. The words heard from the crucifix are well known: "Why are you distressed, O faint-hearted one? Continue the undertaking, and I will help you, for this is my work and not yours" (Cicatelli, 1620,28).

The starting point is that of "faint-heartedness," of a heart that is still too small, fragile, weak, and vulnerable to withstand the impact of the power of the Spirit and the terrible trial of the gratuitousness of the gift. The words of the crucified Jesus are words that will make him "the happiest and most consoled man in the world" (*Life Manuscript*, 55). From the beginning, Camillus experiences a great love, an unlimited



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mercy that purifies and recreates, so that his heart can begin to beat again in time with the heart of God and continue to do so even when God seems to have hidden himself and abandoned us.

For Camillus, who was wandering in darkness, discerning a still uncertain will of God, the cross of Jesus is experienced at that moment as a consolation, a glimmer of certainty in the uncertainty of God's mystery, the testimony of the presence of the One who does not forget us, in situations that spoke rather of distance, or at least of the silence of a silent sky. Here, Camillus is faced with the fundamental word of the cross, with the gesture of God who comes to meet man and recreates him and draws close to him in the only way he knows: as mercy.

Almost as a commentary on the words of the crucified, Camillus later wrote: "one can almost say that this foundation was miraculously made... I said that this miracle was manifest in our foundation, and in particular in the use of me, a sinner, ignorant, and full of many faults and shortcomings, and worthy of a thousand hells. But God is the master, and he can do what he pleases, and it is infinitely well done. Let no one be surprised that God has worked through such an instrument, for it is greater glory for him than to do wonders for nothing." (*Writings*, 454-455)

### **'Learning to live in order to die'**

"All his contemplations, ecstasies, raptures, and visions consisted in spending almost the whole night staring at some dead body, or a dying or other poor sick person. And in these exhausted and emaciated bodies, he considered the extreme misery of human life... And in such spectacles of horror, he learned to live to die, and these were always his books and his schools where he learned to despise the world and love his neighbours" (*Life Manuscript*, 251).

In this text, we find an expression that points us in a specific direction for reflection on Camillus' experience of the cross and mercy: for him, service to the sick was the place where he "learned to live in order to die." Even in the Formula of Life of 1599, in which the saint summarized the essence

of the Camillian charism, we find a similar expression: the minister of the sick must learn to "die in order to live."

"If anyone, inspired by the Lord God, wishes to exercise works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual, according to our Institute, let him know that he must be dead to all things of the world, that is, to relatives, friends, possessions, and to himself, and live only for Jesus Crucified..."

These two expressions sum up Camillus' experience of the cross: his whole life was "learning to live in order to die and to die in order to live," at the school of the crucifix.

In the profession formula used before the Institute was established as a religious order—when the red cross was given—a "resolution" was recited: "And I, for your love... with all the affection of my heart and soul, propose to observe chastity, poverty, and obedience, and to serve your poor sick children and my brothers and sisters, all the time of my life, with the greatest charity I can, aided by your divine grace. And for this I beg you, for the love with which you sent your Son into the world to die for the human race, that you always keep my heart burning with the fire of this love, never to be extinguished, so that I may persevere in this holy Work" (*Life Manuscript*, 78-8).

"With all the affection of my heart." It is that "love with which you sent your Son to die for the human race" that has become so important in my life that I throw in all my best energies, all my strength, all the best I have, because it is now the very meaning of my life! It is both an act of faith, of hope, and of supreme love that makes me capable of "betting my life on God."

Learning to die in order to live, the gift of self, therefore, has its determining condition for Camillus in the divine Grace revealed on the cross. The response to such love consists essentially in ensuring that this "fire of charity" remains lit and does not go out. In other words, it consists in following the movements of Grace, with trusting abandonment to God in the image of Jesus, so that God Himself may love in man as He pleases.



*Camillus' tears before the cross can bring us back to a fundamental coordinate of the believer's attitude before the mystery of God: only by holding ourselves before the crucified love can we discover and purify our needs.... Before the cross, man, like Camillus, finds himself in need of mercy.*

### **'Enclosing himself in the side of the Crucified One'**

The face of mercy, as we can see in Camillus' life, is revealed in privileged, personal, intimate moments, both linked to the experience of standing before the crucified God: the Eucharist and meditation on the Passion.

"In his prayers, he did not dwell on certain points that were too subtle or speculative, but enclosed himself entirely in the Most Holy Side of the Crucified One, where he asked for graces, discovered his needs, and had lofty and divine conversations with his beloved Lord..." (*Life Manuscript*, 248).

Camillus' tears before the cross can bring us back to a fundamental coordinate of the believer's attitude before the mystery of God: only by holding ourselves before the crucified

love can we discover and purify our needs. Only there do we see ourselves for what we are, with all the potential God has given us, and with the inevitable negativity, from sin to weaknesses, from forms of immaturity to childishness. Before the cross, man, like Camillus, finds himself in need of mercy.

Here we are at the roots of mercy: only in the absolute and incomprehensible gratuitousness of crucified love can we learn to have mercy on ourselves. Only in this way will we be regenerated by the experience of mercy and become mercy ourselves, overcoming our timidity: only those who feel in need of mercy can hear the same need in others and respond to it according to the unique requests that arise in that specific brother or sister; only in this way do we become capable of works of mercy. Otherwise, we will always limit ourselves to giving simple "services," perhaps professionally flawless, but condemned to the



sterility of a "heart that is still too small."

Camillus' experience of the cross, therefore, is the experience of the "fire on earth," of the divine passion for humanity, revealed and experienced in the form of mercy. Camillus was first of all "touched and healed by mercy" (conversion); at the same time, Camillus was also "filled with mercy," from contemplating the divine fire and from constant union with Him; finally, there was his service to the sick, which occupied most of his life, in which Camillus gave himself in mercy.

Camillus, who before the cross discovers himself to be only a "great sinner," in need of mercy, in vital communion with the crucified one, in the invitation to "have in us the same feelings that were in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5), becomes in turn a gift of mercy for those in need of mercy.

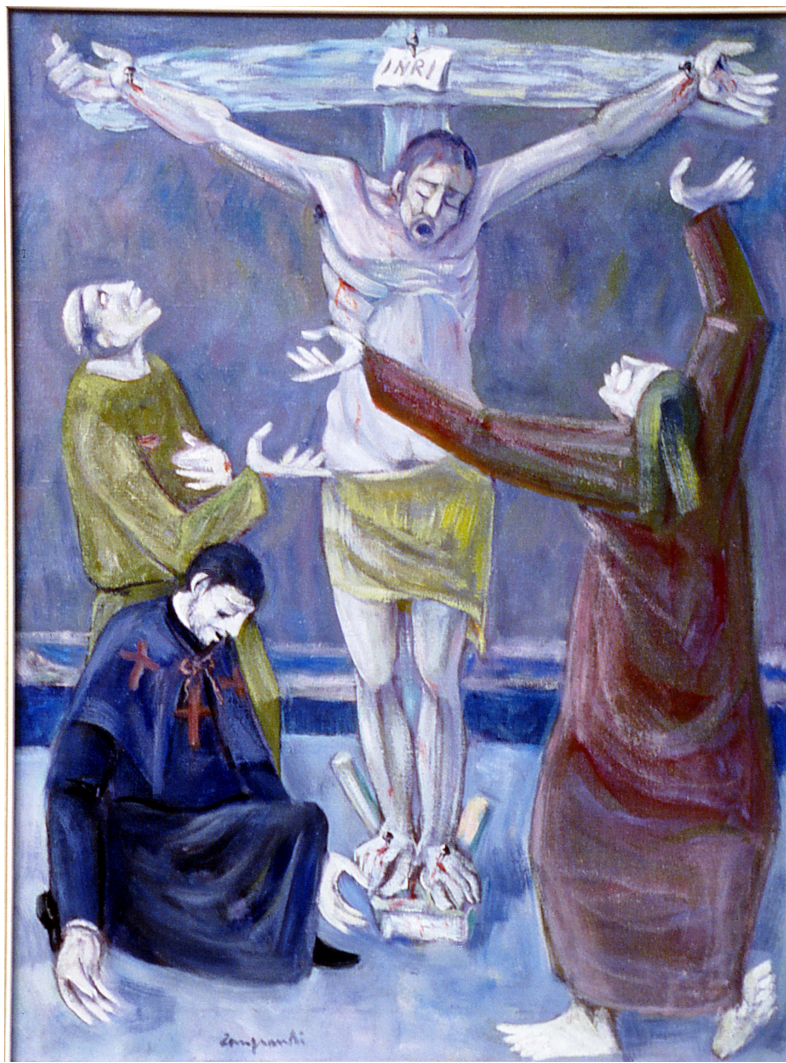
These are the central elements of Camillus' spirituality of the cross: the crucified and the sick; Jesus crucified on the cross and the sick crucified by suffering. Camillus places at the center of his ideal of discipleship the Gospel appeal of Jesus: I was sick and you visited me (Mt 25:36), so much so that in his Rules of 1584, he writes: "Let everyone look upon the poor as upon the person of the Lord."

The following of the cross is thus concretely translated into service to the sick; it is the most immediate service, the place par excellence for encountering the crucified God of mercy: "He considered so vividly the person of Christ in them, and often when he fed them (imagining that they were his Christs), he asked them for grace and forgiveness of his sins, standing so reverently in their presence as if he were in the presence of Christ himself, feeding them many times uncovered and kneeling... When he took one of them in his arms to change his sheets, he did so with such affection and diligence that it seemed he was handling the person of Jesus Christ himself. And even if the sick person was the most contagious and leprous in the hospital, he would nevertheless take him in his arms, breath to breath, bringing his face close to his head as if it were the sacred head of the Lord. (*Life Manuscript*, 228)

Total dedication to the sick thus became for

Camillus the sure criterion for discerning the experience of faith, because it was essentially an experience of mercy and of the cross: in following the cross, it found its truest expression in the fourth vow of the Ministers of the Infirm.

The "living solely for Jesus crucified," for the one who gave everything on the cross, revealing a God who continually gives himself completely in his Son, becomes such only in the willingness and desire to "die for the crucified one," to give one's life for him. Total and unconditional dedication to God, living only for Jesus crucified, is then realized in the "service of the poor sick, even if they were plague-stricken." What Camillus called the "precious margarita of charity" had to be nourished with the same charity full of affection and care shown by the Father in Jesus: "First, let everyone ask the Lord for the grace to have a motherly affection for their neighbour so that we may serve them with all charity, both in soul and body, because we desire, with the grace of God, to serve all the sick with the affection that a loving mother has for her only sick child" (Reg. XXVII, *Writings*, 67).



When Camillus comes to articulate the only fundamental reason for performing “works of mercy,” in dying to oneself and living only for the Crucified One, he states with extreme clarity: “which he will do out of true love for God.”

Here we touch upon the most intimate core of the experience of faith, capable of making mercy authentic. Camillus invites us to go beyond appearances, to look at ourselves, and not only at what we do, in front of the cross, and to let ourselves be placed in the truth by his word. The emphasis placed on the adjective “true” seems to refer to the possibility of a “not true” love of God, of a superficial mercy for the sick. At this point, however, the act of faith, our very response to the vocation, will lose its power of self-transcendence, of trusting abandonment, and the gift of self will gradually but inexorably become a performance that guarantees a form of gratification, of self-satisfaction.

#### **‘Prepare yourself for much suffering’**

The Formula of Life of the Ministers of the Sick offers us an important indication for discerning our fidelity to the charism of mercy and for discerning the very quality of our faith. Camillus concludes: “...but let everything be dead to the world and give oneself entirely to the will of God... and consider it a great gain to die for the crucified Christ Jesus Our Lord...and thus renewed, prepare oneself to suffer greatly for the glory of God, and the salvation of one’s soul and the souls of one’s neighbour” (*Formula of Life*, 1599).

Those who have set out on the path of mercy “for true love of God,” Camillus tells us, will certainly be tested with suffering. In no way is any proportion being established between following Christ and illness, but rather between “true love” and “pain.” “Suffering greatly for God” becomes a sign of the purity of the gift, ultimately the true proof of love.

We must all go through times of desolation and trial, because it is the time when we are tested in the steadfastness of our faith and vocation, in the consistency of our ideals, in the truth of our love. The trial of ‘suffering greatly’ is therefore closely linked to the truth and freedom of our relationship with God, to his gratuitousness, which appears or disappears when all the gratifications that obscure it disappear. This is ultimately the mystery we contemplate in Jesus Crucified, this is the way of his following, this is the parable of the holiness of a man who was perhaps, like Camillus, “a great sinner, ignorant and full of many faults and shortcomings,” but who precisely in this weakness was able to find a new presence of God.

Only when I discover that Someone has taken my sin and my weakness upon his shoulders, and not only has shown me mercy, but has given me the gift of using the same mercy towards myself and not cursing my weakness, then, recreated by this mercy, I can become a true gift of mercy, I can share the same mercy, I can approach the weakness and suffering of others with the same delicacy, the same attention, the same surprising gratuitousness that Jesus crucified showed towards me. After all, this is the treasure that Camillus has placed in our hands.

He writes in his Spiritual Testament: “I vow to endure and be patient in every adversity for the love of Him who willed to die on the cross for me, and I will not only endure lack of appetite, poor sleep, and harsh words; but I also want to obey those who govern me for the love of God, and with patience I intend to endure every bitter medicine, every painful remedy, and every annoyance until the agony of death itself for the love of Jesus, who suffered more for me; indeed, when I am out of myself and suffer any travail or pain in my body, I intend to suffer it willingly for the love of my sweet Jesus...” (*Writings*, 483).





# Solemnity of St. Camillus de Lellis:

## Celebrations in Rome and at Bucchianico

### in the heart of the Camillian Jubilee Year

*The Solemnity of St. Camillus de Lellis was celebrated throughout the Camillian world. The celebrations held in Rome, at the Generalate, and at Bucchianico, the saint's birthplace, were two particularly significant moments, marked by liturgical sobriety, spiritual intensity, and renewed adherence to the charism of charity, in the heart of the Camillian Jubilee Year.*



In the Church of *Santa Maria Maddalena* in Campo Marzio, the solemnity was experienced with simplicity and spiritual intensity. The Holy Mass at 7:00 p.m. was presided over by His Excellency Monsignor Mauro Lalli, Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea, Bishop originally from Pescara and devotee of St. Camillus. Concelebrating with him were the priests of the Camillian community of *Maddalena*, together with guest priests and numerous faithful and devotees.

At Bucchianico, the celebrations were distinguished by their solemnity, popular fervor, and spiritual richness. The solemn Mass on July

14, at 10:00 a.m., was presided over by Father Pedro Tramontin, Superior General of the Order, at the Shrine of St. Camillus, in the presence of Camillian confreres, Camillian sisters, and a large crowd of devotees.

The celebrations began on July 5 with the opening of the Novena at the Shrine, accompanied by conferences, cultural and spiritual events dedicated to the figure of the Saint. These moments represented a precious opportunity to rediscover the message of evangelical charity that St. Camillus sowed throughout the world through his spiritual sons and daughters.





# Spirituality as the axis of health

By Juan Pablo Hernández

The *Camilo de Lellis* Foundation (Camillian Spanish province) continues to carry out its mission with dedication to serving elderly religious, offering support and assistance in various religious communities throughout Spain. More than thirty congregations currently benefit from this commitment, which fully embodies the Camillian charism: a life consecrated to the service of God which, in the face of illness and frailty, translates into a concrete presence made up of care and closeness.

It was in this context that the formation meeting “Spirituality and Health” took place, attended by over sixty superiors of nursing homes for elderly religious and coordinators of the Foundation. The event was opened by José Carlos Bermejo, provincial superior of the Camillian religious in Spain, who recalled the importance of “letting oneself be cared for,” reflecting on how illness and weakness can become places of transformation

and welcome, following the inspiration of Teilhard de Chardin.

Next, Asunta Jambrina, head of Quality at the Foundation, presented the person-centered care model that guides the organization’s daily activities. Miguel Ángel Millán, member of the board of directors, offered an analysis of the most effective strategies for improving the quality of life of elderly religious who are not self-sufficient. Finally, Rosa Ruiz, head of research at the *San Camillo* Center and editor of *Humanizar* magazine, offered a profound reflection on incarnate spirituality, highlighting the link between corporeality, aging, and integral health.

The day ended with the celebration of the Eucharist and a fraternal moment of dialogue and encounter, strengthening the sense of community and the shared desire to continue this precious mission with passion and heart.







## “His love conquers all fear”: Second Day of Prayer of Camillian Vocations

By Fr. Baby Ellickal MI

*The theme chosen for this edition, “His love conquers all fear,” inspired by the verse from the Gospel of Luke, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will catch men” (Lk 5:10), guided an entire day dedicated to prayer, reflection, and fraternal communion within the Camillian charismatic family.*

On Sunday, June 29, 2025, on the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, the second World Day of Prayer for Camillian Vocations was celebrated with intense spiritual participation at the parish basilica of St. Camillus de Lellis in Rome. The theme chosen for this edition, “His love conquers all fear,” inspired by the verse from the Gospel of Luke, “Do not be afraid; from now on you

will be catching men” (Lk 5:10), guided an entire day dedicated to prayer, reflection, and fraternal communion within the Camillian charismatic family.

The initiative, promoted by the General Secretariat for Formation, was coordinated by Fr. Baby Ellickal, General Consultor for Formation, in collaboration with Fr. Sergio Palumbo, Provincial Superior of the Roman Province

and Regional Secretary for Formation in Europe, and with the support of the Central Commission for Formation. From the very beginning, there was an atmosphere of recollection and fraternity, enriched by the presence of numerous religious men and women from various Camillian realities, a concrete sign of the vitality of the shared charism.

Numerous significant figures from the Camillian family

participated, including the Superior General Fr. Pedro Tramontin, the Vicar General Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon, Mother Zelia Andrighetti, FSC, Superior General of the Daughters of St. Camillus, Sister Liberty Elarmo, Vicar General of the Sisters Ministers of the Sick of St. Camillus, Sister Delina López Córdova, Vicar General of the Handmaids of the Incarnation, Fr. Angelo Brusco, former Superior General, and other provincial superiors and representatives of the Camillian congregations.

The day began with the recitation of the Holy Rosary, animated in a vocational spirit and entrusted to the Virgin Mary, *Salus Infirmorum*. In his opening greeting, Fr. Baby Ellickal thanked all those present for their participation, expressing particular gratitude to the superiors general and provincial, to the confreres, sisters, and lay collaborators. He emphasized that vocation does not arise from human merit but from the free initiative of God, who calls even in moments of fragility and fear.

Fr. Sergio Palumbo also offered a meaningful reflection, focusing on the importance of community discernment and the synodal journey in vocational ministry as fundamental elements for faithful and generative witness.

During the day, several messages arrived from the charismatic family. Fr. Pedro Tramontin recalled the urgency



of vocational promotion and the prophetic power of the Camillian charism in a world marked by suffering, while Mother Zelia Andrighetti linked the theme of the day to the courage of faith lived by Peter and Paul. Sister Liberty Elarmo testified to the beauty of a life given, even in weakness, while Sister Delina López urged us to live our vocation with authenticity and evangelical radicalism. The Missionaries of the Sick “Christ Hope” sent a message of spiritual communion and encouragement to live a courageous and transforming vocation.

The heart of the day was the Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Fr. Pedro Tramontin and concelebrated by various confreres. In his homily, Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon offered a profound reflection on Jesus’ question to his disciples: “Who do you say that I am?”, considering it the heart of every vocation. He recalled that following Christ means allowing oneself to be questioned, abandoning false securities, and embracing the cross as the way to truth and freedom. During the liturgy, the prayers of the faithful in various languages and the offertory emphasized the universality and unity of the Camillian family.

In closing, Sister Ruby Chilito Penagos, member of the central commission for formation, thanked all those present for their participation and contribution to the success of the event. The day ended with a moment of fraternal agape in the parish hall, in an atmosphere of joyful sharing and simplicity.





# Four new Camillian religious from the “Pearl of Africa”

By **Fr. Sojan Koonanickal MI**

**W**ith deep joy and gratitude to Almighty God, the Camillian community in Uganda enthusiastically announces the Temporary Profession of four novices, celebrated on July 14, 2025, at the St. Camillus Novitiate in Masaka, in the context of the jubilee year marking the 25th anniversary of the Camillian presence in the country.

The celebration was enriched by the presence of the General Consultor, Br. Paul Kabore, who received the novices' vows. The Holy Mass was presided over by the Superior of the Mission, Fr. Babychan Pazhanilath, and concelebrated by Fr. Tom Smith, one of the first missionaries in Uganda, together with numerous priests, religious, family members, friends, and faithful.

With great emotion and gratitude, Ewonyu Zachariah, Kavuma Peter, Kiiza John, and Ogabe Gabriel Gad took their temporary vows, expressing sincere gratitude to their superiors and declaring with conviction their commitment to live faithfully the Camillian vocation.

This stage marks not only a decisive moment in the personal journey of the novices, but also represents a concrete sign of hope for the future of the Camillian mission in Uganda. In the heart

of the jubilee, the growth of the community – both in spiritual and numerical terms – confirms the vitality and solidity of St. Camillus' charism in this young missionary reality.

On July 13, 2025, seven scholastics renewed their vows for another year, helping to consolidate the foundations of the mission and its service to the world of suffering.



# Fr. Bruno Scapin [ 1929 – 2025 ]

He was born on September 25, 1929, in Cittadella (PD) to Angelo and Santa Milani. He entered the seminary on September 1, 1941, in Besana Brianza (MB). On July 7, 1943, he transferred to the seminary in Mottinello di Rossano Veneto (VI) for middle school. He entered the novitiate on July 14, 1946, in Verona, in the house of San Giuliano, where he made his temporary profession on September 8, 1947. He made his solemn profession on October 1, 1950, in Mottinello, where he was studying theology. He was ordained a deacon on December 8, 1953, in Padua by the local bishop, Monsignor Girolamo Bortignon, who also ordained him a priest on June 17, 1954, in the formation house in Mottinello. During that first summer as a new priest, he served in the hospital chaplaincies in Arezzo from July 16 and in Forlì from August 27.

On September 28, 1954, he was assigned to his first post in Cremona, at the Casa di Cura S. Camillo. On February 13, 1955, he moved to Bologna, where he worked in the maternity ward. On May 15, 1956, he moved to the civil hospital in Padua. On March 26, 1957, he was transferred to the Alberoni health facility in Venice to work in the bursar's office. On June 28, 1963, he moved to Cremona, chaplain at the Civil Hospital; in



July 1965, he was appointed superior of that hospital community. On June 25, 1971, he was appointed superior of the house in Bologna, a position he held for the following three years. In the summer of 1977, he was appointed Provincial Councilor and superior of the Alberoni House in Venice. On June 16, 1980, he was appointed superior of the chaplaincy in Rovigo, and in September also bursar. The transfer was also due to the need to attend the University of Medicine in Bologna, where he obtained his degree in medicine and surgery on June 21, 1983. On October 10 of the following year, he moved to Bologna for his internship. On October 17, 1986, he was transferred to the St. Pius X Nursing Home in Milan, where he had the opportunity to put

his medical profession to good use and where he remained until and beyond his retirement. He was particularly interested in blood sampling. Among his interests, acupuncture also took shape at a certain point, which he practiced somewhat quietly. On October 17, 2007, he was appointed advisor to the Community of St. Pius X and on September 28, 2010, first advisor. The sale of the Casa di Cura S. Pio X in early 2016 saw him move with the Community to another Camillian nursing home in the city, the S. Camillo.

When you are old, with over ninety years behind you, leaving the place and the people who have become your life is very difficult, even for a consecrated person. After his hoped-for transfer to the Capriate S. Gervasio nursing home fell through in the spring of 2022, his transfer to the Besana Brianza (MB) nursing home was successful on January 25, 2024, when Father Bruno was already in rather poor health. But he still had the opportunity to make himself appreciated in his new surroundings. Those close to him continued to visit him and take care of his needs. He died at the age of 95, dean of the religious province, at 4:30 p.m. on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi.

An intelligent man, not one of many words, sly, with a



large build and a deep voice, Father Bruno had a mixture of good nature and irony, wisdom and practical spirit written all over his face. In the 1980s, he was part of a small group of Camillians who were not

satisfied with already having a specific ministerial profile, such as the priesthood and the nursing profession, and began to study medicine, perhaps, who knows, with some young university students who, as

happened to Camillo de Lellis, presented him with a mocking “Tarde venisti” (You came late). Was it the need to find greater integration between care of the spirit and care of the body? It was also the concern of the Founder.

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## Fr. Paul Schreur [ 1945 – 2025 ]

**F**ather Paul Schreur was born on February 3, 1945, in Rotterdam, the son of Anna Lamboo and Marinus Schreur. There was famine in Rotterdam, and Paul survived thanks to the help of Protestant friends. He was baptized on February 5, 1945, in Rotterdam, in the parish of the Holy Family. He was confirmed on May 12, 1953, in Roermond. His paternal uncle Godefridus was a Camillian religious, and his two sisters Angela and Gerarda were religious Sisters of St. Camillus.

He entered the minor seminary of the Camillians on September 2, 1957. On September 14, 1964, he began his novitiate in Hilariberg (Austria). On September 15, 1965, he made his first profession in Hilariberg. He then studied philosophy in Pfaffing and Sudmühle and theology at the University of Nijmegen. On December 7, 1970, he made his solemn vows, after which he was ordained a deacon on May 22, 1971. After obtaining his bachelor's degree in 1971, he continued his studies in pastoral theology at the same university



in Nijmegen.

On May 6, 1972, Father Paul was ordained a priest by Monsignor Henricus de Cock in the parish church of St. Joseph in Roermond. In 1976, he was appointed member of the pro-secretariat for the Camillian service of the order in Rome. Due to the illness of his Camillian uncle Godefridus Schreur, on March 13, 1973, Father Paul was appointed chaplain of the St. Camillus nursing home in Roermond and abandoned his studies in pastoral theology.

Together with three other Dutch Camillians, he founded a new community in Hertogenbosch in August 1978,

working as chaplains in various hospitals.

On April 4, 1980, the Superior General, Fr. Calisto Vendrame, appointed him Provincial Superior of the Dutch Province. He remained in this position until May 1989. He then resumed his service as chaplain at the St. Camillus nursing home in Roermond. He served the Dutch Province as Provincial Treasurer and Superior of the Roermond community.

In 2001, he was re-elected provincial superior with the task of amalgamating the Dutch province: the community of Roermond with the German province, the community of Dar es Salaam with the Kenyan delegation, and the community of Barranquilla with the Colombian delegation. This project was not successful. Only the amalgamation with the German province was realized. The former Dutch province remained as a delegation of the German province. In this context, the community in Dar es Salaam also became a delegation of the German province.

In addition to his commitment to the Dutch province and his service as chaplain, Fr. Paul took on various responsibilities within the Church and Dutch society. For many years, he was first a member and then chairman of the Dutch inter-congregational commission for vocations.

This commission of consecrated men, consecrated women, and priests developed various projects in the field of vocational pastoral care. Particular attention was paid to the possibility of female vocations joining male religious institutes. In close collaboration with the provincial superiors and the general council, a way was found to achieve this goal: female members profess private vows and are bound to the religious institute by a civil agreement. In this way, Trix Coerts and Maria Poulisse

became members of the Dutch Camillian province.

Fr. Paul was a member and president of the association of hospital chaplains; a member of the inter-congregational committee of the Dutch conference of religious superiors to make the spiritual heritage of religious institutes that have worked in the field of healthcare available to future healthcare workers; member and representative of religious institutes working in the field of healthcare in support of the Bishops' Conference on ethical issues related to the world of care; teacher and spiritual assistant for the Kairos diocesan formation project. After his retirement, he was president of the regional food bank for the poor.

Father Paolo was the initiator, together with the board of

directors of the San Camillo nursing home, of the Hospice De Ark, where he cared for many people and where he himself wanted to be cared for and accompanied, in the Camillian spirit, during the last days of his life.

During his many years of residence in Roermond, he was a spiritual support and a beacon for many people, in both the beautiful and difficult moments of life. Everyone experienced his love of nature during his countless bicycle trips at home and abroad, and he delighted the community with the fruits of the earth, sown and harvested with love and pleasure in the greenhouse behind the community house.

Father Paul died in the Roermond community on June 18, 2025.

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## Bro. René Desbons (Jean) [1933-2025]

**R**ené Desbons, son of Georges Desbons and Marie-Louise Barbé, was born on December 12, 1933, in Paris (14th arrondissement). He was baptized on January 27, 1934, and confirmed on May 25, 1944, in Paris.

While searching for his path in life, Providence led him to Niderviller, where there was an aerium (a shelter for tuberculosis patients) run by



the Camillian religious. For six years, he worked as an assistant to the director. This job gave him the opportunity to get to know the Camillians and to reflect on his vocation.

He asked to enter the Order as a religious brother and was admitted to begin his postulancy in Lyon on March 16, 1953. He received the novice habit on October 31 of the same year. Since there was



already a brother named René in the Province, he was asked to change his first name and chose John the Baptist. He always wanted to keep this first name.

His temporary profession took place in Lyon on November 1, 1954. He remained there for several months and in March 1955 was sent to the Preventorium in Marbach as an assistant. However, in January 1956, he contracted pulmonary tuberculosis and had to spend two months at the Pasteur Hospital in Colmar, then two months at the Saint Camille Hospital in Bry-sur-Marne, followed by three months of convalescence at the Villa Saint Camille in Théoule-sur-Mer.

On his return to Marbach, he was assigned to the medical secretariat: in this community he made his solemn profession on December 9, 1957. On August 16, 1966, the Provincial entrusted him with the secretariat and reception of the Villa Saint Camille in Théoule-sur-Mer, where he remained for the rest of his life.

In November 1977, with the arrival of the new team composed of Fathers Martin, Ketterer, and Muller, who came to give the Villa a more social purpose, he was appointed

head of the bursar's office, a position he held with great pleasure (in his own words) until 1990. From 1990 to 1992, he worked as a multi-skilled employee at the Villa.

On July 1, 1997, he retired as an employee of the Villa.

From 1970 to 1978, Fr. Jean was a member of the diocesan vocational team in Nice, where he had weekly meetings and reflection camps to deepen his baptismal vocation. It was a rich, intense, and fascinating service for him.

He was appointed Superior of the community on March 15, 1994, for one year, and on August 6, 1995, for another three years. He was also Provincial Councilor from 1992 to 1995.

After retiring from active life, Brother Jean wanted to commit himself to external ministry and became a prison visitor. In addition, the prison chaplain asked him to attend Mass regularly every Saturday to meet informally with the prisoners and pray with them. He also visited isolated people who were struggling to cope with widowhood and continued his human formation.

Thanks to the diverse

welcome he received at Villa Saint Camille, Brother Jean was happy to meet many people in addition to the staff of the House. He was fortunate to meet some excellent teachers who passed on to him a taste for reading, general culture, and research. He was "a self-taught man in constant evolution."

Very friendly and open to all, Brother Jean undeniably had a sense of hospitality.

He devoted all his energy to helping people get back on their feet, and to do so he lived his religious consecration and Camillian charism in an exemplary manner, until illness increasingly weakened him. He also supported the Camillian Missions by collecting stamps to sell to a collector.

Brother Jean died on the morning of July 5, 2025, at the Clinique Sainte Brigitte in Grasse. "Lord, give him eternal rest.

*"I am waiting for you, Lord. It is you who must come. But night is already falling on the horizon. I am ready for you.*

*Peace descends upon me from beyond the hills, like a second birth that makes everything eternal."*

(Pastor Alain Houziaux)



“You are my master, and I have no greater consolation than to serve you.”  
**St. Camillus de Lellis**

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