

08<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

Dear Confreres

It is my hope and prayer that you are all keeping well and doing your best in your various ministries. Let us be grateful to God for continued guidance and protection in these difficult times. As we navigate our way through the turbulent challenges of covid-19, let us be conscious of our personal responsibility to vaccinate in order to minimise the risks of covid-19. We cannot encourage other people to vaccinate when we shy away from doing so ourselves.

Confreres, kindly take note of the following information to keep us abreast with events in our Region.

### **1. Canonical visitation**

The Superior General began his canonical visitation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August at Abbot Francis House-Merrivale (Merrivale Zone) where our young confreres are undergoing their initial formation. On the 5<sup>th</sup> August he met each of the three confreres at Mariannahill Monastery. On the 8<sup>th</sup> August was the installation of Archbishop Mandla Jwara, CMM as archbishop of Durban. It was a beautiful occasion, and I was one of the few Mariannahillers (including the Superior General) who attended the installation (the numbers were restricted because of covid-19 regulations). It is hoped that a bigger celebration will be organised once the covid-19 situation improves and larger crowds are permitted to gather. The Superior General arrived in the Region on 10<sup>th</sup> August and on 11 I accompanied him to East London where he met the four confreres. We came back to Mthatha on the 12<sup>th</sup>, and on the 13<sup>th</sup> I again accompanied him to the Maluti Zone where he met each of the confreres. We returned to Mthatha on the 16<sup>th</sup> and he continued with his visitation in the Mthatha Zone. The canonical visitation was concluded with a Regional Council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August in which the Superior General shared his impression of the Region with the Regional Council and highlighted a few areas that the leadership will need to make some follow-up on. I wish to express a word of gratitude to the Superior General for spending this time in our Region, listening to each confrere. It is my hope that each confrere felt free to share openly whatever he needed to share with the Superior General. I want to thank sincerely all the chairpersons of our four zones for their collaboration in organising the Canonical visitation and for the warm welcome and hospitality in each of our zones. Thank you to each one of you too confreres for your cooperation and availability to participate in this important process.

### **2. Priestly ordination of Rev Deacon Laurent Ipoba, CMM**

In the previous communication I had indicated that Deacon Ipoba's ordination would take place on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Kindly note that, this date has been changed to 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and the ordination will be at Mariazell Mission at 10am. We are not sure at this stage if the covid-19 regulations would have been relaxed to allow for many people or not. The Diocesan Ordination Committee will communicate accordingly and guide us. In the meantime, let us keep our confrere in our prayers and support him.

### **3. Workshop on the sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable people**

According to our planning, this workshop should have taken place sometime in July when students were around in the Region. Unfortunately, it had to be cancelled when the country

was moved to lockdown level 4. However, we have arranged for this workshop to take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021, at Abbot Francis Home at 9am. With the exception of students, I kindly appeal to each one of you confreres to budget time and attend this workshop. It is scheduled to begin at 9am and end with lunch at 1pm.

### **4. Praying for the sick**

Our candidate, Bheki Tyobeka has not been very well and had to see the Dr a few times. His condition seems to have improved. Let us keep him in our prayers. Let us also keep in our prayers our elderly confreres, especially Fr Cas at Mater Dolorosa (we assure him that he is not forgotten).

### **5. Bedford Flats Project**

The project of constructing new flats at Bedford is complete. Unfortunately, this project took longer than we had planned due to a number of factors. The challenge now is for us to be innovative and find ways to market the flats and attract more tenants. We will need to work hard on this and ensure that the objective of investing in the construction of these flats is realised.

Confreres, on the occasion of the Feast of the Birthday of our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary I entrust each one of us to her perpetual intercession and that of our Confrere, Blessed Engelmar. Together we Can!

Fr Gideon Sibanda, CMM

Regional Superior