

Dear confreres,

### **1. Introduction**

I wish to sincerely thank our confreres Fr. Raphael Phiri CMM and Fr. Thamsanqa Njiyela CMM and the Emaus Heritage team for arranging such a beautiful celebration of the death anniversary of Abbot Francis. The theme of the celebration was: ***Abbot Francis Pfanner, the missionary pioneer in 200 years of the Catholic Church in South Africa.*** During the ceremony we lit the candle to honour Abbot Francis Pfanner, all the zealous Trappists who came with him as well as all the CMM and CPS missionaries who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the Gospel in our land. It was time to take stock of our lives and ask ourselves whether we are still prophetic and zealous missionaries at our present time. Fr. John Chikadi CMM, the Provincial Superior of Mthatha, presided over the Holy Eucharist. Fr. Mthembeni Dlamini CMM was the preacher of the day and Fr. Bheki Shabalala CMM spoke on the theme of the celebration (The copy of the speech is attached). Hundreds of the faithful graced the ceremony. Many priests, sisters and the laity from Mthatha joined the pilgrimage this year and the choir from Mthatha led us in the liturgy. I thank all the confreres who brought the faithful from their parishes. We had a strong presence from Elandskop parish where Fr. Immanuel Ndlovu CMM and Deacon Lindelwa Dlamini CMM are working. We hope that as more people embrace the virtues of Abbot Francis Pfanner, his process of beatification and canonization will be speeded up.

### **2. Priestly ordination of Deacon David Gowelo CMM**

It is with absolute joy that I announce the priestly ordination of **Deacon David Gowelo CMM on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at Witbank cathedral at 10am.** Bishop Joe Sandri MCCJ, bishop of Witbank, will ordain him and one local seminarian who will be ordained deacon. Although it will be a Sunday, you are all invited and encouraged to attend the ceremony. Hearty congratulations deacon Gowelo! The confreres who wish to attend the ordination from Mariannhill and Mozambique must indicate to me before the end of this month so that we can plan accommodation and transport.

### **3. Annual Retreat**

Our Provincial annual retreat will take place at **Mariannhill Coolock from the 16<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018.** It will begin with supper and an official opening on Sunday evening. Fr. Ntlalohle Dlamini TOR will direct the retreat. Kindly indicate to the Provincial's office before the 16<sup>th</sup> of August if you will attend the retreat. You are all encouraged to attend these spiritual exercises that are meant to build our fraternity and to deepen our spirituality.

### **4. Farewell to Dr. Rod Moffat**

**On the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018 during a special supper, the Monastery community bade farewell to Dr. Moffat who has retired at age 83.** He ministered to the community as a house doctor for thirty years free of charge. He was presented with some Monastery symbolic gifts and a certificate for the recognition of his medical service.

He gave a moving speech about how much he appreciates the Monastery and our community. As a result, he has arranged with Dr. Carpenter, mission doctor, who works at Dennis Hurley Centre to continue looking after our community as a house doctor pro bono. We thank God for such good people. Dr. Kheswa also provides medical care pro bono to our confreres at Mater Dolorosa once every week. Of course once they have referred the patient to the specialist or hospital, we pay the usual exuberant medical bills.

#### 5. **Conference room at Mariannahill Coolock**

There is a house annex to the main building in Mariannahill Coolock. The house has four rooms and a big room which was used as a conference room. Because of old facilities in the rooms and a poor structure of the house which was flooded with water several times resulting in destroying the carpet on the floor, a renovation was needed urgently. The work began at the end of May and it is expected to be completed at the end of June. The renovation was supported by the Korean Catholics whom Fr. Mathew Kim CMM met in his various visits and encounters. **When the renovation is complete, we will have four en suite rooms with a new conference facility.** This will help us to accommodate more people and it will allow us to accommodate two groups at the same time since we also have a smaller conference facility within the main house. South Coast suffers from water shortages hence there is a need to buy another 10,000 liters water tank. We also need new chairs for the new conference room. We thank Fr. Kim for his fundraising efforts. We thank you, confreres, for your continued financial support. Let us continue to support this project as far as we can. You will receive a full report of how the house has fared once Fr. Gideon Sibanda CMM and Bro. Tendai Gandanzara CMM have visited the place and all our other business entities for evaluation.

#### 7. **Veneration of the Sacred Heart in June**

Abbot Francis Pfanner had great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the most Precious Blood of Jesus. Following in his footsteps, Abbot Gerald Wolpert solemnly dedicated Mariannahill and all its mission stations to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1911. When Mariannahill survived the First World War of 1914 without any attack, Abbot Gerald Wolpert made a solemn vow that during the whole month of June there will be adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the whole diocese to thank the Lord for the protection. He vowed that a Sacred Heart chapel will be erected at the hill where the Monastery was originally supposed to be built. Indeed, in 1919 this promise of building the votive chapel was fulfilled and the tradition of the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues during the month of June until today. Unfortunately, many members of the faithful and some young priests in the diocese are not aware of this precious history. Next year the Sacred Heart Chapel will celebrate 100 years of its establishment! It is a good occasion for CMM confreres working in the parishes that they bring some parishioners to celebrate the day with the Monastery and CPS Convent communities on that special hill. I invite you to discuss this idea in your Zone meetings. We need to preserve and keep alive these special devotions which form part of our charism and spirituality.

## 8. New appointments

**Fr. Vukani Mbuso Masango CMM and Fr. Syabonga Nicholas Mbeje CMM** have been re-appointed as rector and vice rector of Abbot Francis House respectively. The term of service is three years. We sincerely thank you, confreres, for your hard labour in guiding our formees. May God richly reward you!

## 9. Donations from parishes

According to the contracts that we have with the dioceses that we serve, we have a right to fundraise for our Congregation and Province. Some parishes have done these campaigns faithfully over the past years e.g. Queensburg/Bellair, Raisethorpe, St. Joseph's in Middelburg, Christ the King, Portshepstone etc. We thank you sincerely for your support. **This year Queensburg/Bellair parish has contributed R7084,00 towards the formation of our brothers. St. Joseph parish, Middelburg have contributed R4000,00 towards the education of our brothers.** I encourage the confreres who have not started these fundraising campaigns to please do so. I am available to come and address the faithful in any parish if confreres in parishes need my assistance.

May I also remind you that in parishes where a priest receives more than one mass intention to persolve on Sunday or during weekdays, he has an obligation to send one mass stipend to the Province. I thank those confreres who do this faithfully. I also thank those confreres who fetch mass intentions from the bursar and persolve them faithfully. That is your contribution to the Province and we appreciate it.

## 10. Repair of the Monastery Tower Clock

About 115 years ago Bro. Nivard Streicher CMM, the great architect, applied for donations in Germany in order to install Mariannahill Monastery and Maria Ratschitz parish tower clocks. The firm by the name FENDT accepted the application and sent the clocks to Mariannahill 114 years ago. Many brothers have taken good care of our Monastery clock. Bro. Herman Krausert CMM, God rest his soul, even had the ability to fix it whenever necessary. Unfortunately, the clock at Maria Ratschitz does not operate anymore. At the moment Bro. Konrad Diethei CMM takes good care of the clock and Bro. Terence assists us when Bro. Konrad is away. Lately the roller brush that turns the pendulum of the clock was not functioning properly which resulted in a clock being erratic. Last year November Bro. Konrad attended the Centenary celebration of the death of Theodor Fendt, the founder of Fendt firm and he received a donation to fix our clock. Mr. Peter Flow who repaired the Reichenau Mill and his friend Micheal are working on the plan to fix the clock. They hope to finish the job before the end of this month. We are grateful to the brothers who look after our precious clock and tower and all the people of good will who have assisted us to keep the clock turning. Once the clock is fixed, Bro. Konrad wishes to introduce another younger confrere on how to maintain the clock.

## 11. Course for preparations for perpetual profession

**Frts. Leopoldo Manuel CMM and Petardo Cachepa CMM** will participate in the above mentioned course at Mariannahill Coolock. Fr. Patrick Chongo CMM, General councilor, and other participants from other Units will arrive on Friday 22 June.

## 12. Home leave for Fr. Superior General

**The Superior General Fr. Thulani Mbuyisa CMM** is due for home-leave in July this year. He will arrive at our Unit on the 01<sup>st</sup> July and leave on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018. Welcome home baba! Enjoy your well-deserved rest. He will join us for the ordination in Witbank and for our feast on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

### Conclusion

Pfanner Development Centre, which is run by Fr. Vincent Mdabe CMM and Mrs. Judy Fiegland, has been at the service of our community and the local people for the past few years. In April this year it completed 10 years of its establishment. Besides the work that the office renders to our community in land and property issues, it also houses offices for various organizations that also provide service and skills development to our society i.e. Catholic Schools Board, Masithuthukisane, Eye Clinic, Community Outreach Centre, Caritas, Justice and Peace office and Phenduka and Qhawe Investment.

**In December this year we shall have a celebration to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Pfanner Development Centre.** You will be informed of the date accordingly. We are grateful that this year, through the Development Office and the assistance of our young brothers and candidates, **we raised R100,000,00 from the sales of the Christmas stocking.** I thank the brothers who participated in the sale of the stockings. Mrs. Ellaine Naicker and Aqua transport are the official sponsors of this fundraising campaign. May God bless them and their business.

May I remind you confreres that June is a month dedicated to the youth in South Africa. Let us remember them in our prayers that God may always show them the right way amidst all the challenges that they face. We wish them, our young brothers, candidates and CMM teachers/professors a restful winter holiday as the schools close this week!

Yours faithfully

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Fr. Bheki Shabalala CMM

Provincial Superior