Dear Salesian Sisters and Brothers,

Tonight the provincial council began their July meetings which end Tuesday evening with dinner. As usual, we gathered for prayer, reflection and dinner together. Please keep us in prayer as we reflect and plan on issues pertaining to the province.

We are mourning the death of Fr. John O’Brien who entered his eternal reward on July 6th - sometime in the early morning. The Funeral Mass will be held at St. Dominic Savio in Bellflower on Wednesday, July 12 at 7:30pm. Then, on Friday, July 14, the province will gather once again for a funeral Mass at the Salesian Community Chapel in Richmond, California, followed by the Interment in our Salesian Cemetery.

John O’Brien served in the province in many different roles. But, for 25 years, John served as a U.S Navy Military Chaplain. As a Catholic Chaplain, John served at Camp Pendleton, California, Japan, Paris Island, South Carolina, Okinawa and Sicily. In the province Fr. John held different positions such as teacher, Catechist, Prefect of Studies, associate Pastor and Pastor. We are grateful for John’s life and his generous service to the Congregation, the Province, the Church and his country. Through his ministry, Fr. John touched many young people and impacted their lives for the better. In his latter years, John led a quiet life at St. Joseph’s Salesian Renewal Center, Rosemead and St. John Bosco High School, Bellflower. He didn’t speak much but was always present at all the community events and functions. In the last few years, it became increasingly more difficult to carry a conversation with John but he liked when people acknowledged him and gave him attention. He always smiled back.

Our Salesian Constitutions tell us:

The community supports with greater love and prayer the confrere who is gravely ill. When the hour comes for him to bring his consecrated life to its highest fulfillment, his brothers help him to enter fully into Christ’s paschal mystery.

Death for the Salesian is made bright by the hope of entering into
the joy of his Lord, and when it happens that a Salesian dies working for souls, the Congregation has won a great triumph.

The memory of departed confreres unites, “in a love that will not pass away”, those who are still pilgrims with those who are already resting in Christ.

We have a won a great triumph by the witness and life of Fr. John O’Brien. Our Faith helps us to see death as a passage to new life and fulfillment and not as an end. Don Bosco said a great deal about death to his confreres and boys. He prepared them by having the monthly “exercise for a Happy Death,” as it was called. He taught them to die to sin so as to be ready one day to welcome death in the Joy of divine friendship. We Salesians should not look at death with alarm. To John O’Brien we say, “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your master” (Mt 25, 23). Let us keep Fr. John in our prayers as he rests in the “Salesian Garden,” and in the presence of God, Mary, Don Bosco and all the Salesian Saints.

Now we have one more who will intercede for us.

On July 16, the Salesian Directors of the United States will gather at Don Bosco Hall, Berkeley for a week-long workshop. Fr. Bill Jarema will facilitate two of the days (Tuesday and Wednesday) with topics of reconciliation, healing, rebuilding communities and dealing with some of the toxicity that can hamper our community relationships. Many times a community is held hostage because of the negativity and anger of a community member. As leaders of community and the Salesian mission to youth, we must be open for dialogue, for reconciliation and building unity. That is our role as animators of the Mission and the community. If we as leaders do not know how to gather people for conversation and dialogue, or if we transmit our anger and frustrations to the community members, we are doing a disservice to the brothers and the mission. Unfortunately, sometimes this does exist. We are asked to grow in maturity and holiness. We are challenged to live out the Gospel values given to us by Christ. Are they too idealistic and impractical? Then, our discipleship and our following Jesus is impractical and a waste of time and effort. Jesus has called us to a life of communion, as he is in union with the Father and the Spirit. We are to sit and listen to each other, show compassion, mercy and understanding. And, together, with flexibility and trusting hope, move forward in touching the hearts and lives of the young and being prophets of fraternity.

Please keep us in your prayers and keep all our young people who are either helping out at some summer camp or living out the Salesian summer camp experience. May our lives give witness to that communion and brotherly unity Christ wished for us.

With warm regards and gratitude,

Fr. Ted Montemayor, SDB
JULY
SALESIANS MISSIONARY INTENTIONS
IN THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY FATHER’S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR 2017

For Salesians in Europe
That Projec Europe, a missionary project of the Congregation, may bear abundant fruit.

During his historic pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (1982) Saint John Paul II said: “I address to you, old Europe, a cry full of love: Return to yourself, be yourself! Rediscover your origins. Relive your roots”. Project Europe of the Salesians of Don Bosco is gradually moving ahead on the road of this prophetic and missionary appeal. We pray that this journey may be consolidated and become fruitful, so that the Salesian communities in Europe may be renewed in the joy of the Salesian charism and mutual acceptance of the confreres.

Province Calendar

July, 2017

4  TU  Independence Day
7  FR  Bl. Maria Romero Meneses, FMA
9-11 SU-TU  Provincial Council Meeting
            Provincial Residence, SF
17-21 MO-FR  SUE-SUO Directors’ Workshop,
            Berkeley
30-4 SU-FR  Retreat, San Juan Bautista

August, 2017

13-15 SU-TU  Provincial Council Meeting,
            St. John Bosco HS, Bellflower
15  TU  Assumption of Our Lady
25  FR  Blessed Maria Troncatti
26  SA  Blessed Zeffirino Namuncurà
Greetings and Welcome back to Camp Salesian as we kick off our second week. Camp commences each day at 9:00am with an introduction from Camp’s Headmaster Johnny, followed by a morning prayer led by Brother Paul. The Good Morning themes for this week varied from dancing with God, god’s vocations, and understanding your mission in life.

After our campers participated in their daily assembly they are then dismissed to their assigned groups where they start working on the daily activities. Some of these activities include; swimming, arts and crafts, sports, game room, rally prep, field trips on Wednesdays, Holy Mass on Fridays, faith sharing and S.T.E.A.M (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.)

For S.T.E.A.M this week the counselors had prepared a fun science experiment for our campers. Campers made a paper mache volcano out of a plastic bottle, newspaper, glue, water, cardboard box and paint. For the lava they used vinegar, baking soda, food coloring, and paper. Campers learned what makes a chemical reaction and when it occurs. This upcoming week the campers will be able to test their volcanoes for eruption.

For arts and crafts the kids were given an activity out of construction paper. Campers had to create their own object from a puzzle with seven pieces.

This past Tuesday the campers in the upper class went to The Autry Museum where they learned about the history, culture and art of the American West.

On Wednesday we had our second field trip which was a trip to Los Angeles Zoo. This field trip in specific the children were really excited for!

Thursday afternoon we had our weekly tournaments in the game room. Campers played against each other. Games varied from air hokey, pool, basketball, chess, tic tac toe, connect four, and jenga.
On Friday campers and counselors walked over to St. Mary’s Church at 10:00am to celebrate the Holy Mass led by Father Luis. Campers were able to hear the word of god and sing songs along with their counselors. Stay tuned for our upcoming and exciting third week.

Be Great. Be Salesian!

Melissa Somoza
Marketing and Camp Media
Salesian Boys And Girls Club of Los Angeles
This summer I have been assigned to camp at San Luis Rey Parish in Laredo, Texas and let me tell you it is HOT!!! Temperatures have reached up to 110° during the day and can still be in the high 90’s even as the sun is starting to set. However, as I began getting to know the animators who will help lead the camp during orientation week, I quickly realized that this was going to be an awesome camp season. Br. Gustavo, who is leading the camp this year, had done the majority of the leg work before I arrived. The core team that he assembled is truly amazing and extremely excited for camp.

This year’s camp theme is “We Are Family,” the same as the Rector Major’s Strenna. I don’t think Br. Gus could’ve picked a more appropriate theme. This truly is a family! Most of the animators have been to camp since they were campers themselves and they continue to come back to help year after year. They’ve literally all grown up together and have really bonded as a family. Being my first year here, they even welcomed me immediately as a member of their family.

While I may have been hesitant at first to come to this camp, I now feel incredibly blessed to have been given this opportunity. I was asked to be in charge of the prayer moments for the entire camp season, including orientation week. And all I can say is that the Holy Spirit was really guiding me during those moments. Somedays I didn’t know what to say or do that would really speak to the animators, but in the end everything came out fine.

Some of the animators would approach me afterwards and thank me for the message relayed, saying that it really spoke to them. One even wrote me a letter explaining a painful part of her past and how my talk gave her the courage to move forward. I can’t put into words how touched I was and how I continue to feel blessed to now be a part of this family.

Orientation week and Week 1 of camp are now behind us, we have three more weeks to go. Even though it’s hot outside, we’re definitely having a blast! Please continue to keep our camp in your prayers.

Br. Benito Guerrero, Jr, SDB
It’s a yearly routine. I drive St. Luke SYLCers to Aptos in time to get them signed and settled in and then return almost a week later in the early morning hours to bring them home. The conversation on the drive to SYLC each year usually focuses on the stories they’ve heard from past SYLC participants and is tinged with questioning as they wonder aloud: “Who will we meet?” “Will we have a good time?” and “How will the food be?” This year, however, the conversation was dominated on their joy of escaping the 109 degree heat in the 209 (Stockton).

The conversation on the ride home at the end of SYLC 2017 was also a bit unusual. Usually the SYLCers, after the many goodbye hugs from their new friends, load up into the car to head home. I wait to hear all their stories, but by the time we were on Highway 17, they’re fast asleep, completely worn out by yet another great year at SYLC. But THIS year was different. They talked and talked about the strength surveys, their new experiences, and the hundreds of ideas they can’t wait to implement back in the parish.

What seemed to excite them the most was the Friday visit from our pastor, Fr. Ramon, and the principal and vice principal from our home parish. Together with the SYLCers from Mary Help of Christians they learned about the various ‘back at home’ ministries represented. Interspersed with information sharing from these ministries was, “I didn’t know your program included that!” “We’re on the same parish grounds and we never knew this!” and “We need to work together and support each other!” The meeting brought our ministries closer together, helped each ministry understand the other a little better, and ended with a firm commitment to build TOGETHER a Salesian mentality and spirituality back in Stockton.

As CYM at St. Luke’s, I’m always pleased to see the fruits of SYLC shape our parish youth leaders and in turn strengthen our ministry “to, by, for, and with” young people. This year I’m overjoyed with the additional emphasis they brought home of working closer with the overall community. Thanks SYLC team…another great year!

Paul DeValle
CYM, St. Luke, Stockton
John Paul II spent the bulk of his pontificate attacking the lie that was Soviet hegemony. We renew, cleanse, and redeem the word. The Word will undo the chaos of lies. People listen to great orators and poets because they’re looking for truth.

Matt Schiller wins the Frannie

The Catholic Press Association’s highest award, the St. Francis de Sales Award, was presented at lunch on Friday, June 23. It honors an individual for his or her contributions to Catholic journalism. When voting, CPA members usually face a tough choice among three or four nominees.

This year’s winner was Matt Schiller, business manager of Catholic New York. Accepting the award, Mr. Schiller said that the Catholic press isn’t just a job; it’s a passion. We’re evangelists of the same Catholic faith that the Catholic saints of Quebec exemplify (St. Francis de Laval, St. Marie of the Incarnation, and Blessed Catherine of St. Augustine). He highlighted his mentors in the Catholic press and stressed the importance of mentoring, both teaching one’s colleagues and learning from them. His final advice was to build personal bridges with people; thank everyone; and forgive everyone.

Read more: http://cny.org/stories/catholic-new-yorks-matt-schiller-receives-cpas-st-francis-de-sales-award,15767

Four Salesians ordained on June 24

Story and photos by Fr. Mike Mendl, SDB

Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, SDB, ordained four Salesians to the presbyterate on June 24. They are Fr. Paul Phuoc Trong Chu, Fr. Minh Duc Dang, Fr. Jean Wilgintz Polynice, and Fr. Dieunel Victor.

The rite was celebrated at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Pelham Manor, N.Y., starting at 10:00 a.m. The church was packed with several hundred Salesian priests, brothers, and sisters, Salesian Cooperatorists, Don Bosco Volunteers, Salesian parishioners, the ordinands’ families and friends, and young people from various Salesian works, including a sizeable delegation from as far away as Toronto.

(My arrival at the ordination was delayed by an act of God, i.e., a flight cancellation caused by bad weather as I attempted to get to New York from Quebec [see article, pp. 15-20].)

Fr. Chu, 34, was born in Vietnam and came to the U.S. in 1992. His family’s home parish is St. Paul the Apostle in Springfield, Mass. His father, Duong Van Chu, is deceased. His mother is Son Thi Pham, and he has two younger sisters. He entered the Salesians in 2007 and made his first profession of vows on August 16, 2009. He studied theology at the Studium Theologicum Salesianum (the Ratisbonne Institute) in Jerusalem from 2013 to 2017 and has been assigned to Don Bosco Prep High School in Ramsey, N.J., as coordinator of campus ministry.

Fr. Dang, 34, also was born in Vietnam and came to
I am approaching the subject of weight gingerly. Why? I don’t want people to think that I am critical of you just because you might be on the “heavy” side. I want to have a deeper understanding of weight and how that affects your health. For the coming weeks, we will unravel how our weight could change our health and more importantly what can we do about it. I dare not offend you by making broad statements about weight or obesity. Hence I was extremely happy to come across this website “Weight Matters” in their introductory statement about why weight matters. It begins with an opening statement which reflects my belief and my motivation to begin our conversation on weight.

The issue of weight matters to people in many different ways. It evokes many different emotions and can often be difficult to talk about with your healthcare provider, spouse, friend, loved one or others.

The most important reason why weight matters is because of your health.

There are many health implications that accompany excess weight, such as diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea and others. Sometimes weight can even affect emotional health as well. It is not uncommon for someone dealing with weight issues to be affected by depression or a lack of self-confidence.

Gaining excess weight and realizing the health implications is not always the easiest thing to recognize. In fact, most Americans do not realize that they are affected by excess weight or obesity, or even at risk for weight-related conditions. This is why it is so important for you to realize that YOUR WEIGHT DOES MATTER!

Let me begin by going into the physiological component of a fat cell this week. From Wikipedia in its definition of Adipocyte: Adipocytes, also known as lipocytes and fat cells, are the cells that primarily compose adipose tissue, specialized in storing energy as fat.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: get your weight and height ready. Next week we will need these measurements to know your BMI (Body Mass Index).

The Care Ministry welcomes your comments/suggestions: kunlouis@gmail.com

June 29, 2017

Fr. Polynice, 43, was born in Haiti and came to the U.S. in 1998. He became a member of St. Joseph’s Parish in Spring Valley, N.Y., in the New York Archdiocese. He entered the Salesians in 2004 and made his first profession of vows on August 16, 2007. He is the first Haitian-American to profess as a member of either U.S. Salesian province. He studied theology at Seton Hall University’s Immaculate Conception Seminary in South Orange, N.J., from 2013 to 2017 and has been assigned to the retreat team at Don Bosco Retreat Center in Haverstraw-Stony Point, N.Y.

Fr. Victor, 34, was born in Haiti and came to the U.S. in 2000. His family joined St. Jerome’s Church in Brooklyn. His parents, Camil and Marie Victor, are deceased. He entered the Salesians in 2004 and made his first profession of vows on August 16, 2008. He studied theology at the Ratisbonne in Jerusalem from 2013 to 2017 and has been assigned to Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Takoma Park, Md., as coordinator of youth ministry.

At the end of the ordination Mass, the four new priests together gave their first blessing to Cardinal Rodriguez. Then there was a scrum of parents, relatives, friends, and members of the Salesian family for blessings, and many photographers doing their best to get pictures.

A reception dinner followed at the Surf Club in New Rochelle, N.Y. There each of the ordinati spoke brief words of gratitude to God, Mary Help of Christians, their parents and family, their confreres, and their friends.
Dodge Disease with Diet

Abstracted by Sheila Kun, Cooperator

We are constantly bombarded with information about what food is good to prevent health problems or to improve our immunity. Food therapy is not new. But how much do you know about the true value of the food that you choose to be on your dining table? I found this article from the Nutrition Action Healthletter, June edition, 2017 very interesting. They offered 25 health and food related quiz, I failed to answer correctly on many of them. Hence I thought bringing them to you in different parts would improve your knowledge about food and its effect on our health. It is better to hear from experts than fake news that are floating around. There are the first 8 questions, and stay tune next week for the answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Which is LEAST likely to help prevent memory loss?</td>
<td>a) Controlling blood pressure, b) Filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables, c) Keeping a lid on blood sugar, d) Avoiding gluten, e) Getting enough exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Which is LEAST likely to cause food poisoning?</td>
<td>a) Mayonnaise, b) Chicken, c) Green salad, d) Ground beef, e) Raw sprouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Which is LEAST likely to lower the risk of breast cancer?</td>
<td>a) Staying at a healthy weight, b) Exercising on most days, c) Avoiding soy foods, d) Not taking hormones after menopause, e) Limiting alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Which is likely to have the fewest pesticide residues?</td>
<td>a) Tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Which is LEAST likely to lower your risk of type 2 diabetes?</td>
<td>a) Almond milk, b) Spinach, c) Bran cereal, d) Beans, e) Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Which is LEAST likely to reduce arthritis pain in your knees?</td>
<td>a) Taking a 30 minute walk on most days, b) Strengthening your quad muscles, c) Doing aquatic exercise, d) Taking Vitamin D, e) Losing excess weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Four of these conditions are linked to sexual dysfunction in men. Which one ISN’T</td>
<td>a) Obesity, b) Diabetes, c) Muscle loss, d) High LDL cholesterol, e) High blood pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Which is LEAST likely to lower your risk of stroke?</td>
<td>a) Lowering high blood pressure, b) Taking B vitamins, c) Filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables, d) Exercise daily, e) Limiting alcohol to 1 drink a day (women) or 2 drinks (men)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: Take the quiz.
The 148th Missionary Expedition that the Rector Major will send off from Valdocco on 24 September 2017 has more colour and form than any earlier ones. 21 Salesians from around the world are ready for their marching orders. Three of them are Salesian Brothers and eighteen are priests and clerics. Sixteen of these missionaries are still formation, and their average age is 26.6 years. The youngest is twenty-two! And one of the priests is 61 years! Beautiful! Don Bosco smiles and takes pleasure in seeing the growth and courage of his children. Three of the destinations are of particular interest: two trainees will leave for Japan, the land of Don Cimatti; two other trainees, for Yakutia - Siberia, in eastern Russia, among the coldest areas in the world; and two others - a priest and a perpetually professed coadjutor - will be members of the first Salesian presence in Malaysia, which will become the 134th country with a Salesian presence.

Everyone is ready to go anywhere and forever!

This is the Society of St. Francis de Sales Don Bosco dreamed of and founded! A Missionary Society!

Fr. Guillermo Basañes SDB, Councillor for the Missions

With Don Bosco ... on vacation!

In many countries in the northern hemisphere, young people are in vacation in July and August. This creates also a great opportunity for missionary volunteering. The Congregation has a very rich and varied experience in this area. Many young people spend a few weeks, even a month, in various forms of apostolate, animation, volunteering or summer experiences in different parts of the world. From Slovakia some young people go to Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Siberia; from the Czech Republic to Bulgaria; from Slovenia to Angola; from Malta and Austria to India; from Italy to Egypt, from Spain to Morocco, from the United States to Mexico.

It is internally, within their own countries, above all, where the most varied activities take place, such as summer camps: In Italy there are the "summer boys", in Australia, "Cagliero camps", in Brazil "Boscolandia". Some other initiatives are more missionary, such as the "mission weeks" or the GAM (Missionary Action Groups) in San Paulo; the JMS (Salesian Missionary Youth) in Uruguay; the GRUMS (Missionary Groups) in Colombia; in the Democratic Republic of Congo the active members of “Missionary Groups” go to rural areas on holidays; in Angola more than a hundred university students go “to experience mission” in the forgotten areas of the country. We could go on indefinitely over the entire Congregation: India, Vietnam, Nigeria, Ghana, Madagascar, Australia, Argentina, Ecuador, Mexico, Venezuela ... all with similar experiences.

And what do they do? The types of activity vary depending on the context. There are the typical activities of daily oratories, remedial learning, activities of cultural formation of young people; Bible-study groups, human rights education, health education, emotional and sexual education, pastoral animation of groups; workshops of handicrafts, theatre, dance, music, sports, tournaments. They may make family visits, where they pray together, reading a passage from the Bible and blessing the home. The good that comes to the missions is great, but what is even greater is what takes place in the hearts of the young “missionaries”, giving rise to an explosion of happiness, which will positively influence their lives for ever. I once received an SMS from a girl who was returning from one of these missionary vacations. She was from a wealthy family, one of a group of 30 university students in Angola. They had been to a difficult place, hot, very poor, infested with mosquitoes, malaria, no toilets, sleeping on mats on the ground, ... Her message read: “Thank you very much, Father, for making me discover where true happiness is.”

Happy holidays in the missions!

P. Martin Lasarte, sdb
I was a member of the 144th Missionary Expedition (2013). We received the usual training at Rome and Turin. When I finally reached my mission in France, I found myself in a sea of real difficulties to find my place in the community and a meaning in my presence. I even questioned my Salesian vocation.

The third meeting of the Missionaries of Project Europe took place at Munich in 2016. It was the first programme of this sort for me after the initial formation in Rome, and I was doubly impressed.

In the first place I realized that I am really participating in a project that goes beyond my personal plans and aspirations, a project that has its origins in the Holy Spirit. It has already produced great fruits through other confreres who are responding to Him with enthusiasm.

In addition, at Munich in Bavaria, it became clear that, for the provinces that welcome us, Project Europe is not something to be added on to or in parallel to the Provincial project. It is a renewal of the Salesian charism “together with” the confreres of the Province we join. It is a project we build together with them. This rid me of the guilt feelings I used to have, thinking I was not contributing enough to France.

I believe that, in our FRB province, we have been fortunate to have a provincial that is open and very supportive of Project Europe. His advice animates the implementation of the project. This has had a significant positive impact on our integration as missionaries from abroad. We feel wanted, welcomed and accompanied.

To return to my personal case, at my arrival I was sent to the community where the current Provincial was the Rector and Parish Priest. He was later replaced by the former vice provincial. I was prepared, step by step over a period of two years, to take charge of the centre and to assume responsibility for this job.

Though I am an African and from abroad, the former vice-provincial, who had been the Parish Priest and the rector of the community, passed the baton on to me. Even more wonderful was that, when I took over these posts, he remained on as my vicar for a year before moving to another community. This was a great witness of his strength and a conversion for myself. It was also a powerful testimony to the parish community and lay collaborators. This single simple act of his was evidence enough of our brotherly love and the trust placed in me.

P. Christian Tshala-Wika
Congolese, Missionary in France

Witness of Salesian Missionary Sanctity

Fr. Pierluigi Camerani SDB, Postulator General for the Causes of Saints

Servant of God, Father Rodolfo Lunkenbein (1939-1976) was killed in the courtyard of the Salesian mission of Meruri (Brazil) on July 15, 1975, for having chosen to dedicate his life to the defense of Bororo Indians. He was killed along with the Servant of God, Simão Bororo (1937-1976), who had tried to protect the missionary. The motto that Father Rodolfo had chosen at his priestly ordination was “I came to serve and give life.” On his last visit to Germany in 1974, his mother begged him to be careful because they had been informed of the risks that his son was taking. He replied, “Mom, why are you worried? There is nothing more beautiful than dying for God’s cause. That would be my dream.”

For Salesians in Europe

That Project Europe, a missionary project of the Congregation, may bear abundant fruit.

During his historic pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (1982) Saint John Paul II said: “I address to you, old Europe, a cry full of love: Return to yourself, be yourself! Rediscover your origins. Relive your roots.” Project Europe of the Salesians of Don Bosco is gradually moving ahead on the road of this prophetic and missionary appeal. We pray that this journey may be consolidated and become fruitful, so that the Salesian communities in Europe may be renewed in the joy of the Salesian charism and mutual acceptance of the confreres.