



Ministers of the Infirm

Newsletter

Camillian world seen from Rome, and Rome seen from the world

N. 97



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Message of the Superior General

Our Ministry

“Our Order, formed by its nature of clerical religious and lay religious, called by fathers and brothers by St. Camillus, has, as its purpose, complete service of the sick person in the totality of his being” (Constitution Art. 43).

Dear confreres,

I greet you with fraternity and gratitude, hoping that this letter of mine finds you in peace and health!

I would like to share with you, briefly, some thoughts on our Camillian ministry and ongoing activities that keep the Camillian spirit of our commitment glowing both at the central level of the Order and in the various provinces, delegations and missions.

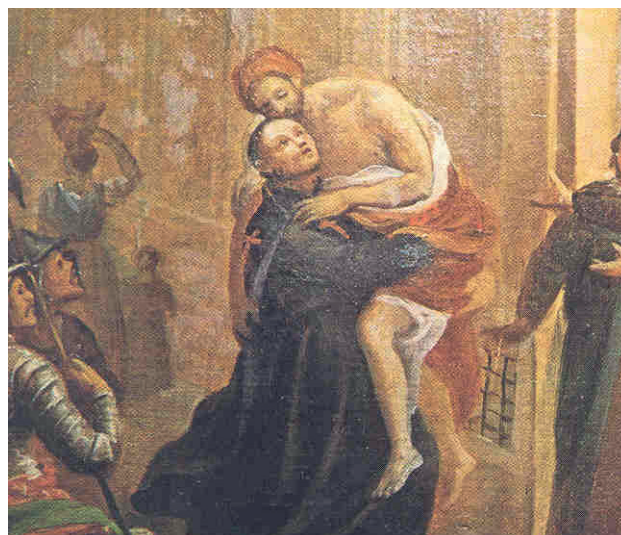
During the pastoral visits, together with the consulta, I witnessed how the commitment of our confreres and their collaborators is constant and generates intense ministerial experiences of caring for the sick and the poor: such a witness elicits credibility and esteem

toward the charism of mercy that God, through the intercession of St. Camillus, still entrusts to us as consecrated individuals and communities.

Together with the general councilors, I have already visited all the countries of Latin America, except Brazil, where Camillians live and work. In Africa, I have already had the opportunity to meet Camillian religious and communities in Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda and Benin-Togo. On the European continent, I have made some visits to Camillians in Germany, Hungary, Holland, France, Ireland, Austria, Georgia, Armenia and in some communities of the three Camillian provinces in Italy. In Asia, together with two councilors, we met the confreres of the young delegation in Indonesia. The general councilors also met individual religious and communities in different provinces, delegations and missions on specific events pertaining to their area of responsibility within the general administration of the Order.

In general, our ministry is experienced positively in the provinces and delegations. This 'identity' adherence to the Camillian charism is to be credited to the effort and commitment of each of you, and to the concrete and fraternal collaboration among the provinces. I have been able to see the importance of the Camillian ministry of presence and 'touch' alongside the sick, the fragile, and the neediest. The sick are welcomed, assisted and cared for with love and competence in our chaplaincies, hospitals and social facilities, with different latitudes and with the nuances proper to different cultures. Our services enjoy good credibility with ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and especially with the 'people' who daily entrust their hope for healing and consolation to us. At the same time, we wish to deepen the discussion on our large health care facilities present in some provinces. It is crucial to discern the extent of the testimonial credibility ad-extra and ad-intra of the religious community and the economic sustainability of these structures, with a future-oriented perspective.

So many religious are dynamically involved in the health ministry of national bishops' conferences and in diocesan life, and they also undertake important roles. In some countries, through Camillian centers of pastoral formation and their offering of specialized conferences



and courses, it is possible to interact with the fabric of health care and volunteerism.

In contexts where the Catholics are a minority among the great spiritual and religious traditions, our confreres have gained credibility precisely through the quality of service and the gratuitousness of mercy toward the sick.

With much creativity every day you interpret and actualize to the best of your ability the true meaning of our charism even in difficult contexts.

The collaboration of the Lay Camillian Family, combined with the animation of volunteers' groups, of the faithful in the parishes and rectories entrusted to our pastoral care, represents a sign of the times that appeals to us, consecrated Camillians.

With this in mind, the upcoming jubilee, a joyful and grateful expression of the 450th anniversary of the conversion of Camillus de Lellis, our Founder (February 2, 2025 - to December 8, 2025), will be a providential opportunity to implement the varied ministry we already live and to discern and plan new areas with hope and commitment.

I invite you all to get involved in the various celebrative moments that aim precisely at this goal - our charismatic legacy, commitment to current events, and hope for the future. The central commission has prepared the general jubilee program and has already sent it to all provinces and delegations: only four celebrative

events are planned with all members of the Camillian Charismatic Family (CCF). I hope that all of you live the jubilee with intensity and participate in large numbers in the scheduled celebrations. The various religious institutes and communities of the CCF that are present in the provinces and delegations shall organize other jubilee events locally.

The General Secretariat for Ministry in collaboration with CCF members is finalizing the planning and practical aspects for the opening of the Camillian Study Center (CSC) in Rome. As defined by the last General Chapter of the Order (May 2022), this institution will have the task of coordinating the various Camillian Pastoral Care Centers in the world, of promoting Camillian culture in all possible ways, of preserving and keeping alive the material, immaterial and cultural heritage of the former Camillianum (the 'brand', the library, the archives, the reflections and academic publications, etc.) in the Church and in the post-modern cultural and social context, and of creating a collaborative synergy among the various religious institutes of the CCF to support research and publication of scientific articles on all topics pertaining to the world of health.

In order to activate and publish with continuity a scientific journal of the Camillian Study Center and to value the many intellectual skills of Camillian religious, we have already initiated a collection of personal data of several confreres and sisters who have already acquired specialized skills in the world of health and health care. We request provincial and delegation councilors to take steps to complete the data collection, as per the digital format that the secretariat for ministry is preparing.

The CSC will be located in the premises of the former Camillianum. Since this facility is very spacious, the NGO Salute e Sviluppo and the CADIS Foundation will also move their operational headquarters and activities to the former Camillianum, so that together with the CSC they will form a single ministerial, operative, and academic hub.

Under the coordination of the councilor for Ministry Fr. Médard Aboué, a number of regional secretariats for ministry have already been activated: in Asia, Francophone Africa, and Europe. Fr. Médard's meetings continue in order to complete the organizational structure of the secretariats for ministry in different geographical areas of the Order.

The journey of 'Camillian synodality' continues through the periodic meeting of the superiors general and the respective councils of religious institutes, especially women's institutes, which share Camillian charism and ministry. Such meetings are also valuable in finalizing a series of joint initiatives that we intend to complete by the end of the present six-year term.

Dear confreres, despite the difficulties of all kinds of our time and the specific context of everyone's life, let us continue to undertake every service in the world of health, wherever we are, for the building up of the Kingdom of God and the promotion of humanity. Likewise, I also call for evangelical discernment in the face of the major challenges already outlined in our Strategic Plan 2023-2028. I once again invite provinces and delegations and every religious to make it a true instrument of participation and edification of our common vocation of service to the sick.

May the grace of the Lord awaken in us greater generosity and availability for an ever more effective, enthusiastic and creative Camillian commitment.

May Mary, Queen of the Ministers of the Sick, continue to protect our steps.



Fr. Pedro Tramontin MI
Superior General

FECUPAL-Hospice San Camillo and UDLA promote Palliative Care in Ecuador with ground-breaking congress

By Juan Pablo Hernández

FECUPAL - Hospice San Camillo of the Camillian Religious of Colombia-Ecuador Delegation (led by Fr. Alberto Readelli and Director Lucy Maldonado), in collaboration with the School of Psychology and Education of the University de Las Américas in Quito, Ecuador, successfully organized the 3rd Palliative Care Congress, from August 13 to 17. The event was held in a hybrid mode, combining virtual and in-person sessions.

The main objectives of this congress were to update health care personnel on Palliative Care, to promote this specialty as a viable option for students from different areas of health, to contribute to the ongoing education process for staff, trainees, and collaborators of FECUPAL-Hospice San Camillo, and to support the development of Palliative Care in the country.

This important congress, considered a landmark for palliative care in Ecuador, was attended by many leading professionals in the field. These included Brother José Carlos Bermejo, Provincial Superior of Spain, and Xabier Azkoitia, Professor of the Center for Humanization of Health and head of the Spiritual Care service at the San Camillo Center in Tres Cantos (Madrid). Both participated with talks on topics such as “Unwanted Loneliness,” a challenge to promote a palliative culture in which “one does not die alone” and qualified and humanized accompaniment is guaranteed.



Other topics covered included resilience and “Le 5 pulci del lutto” (The 5 Fleas of Bereavement), factors that complicate grief. It was pointed out that good care in palliative care at the end of life prevents complicated bereavement.

With the aim of deepening accompaniment in bereavement, a reel with tips for dealing with bereavement in a healthy way was also recorded. As part of the congress activities, meetings were also organized with St. Camillus Hospice volunteers and the Lay Camillian Family, promoting spaces for growth, reflection and meeting as Camillian Religious with the desire to teach how to care with passion and with more heart in our hands at the end of life.

Ongoing Formation Program in the Brazilian Camillian Province

The participants delved into the theme “Integral Anthropology and the Crisis of Contemporary Culture: Reflections, Consequences, and Directions.”

By **Felipe Rodrigo de Almeida**

The Brazilian Camillian Province recently had a meaningful opportunity for learning and reflection during the ongoing formation program held from July 23 to 26, 2024.

Under the guidance of Fr. Rafael Solano from the Archdiocese of Londrina, participants delved into the theme “Integral Anthropology and the Crisis of Contemporary Culture:

Reflections, Consequences, and Directions.” Fr. Rafael’s insightful reflections provided fresh perspectives and pathways to navigate the challenges of our time.

The program took place at Casa Mary Ward in Itapeperica da Serra, São Paulo, an inspiring setting that enriched the spiritual journey of our religious.

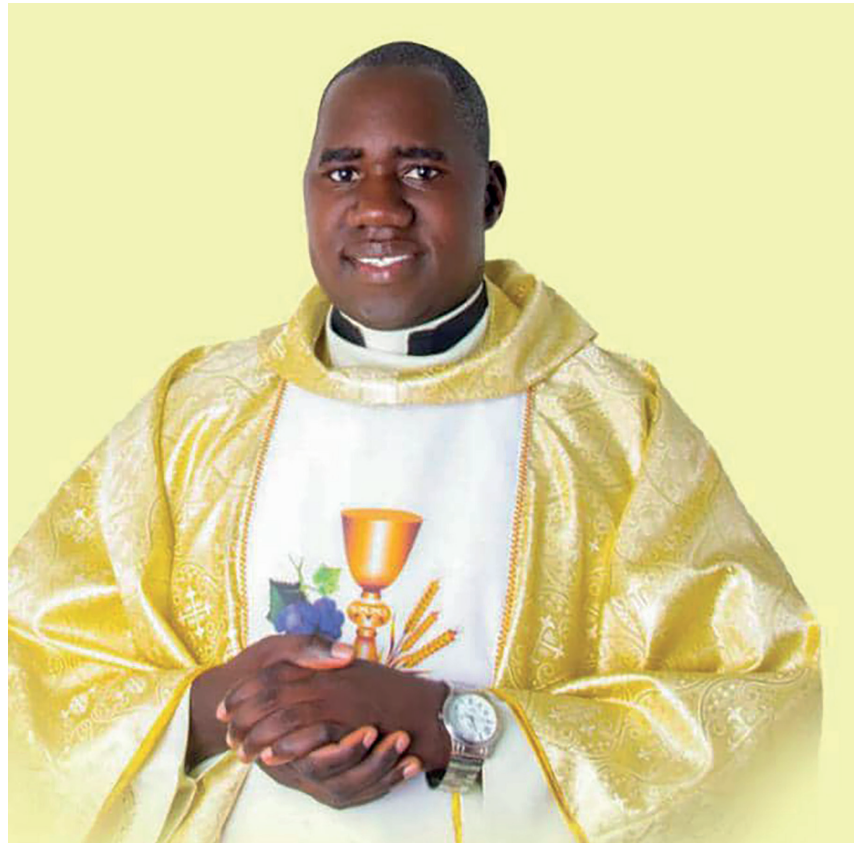


Camillian mission in Uganda celebrates the priestly ordination of Fr. Isaac Ojok, MI

By Gyaviira Matovu

The Camillian Mission in Uganda celebrated with great joy the ordination of Rev. Fr. Isaac Ojok. He was ordained on 1st August, 2024 during the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rt. Rev. Sanctus Lino Wanok, the Bishop of Lira Catholic Diocese at the Ordination ground of Lira Diocese. Fr. Ojok is the fifth Ugandan Camillian priest. On that day, he joined the presbyterate with one religious and two diocesan priests. The celebration was coloured with warmth and jubilation, as the Camillian fraternity and the church in Lira Diocese welcomed the new spiritual leaders.

In his homily, the Bishop encouraged the candidates to embrace the ministry with love and to be conscious of the dynamics of the contemporary world. The Bishop said, “God wants order, the world wants disorder; God wants life, the world wants death; God wants unity, the world wants disunity so that they can rule the hearts of humanity. Your call is to be the light in the darkness of the world. Make people see the light of Christ.” Later, other speakers congratulated the newly ordained priests and gave



them an assurance of support in the ministry in addition to other messages of advice. The Chancellor of Lira Diocese, Fr. Emmanuel Opio urged the newly ordained to be obedient and accountable priests; and never to account to themselves, but to their superiors. In his message, Fr. Ojok expressed his gratitude to God for the gift of priesthood, and the love of all who have supported

him during the formation. He further requested the people of God to pray for them, and to pray for more priests.

The following day, Fr. Ojok celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass at his parents' home in Lira Cathedral Parish. He also witnessed the wedding of Nancy and Aron, a young and energetic couple. It was a joyous celebration marked

by a sense of gratitude to God for calling Fr. Ojok, who reaffirmed his commitment to serve the Lord in the Ministry to the sick. Fr. Joseph Ogwal, the Pastoral Coordinator of Lira Diocese and preacher of the day commended Fr. Ojok for his perseverance and exhorted him to embrace unity in diversity. He also elaborated the relationship and connection between the sacrament of matrimony and the sacrament of Holy Orders as sacraments of service. Both celebrations were attended by the Camillian religious and those in formation. The mission Superior, Rev. Fr.



Babychan MI, exhorted Fr. Ojok, “Endeavour to be a holy priest. If you cultivate a strong relationship with God, He will be with you and people will come to you.” As the Ugandan mission celebrates 25 years of its mission, the Ordination

of Fr. Ojok Isaac comes as a special blessing.

Fr. Isaac Ojok now embarks on his lifelong journey of service surrounded by love and support of the Camillian community.

Solemn religious profession of three young Camillians

Camillians in Uganda celebrated the Perpetual Profession of three of its scholastics: Akewa Francis, Matovu Gyaviira Charles, and Tiigo Mathias Mulunba on August 15, 2024.

During the Eucharistic celebration Rev. Fr. Babychan Pazhanilathu MI, the Mission Superior of Uganda, accepted their profession of vows in the Camillian Order. This joyful occasion, coinciding with the Feast of the Assumption, was a moment to thank Almighty God as these three brothers committed themselves fully to the works of mercy.

The Ugandan mission, under the guidance of the St. Camillus Province in India, is delighted to welcome these new members into the esteemed Order of the Ministers of the Infirm.



Annual Spiritual Retreat of Camillians in East Africa: 26th – 31st August 2024

By **p. Fredrick Mukabana MI**
Regional Secretary for Formation in East Africa

Camillian confreres from Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya gathered in Tanzania for a joint retreat on the 26th of August 2024. The Tanzanian confreres warmly welcomed the eleven religious participants who attended the retreat from the three East African countries.

The retreat centred around the theme “Our Vocation,” emphasizing the spiritual depth and commitment required in the Camillian call to service. The retreat preacher urged all participants to embrace their vocation as both a sacrifice and a gift from God. He stressed that the religious calling is not about seeking greatness, but rather about dedicating oneself to serve others in humility and love.

Reflecting on our lives, the retreat preacher reminded us that we might feel unworthy of such a noble calling, especially considering the crosses we must bear. However, he emphasized, to truly love Christ, we must also love the cross, for Christ carried the cross for us. Our vocation calls us to care for others, much like how Adam was entrusted with



the care of the Garden of Eden. We are also called to nurture the vineyard of the Lord, following the example of Jesus, who revealed God’s love and compassion. Just as the prophets, such as Jeremiah, were called to serve, we too are invited to offer ourselves in service, not out of obligation, but with genuine willingness and devotion.

The retreat further highlighted that the sacrifice of religious life, including the priesthood, must be marked by a clean heart, poverty, and obedience.

The participants were reminded that our vocation is meant to liberate us, even though it demands sacrifices such as leaving behind family and material wealth. The retreat concluded with a call to renew our commitment to religious life through the profound vows that shape our identity as Camillians.

In essence, this retreat was a time for deep reflection and renewal, inviting each brother to recommit to the ideals of service, sacrifice, and love that define our vocation.

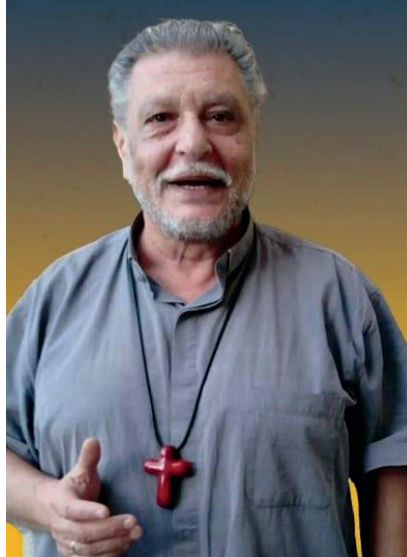
Fr. Antonio Aiello [1953-2024]

The firstborn of two sons, Antonio was born on October 15, 1953, in Sant'Agata di Militello to Stefano and Maria Cipriani. He attended hotel management school and graduated from it.

He lived out his youth, going recklessly around the world. He had been to London, Amsterdam, Germany, Holland, Turkey, the countries of the former Yugoslavia, etc. He made street experiences, alternating periods of working in various hotels. Among his experiences, he liked to tell of being arrested and experiencing life in a cell for a few days.

At the age of 31, Antonio opened his heart to a lay woman, who introduced him to the Camillians in Palermo. The Lord reached him there. Completely lacking in religious life, Antonio felt a strong attraction to the Camillian Order and asks to walk in the footsteps of Camillus de Lellis. He wanted to consecrate himself to the Lord and become a priest, experiencing a radical, total conversion, touched by God's grace and infinite mercy.

The formative journey was not easy for him. The formators had misgivings and preconceptions about him because of his past experiences. But four years as a postulant were enough to mould this young man and



persuade the formators that Antonio was ready to become a son of Camillus de Lellis.

He entered the novitiate on September 8, 1988 in Capriate San Gervasio, he made his Profession on September 17, 1989. After a full six years, he made his Solemn Profession on October 15, 1995, his birthday, in Corsicato Parish, San Giorgio a Cremano (NA).

As Temporary Professed he continued his studies at the St. Thomas of Capodimonte Theological Faculty in Naples and later in Rome in the students' house of the Roman Province, attending the Pontifical Lateran University and later the Camillanum in health care ministry. On April 15, 1996, he was ordained a Deacon in Acireale Cathedral by the bishop of the

diocese, His Exc. Monsignor Giuseppe Malandrino. On September 28, 1996, he was ordained a Priest at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in Pompeii by the Pontifical Prelate, Capuchin Friar, His Exc. Francesco Saverio Toppi, now a servant of God.

Within the Siculo-Napolitan Province he held several positions:

- Director of the San Camillo Nursing Home in Messinere
- Head of the St. Camillus Center of Acireale
- Chaplain of the S. Marta and S. Venera Hospital of Acireale
- Superior of the Provincial House of San Giorgio a Cremano
- Director of the House of Hospitality of San Giorgio a Cremano
- Superior of the V. Monaldi Hospital Community of Naples
- Chaplain of the Pascale Hospital Cancer Center of Naples

Serving at Pascale suddenly ended his earthly pilgrimage.

Fr. Antonio's human experience shows us all a clear and evident manifestation of God's mercy, which never ceases to love us and to transform the miseries of one man into a precious gift for many others.

As a religious and priest he was able to witness God's love with gentleness, balance and calmness. In every place where he was he left its fragrance.

He had a special aptitude for weaving interpersonal relationships with health care workers, the sick and the laity who approached him. He did not like to show off, preach, preside over solemn liturgies with incense and various laces; he was very essential. He shunned various protagonisms and consistently affirmed that the center of the Eucharist is not the priest but Jesus and his Word.

However, he lived everyday life as a true Camillian, always present in the place

his superiors assigned him. He wished to change communities often, so that people would not become attached to him and also, he had the 'opportunity to transmit the Lord's love to other people.

So many in Campania and Sicily were dismayed by this sudden death.

In the community he was affable and pleasant, had a great ability to defuse tensions, cracking a joke or a spiritual thought, to rebuild harmony and fraternity.

He lived very "lightly" the tasks and roles, he did not let himself be overwhelmed by impulsiveness or impetuosity, so much so that sometimes

he gave the impression that he did not want to deal with situations, instead, he preferred, with wisdom, to wait and let things decant!

Sometimes smiling, he would say, "I am invisible to the Order..." and close his speech with a smug and satisfied smile!

The Order and the Province lost a true and authentic son of St. Camillus who with his ordinary life brought Jesus into the hearts of so many lay people and into the hearts of the confreres.

Thank you Antonio rest in the peace of Jesus and receive the reward of the Righteous who worked in the vineyard of the Lord, following St. Camillus.

Bro. Vincenzo LUISE [1935-2024]

Brother Vincent LUISE was born in Naples, Italy, on February 9, 1935 to Giovanni and Giuseppina Senotto.

He entered the Camillian novitiate on October 6, 1952; he made his first religious profession on October 7, 1953.

In 1954 he was transferred to the preventorio of the 'Villa Immacolata' community in San Martino al Cimino (Viterbo).

He made his solemn religious



profession on October 7, 1956. From 1962 to September 1964 he lived in community at the chaplaincy of 'San Camillo' hospital in Rome.

In 1964 he was transferred to the 'San Camillo' shrine community in Bucchianico, and the following year, until November 1968, he was a member of the 'Santa Maria Maggiore' community in Florence.

Subsequently, he was youth assistant at the 'Sacred Heart'

institute in Bucchianico. From April 1972, until his departure for Upper Volta (present-day Burkina Faso), he lived and served in the Camillian community in Sora (Frosinone).

Brother Vincent LUISE arrived at the Camillian mission in Upper Volta (present-day Burkina Faso) in 1978. His main activity in Burkina Faso had been the care of marginalized people living on the periphery of society: lepers in the Paspanga leprosarium and the care of elderly women in the “Delwende” Center (women often accused of witchcraft and chased away from their families).

Attentive to their physical and spiritual health, he healed their sores with his bare hands, distributed food and clothing to them, and took an interest in their social needs: a roof or a small house for those in need, plans for an autonomy of his assisted ones, wells here or there, etc.

The Juvenat (minor seminary) was the first community that welcomed Brother Vincent. He stayed there for about fourteen

years. In addition to caring for the old ladies and lepers in which he also involved the seminarians, he also took care of the maintenance of the seminary and served as bursar of the minor seminary.

He was transferred to the parish community in 1992. In this community he also served as bursar while continuing his work at the leprosarium and the “Delwende” Center.

In 2001, Brother Vincent was transferred to the newly created community of CASO (Reception and Solidarity Center of Ouagadougou), a structure with a prophetic vocation that takes care of AIDS patients free of charge.

In those years, those infected with HIV were mostly marginalized and stigmatized as people of dubious morality. The Center itself was stigmatized from the color of the wall (red wall).

Together with the brothers in the community, Brother Vincent wanted the name of the Center to be changed by adding a religious coloring.

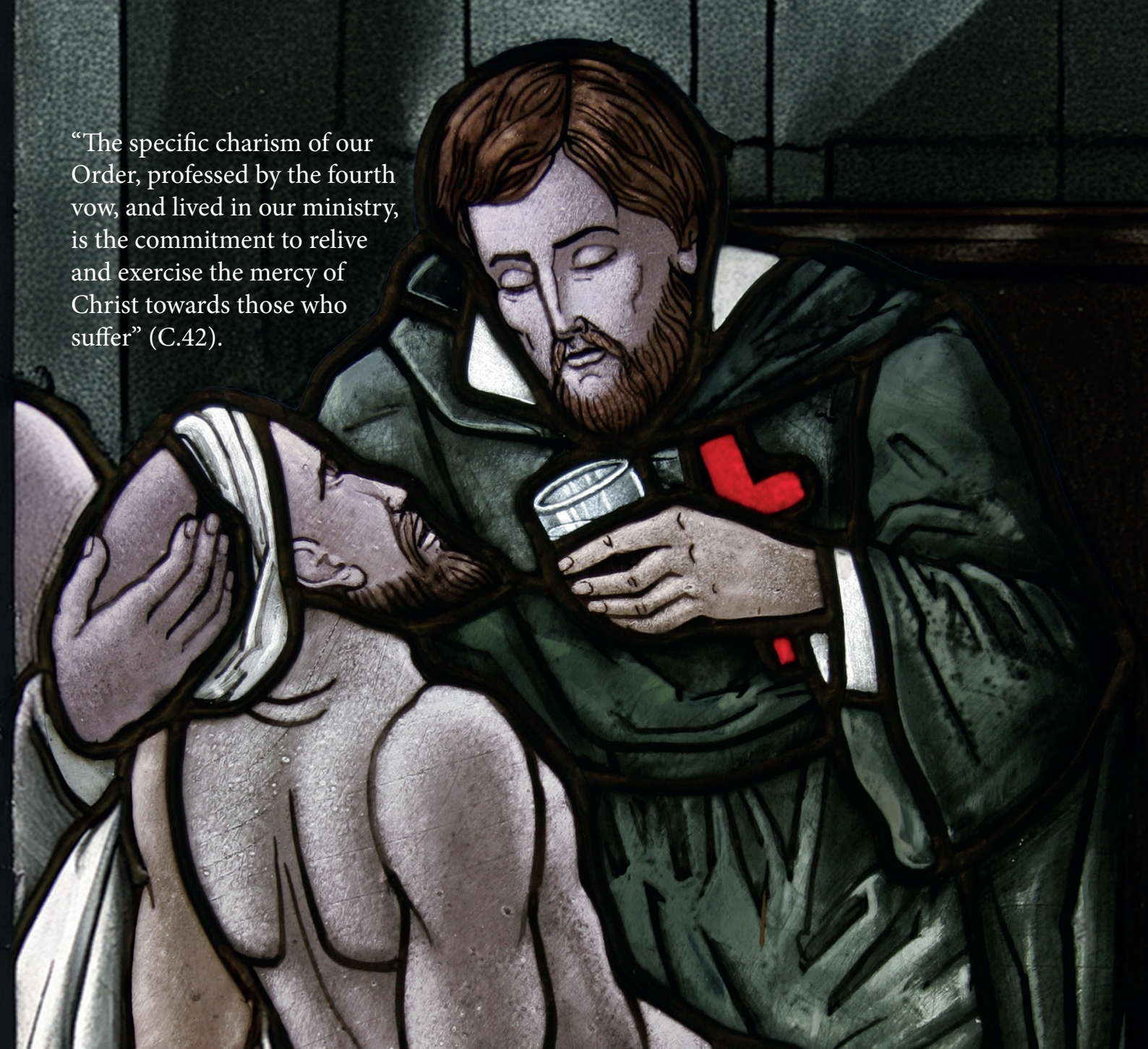
Thus, CASO became CANDAF (Centre d'Accueil Notre Dame de Fatima - Our Lady of Fatima Center). Brother Vincent was very devoted to Our Lady of Fatima. Without ceasing his work with his leprosy friends and old ladies at the “Delwende” Center, Brother Vincent also assumed the position of community bursar in the CANDAF community.

In his later years, deteriorating health forced him to settle almost permanently in Italy. His heart remained in his beloved mission land, however. In the CANDAF community, even the confreres had always kept his room free. In the Burkinabé province he was always registered among the religious of this community.

On August 3, 2024, at the R.S.A. (assisted health care residence) ‘S. Camillo’ in Sora (Frosinone - Italy), Brother Vincent said his last “Yes” to the Lord who called him to live with Him and returned to the Father’s house.

He was buried in the tomb of the Camillians, in the cemetery of Bucchianico (Chieti).

“The specific charism of our Order, professed by the fourth vow, and lived in our ministry, is the commitment to relive and exercise the mercy of Christ towards those who suffer” (C.42).



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