

Pater Bheki Shabalala berichtet aus Mariannahill, Südafrika

Circular Letter 25 January 2016

Dear confreres,

1. Introduction

On the 21st January 2016 Pope Francis declared that Father Engelmar Unzeitig, a member of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Mariannahill, is a martyr! We rejoice with the whole Congregation and the Church at large in this most inspiring news. How interesting that this good news comes at the end of the year of consecrated life and as we focus on the year of mercy whereby we are all challenged to extend a hand of love and assistance to other person. Fr. Engelmar Unzeitig did more than just extend his hand to the fellow prisoners in Dachau. He gave his life for their wellbeing by serving the inmates in the typhoid ward. He exercised his priestly and religious ministry until the last breath. Let us try to emulate the loving and outreaching actions of Fr. Engelmar Unzeitig by going out of our way to bring joy to the people of God. We shall announce the date of his beatification as soon as we receive it.

2. Celebration of the Principal feast of the Congregational

On the 2nd February 2016 we shall celebrate the principal feast of the Congregation, the Presentation of the Lord, at Mariannahill Monastery at 10am. You are all invited and encouraged to come. Bro. Terence Njodzi, Bro. Michael Chasaya, Frt. Tiago Vilanculo, Frt. David Gowelo and Frt. Lindelwa Dlamini will commit themselves to the Lord and the Congregation through perpetual profession. We congratulate our confreres and we sincerely thank the Monastery community for always hosting this feast. On the same day we shall also celebrate the first profession of our brothers who are completing their novitiate soon.

On the 1st February 2016 our temporally professed brothers will renew their profession during the vespers at 5:15pm at the Monastery Church. During the same service the postulants will be officially received into the canonical year of novitiate. We are grateful this year that among the four postulants that will be received into the novitiate, three of them have a calling to brotherhood.

3. Important dates to diarize

Our annual retreat will take place at the Coolock House from the 11th -18th September 2016. Fr. Christopher Neville OFM will direct us.

The pilgrimage to Emaus to commemorate the death anniversary of the Founder will take place at Emaus mission on the 21st May 2016. Bishop Stanley Dziuba will preside over the Eucharist and preach. The Stations of the Cross will begin at 9:30am. The full program will still follow.

The Ixopo Zone has postponed their Zone meeting from the 24th February to the 9th March 2016 at Queensburg/Bellair parish. This change is necessitated by the workshop that will be conducted by the General Finance Commission during the same week at Coolock House and the absence of the chairperson of the Zone, Fr. Henry Kanjo, who is at home for holidays. Frs. Alfred Igwebuike and Raphael Phiri are also at home for holidays.

Frs. Mthokozisi Khumalo and Sbu Mkhize will conduct a retreat on the year of Mercy at Mariannahill Coolock House from the 3rd -9th July 2016. It is intended for religious and lay people. For more details please phone Fr. Sbu Mkhize on 0717578048.

4. St. Mary's hospital chaplaincy

I sincerely thank Fr. Nkosinathi Dlamini who has served as chaplain of St. Mary's hospital for the past three years. Thank you for your dedication and faithfulness in providing the hospital with the necessary apostolate. Fr. Nkosinathi is starting his new ministry at Elukwatini parish, Witbank Diocese, in the beginning of February. We wish him God's richest blessings.

5. Pre-Capitulars commission in Rome

From the 10th -29th February I will be away to Rome to attend the pre-capitulars commission which prepares for the General Chapter 2016. I also hope to take a few days to visit our confreres in Spain especially the ones who have just been transferred there.

6. Conclusion

It is always good when confreres make a commitment in the meeting and follow it with practical actions. I thank the confreres who have contributed generously to the Club CMM whose purpose is to raise money to complete the purchase of Mariannahill Coolock House. For account details please check the last circular letter of December 2015. The financial administration office will send the results of your financial contribution at the end of each month.

I am also grateful to our benefactors, the confreres doing special apostolates and receiving a stipend for it and putting it in the common fund as well as our senior confreres who hand-in their pension fund to the bursar in order to meet the financial requirements and demands of the Province. God bless you all for your dedication and loyalty. If we share the little that we have and are as a community, we shall indeed go very far! This is what strengthened the early Christian community; they shared everything that they had and were! The new provincial council will begin to serve its term from the 2nd February 2016. I thank the outgoing members of the council Frs. Donatus Ndwane and Vincent Mdabe for their dedicated service and wise counsel during the past three years.

I wish all of you a blessed and fruitful year!

Yours faithfully

Fr. Bheki Shabalala CMM
Provincial Superior