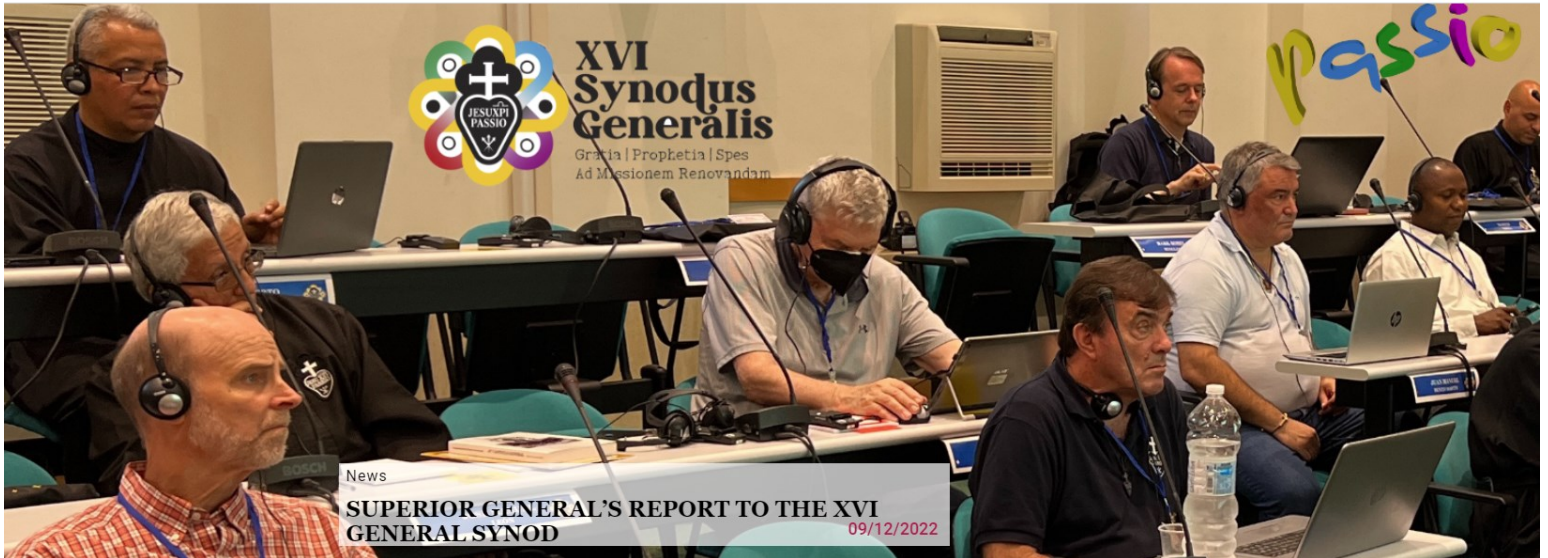


October 2022

Passionist News Notes St. Paul of the Cross Province



16th General Synod of the Passionists



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SUPERIOR GENERAL'S REPORT TO THE XVI GENERAL SYNOD
09/12/2022

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Office of the Provincial

THE PASSIONISTS

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September 22, 2022

Dear Brothers, Associates and Friends,

Greetings from Rome! The General Synod has ended, and I am waiting for the start of our Configuration meeting. The Eternal City offers eternal meetings! On this 'free day', I wanted to send some thoughts on our Synod whose theme is "*Renewing our Mission*".

As we began the Synod, Father Joachim, CP gave an excellent report, but within his words was contained a sobering truth - the Congregation is in a time of crisis – as testified by the numbers. We have been in a steady decline of membership for over a decade. Part of that decline is the natural death of our many older religious, but what is alarming is the troubling number of departures of the young. Many of the departures are men who are leaving to join Dioceses, and sometimes not long after Passionist ordination. Of course, there are other reasons for departure, as well. We have experienced this reality in our own province, and it is very impactful on our community. These are worrisome trends, for sure.

The Synod did present and explore several interventions to stimulate the process of renewal. Three of the most important were presentations on *Formation, the Charismatic Family and the Laudato Si Platform*.

Formation: Martin Coffey, CP presented an excellent document which is the fruit of many years of dialogue and revisions. He clearly presented an outline for Passionist formation that begins with postulancy and ends with death. This is a document our provincial council will study and which we will present to the whole province for study and engagement. What is essential in the document is the recognition that we are all in formation that is particularly Passionist, and that we are all responsible to create communities where the young and the old can understand and experience the uniqueness of this life. Initial formation needs to be continually renewed, for sure, but the participation in renewal by the whole province is critical. As one Passionist bishop put it, 'We cannot form young people in one way and then we place them in communities that bear little witness to the ideals they learned and practiced in the first steps of formation. Is it any wonder they leave quickly?'

Charismatic Lay Family: Antonio Botana, a Christian Brother, presented an excellent session on the role of the laity in Charismatic families. He challenged us to recognize and support the living out of the charism by lay communities in which they create new realities which develop more as communities in partnership with, as opposed to dependence on, the vowed members.

His words will help in our own exploration of our Associates community and how we might expand our vision of that community of the baptized continuing to offer a wider vitality to the charism.

'Laudato Si' Action Platform: Father Joachim reaffirmed our Congregation's firm commitment to engage the Action Platform of Laudato Si. It was very evident that the Synod participants were in vocal agreement with Pope Francis and his constant challenge to us to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. That emphasis resonated powerfully with our charism rooting us in the memory of the Crucified God and compelling us into solidarity with the crucified people and earth of today. This will continue to inspire our work in the province.

Other significant moments of the Synod included the suppression of the *St. Joseph Province* (England and Wales). This was a very bittersweet recognition that the province had too few members to continue. The members unanimously requested suppression and to join the *St. Patrick Province* (Ireland and Scotland). *St. Joseph's Province* is the province of Blessed Dominic Barberi, and we celebrated their extraordinary legacy, and were also heartened that the General Curia will continue oversight of the foundation at Highgate, London as an international Passionist community. Also, statements of support were presented and affirmed for our brothers and people in Ukraine and Haiti as they continue to suffer violence, instability and injustice on such extreme levels.

Additionally, throughout much of the Synod, we watched with concern the activity of *Hurricane Fiona* as it hit land in Puerto Rico and later Dominican Republic. I was able to receive daily updates from Anibal Rodriguez, CP and we are grateful that our community, our student's families and our ministries are all safe and returning to life again. May this struggling island be blessed with our genuine assistance and prayerful support.

This morning, I spent a good bit of time sitting before the remains of our founder, Paul of the Cross- pondering his passion in birthing this movement. Paul's bronzed body has a curious feature - his bare feet. I focused my attention on them and was moved by them. For all eternity, he remains a poor man in search of the depths of Divine love. The shoeless feet of a mystic - always knowing that there is so much more of mystery and mission. In a real way, his bare feet gave me the most confidence as we walk together into the future. If we humbly create communities in which to remember the Passion of Jesus and listen reverently to the stories of our suffering world and planet, we will find and remain on the way to the opportunity that this most compelling moment in Passionist history holds for us.

In JXP,

Father Jim O'Shea, CP
Provincial



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Queridos hermanos, asociados y amigos,

¡Saludos desde Roma! El Sínodo General ha terminado y estoy esperando el comienzo de nuestra reunión de Configuración. ¡La Ciudad Eterna ofrece encuentros eternos! En este 'día libre', quería enviar algunas reflexiones sobre nuestro Sínodo cuyo tema es "Renovar nuestra Misión".

Cuando comenzamos el Sínodo, el Padre Joachim, CP dio un excelente informe, pero dentro de sus palabras se contenía una verdad aleccionadora: la Congregación se encuentra en un momento de crisis, como lo atestiguan los números. Hemos estado en una disminución constante de membresía durante más de una década. Parte de ese declive es la muerte natural de muchos de nuestros religiosos mayores, pero lo que es alarmante es el preocupante número de partidas de los jóvenes. Muchos de los que parten son hombres que parten para unirse a las diócesis y, a veces, no mucho después de la ordenación pasionista. Por supuesto, también hay otras razones para la partida. Hemos vivido esta realidad en nuestra propia provincia, y es muy impactante en nuestra comunidad. Estas son tendencias preocupantes, sin duda.

El Sínodo presentó y exploró varias intervenciones para estimular el proceso de renovación. Tres de las más importantes fueron presentaciones sobre la Formación, la Familia Carismática y la Plataforma Laudato Si.

Formación: Martin Coffey, CP presentó un excelente documento que es fruto de muchos años de diálogo y revisiones. Presentó claramente un esquema para la formación pasionista que comienza con el postulante y termina con la muerte. Este es un documento que estudiará nuestro consejo provincial y que presentaremos a toda la provincia para su estudio y compromiso. Lo esencial en el documento es el reconocimiento de que todos estamos en formación particularmente pasionista, y que todos somos responsables de crear comunidades donde jóvenes y mayores puedan comprender y experimentar la singularidad de esta vida. La formación inicial necesita ser renovada continuamente, sin duda, pero la participación en la renovación de toda la provincia es crítica. Como dijo un obispo pasionista: "No podemos formar a los jóvenes de una manera y luego los ubicamos en comunidades que dan poco testimonio de los ideales que aprendieron y practicaron en los primeros pasos de formación. ¿Es de extrañar que se vayan rápidamente?"

Familia Carismática Laica: Antonio Botana, Hermano Cristiano, presentó una excelente sesión sobre el papel de los laicos en las familias carismáticas. Nos desafió a reconocer y apoyar la vivencia del carisma por parte de las comunidades laicas en las que crean nuevas realidades vivas que se desarrollan más como comunidades en asociación con los miembros

de votos, en lugar de depender de ellos. Sus palabras ayudarán en nuestra propia exploración de nuestra comunidad de Asociados y cómo podemos expandir nuestra visión de esa comunidad de bautizados que continúa ofreciendo una vitalidad más amplia al carisma.

Plataforma de Acción 'Laudato Si': El Padre Joachim reafirmó el firme compromiso de nuestra Congregación de participar en la Plataforma de Acción de Laudato Si. Era muy evidente que los participantes del Sínodo estaban de acuerdo con el Papa Francisco y su constante desafío para que escuchemos el grito de la tierra y el grito de los pobres. Ese énfasis resonó poderosamente con nuestro carisma arraigándonos en la memoria del Dios Crucificado y obligándonos a la solidaridad con el pueblo crucificado y la tierra de hoy. Esto seguirá inspirando nuestro trabajo en la provincia.

Otros momentos significativos del Sínodo incluyeron la supresión de la Provincia de San José (Inglaterra y Gales). Este fue un reconocimiento muy agrí dulce de que la provincia tenía muy pocos miembros para continuar. Los miembros solicitaron por unanimidad la supresión y unirse a la Provincia de San Patricio (Irlanda y Escocia). La Provincia de San José es la provincia del Beato Domingo Barberi, y celebramos su extraordinario legado, y también nos animó que la Curia General continúe supervisando la fundación en Highgate, Londres, como una comunidad Pasionista internacional. Además, se presentaron y afirmaron declaraciones de apoyo a nuestros hermanos y personas en Ucrania y Haití que continúan sufriendo violencia, inestabilidad e injusticia en niveles tan extremos.

Además, durante gran parte del Sínodo, observamos con preocupación la actividad del huracán Fiona cuando tocó tierra en Puerto Rico y luego en la República Dominicana. Pude recibir actualizaciones diarias de Anibal Rodriguez, CP y estamos agradecidos de que nuestra comunidad, las familias de nuestros estudiantes y nuestros ministerios estén a salvo y volviendo a la vida nuevamente. Que esta isla en apuros sea bendecida con nuestra asistencia genuina y nuestro apoyo en oración.

Esta mañana, pasé un buen rato sentado ante los restos de nuestro fundador, Pablo de la Cruz, reflexionando sobre su pasión por dar a luz a este movimiento. El cuerpo bronceado de Paul tiene una característica curiosa: sus pies descalzos. Enfoqué mi atención en ellos y me conmovieron. Por toda la eternidad, permanece como un hombre pobre en busca de las profundidades del amor divino. Los pies descalzos de un místico, siempre sabiendo que hay mucho más de misterio y misión. De una manera real, sus pies descalzos me dieron la mayor confianza mientras caminamos juntos hacia el futuro. Si humildemente creamos comunidades en las que recordar la Pasión de Jesús y escuchar con reverencia las historias de nuestro mundo y planeta que sufren, encontraremos y permaneceremos en el camino hacia la oportunidad que nos depara este momento tan apremiante de la historia pasionista.

En JXP,

Padre Jim O'Shea, CP
Provincial

Ricci Institute welcomes its first summer fellows at Boston College

The [Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History](#) welcomed its latest cohort of doctoral and post-doctoral fellows this summer—the first to come to the internationally renowned research center for the study of Chinese-Western cultural exchange since its move earlier this year to Boston College from its original home at the University of San Francisco.

Eleven Ricci Fellows, representing Italy, Spain, China, and Korea, among other countries, spent the summer working at the institute's headquarters at 2125 Commonwealth Avenue on the Brighton Campus. The scholars—who stayed together in University housing—made use of the institute's vast holdings, including rare books, manuscripts, and unique artwork from East Asia, to conduct research on subjects including music in Christianity, Chinese-Christian art history, and early Chinese translations of Biblical texts.

Doctoral fellow Xiangyu Liu also presented a public recital at the institute, performing traditional and modern music compositions from China, Japan, and the United States on the pipa or Chinese lute.

While the institute, which opened in 1984, has hosted doctoral and post-doctoral students throughout its history, the eight-year-old Fellows program is a key component of the Ricci mission, according to Director and Provost's Fellow M. Antoni J. Ucerler, S.J.

"The institute is committed to bringing young and senior researchers together in friendship and respect," he said. "We are helping them to create a network of fellow scholars and friends; there is nothing greater than that in Jesuit scholarship."

Ricci Fellows have become valued members of the Jesuit, Catholic education community, said Fr. Ucerler, noting that the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies international conference held at BC in early August included a panel presentation from former program participants.

"Ricci Fellowships allow these young people to deepen their research and knowledge, and often find new perspectives: Some have told us that the experience changed the whole direction of their scholarship."

But the personal dimension of the Fellows program is not to be overlooked, he added: "It's heartwarming to see the fellows become a community. They sit together in silence in the reading room for several hours a day working on their research, then socialize and enjoy one another's company."

Post-doctoral fellow Manuel Parada, an assistant professor of art history at the Complutense University of Madrid with an interest in Chinese-Christian art objects, agreed that the program represents an opportunity for growth and enrichment on many levels.

"Ricci offers rare materials I can't find elsewhere," he said, pointing to a small cross representative of Chinese Christian cloisonné, an ancient technique for decorating metalwork objects with colored material. "It's also difficult to find a lot of Chinese researchers in this area of art history, so the fact that they are in the Ricci Fellows program is very helpful to me."

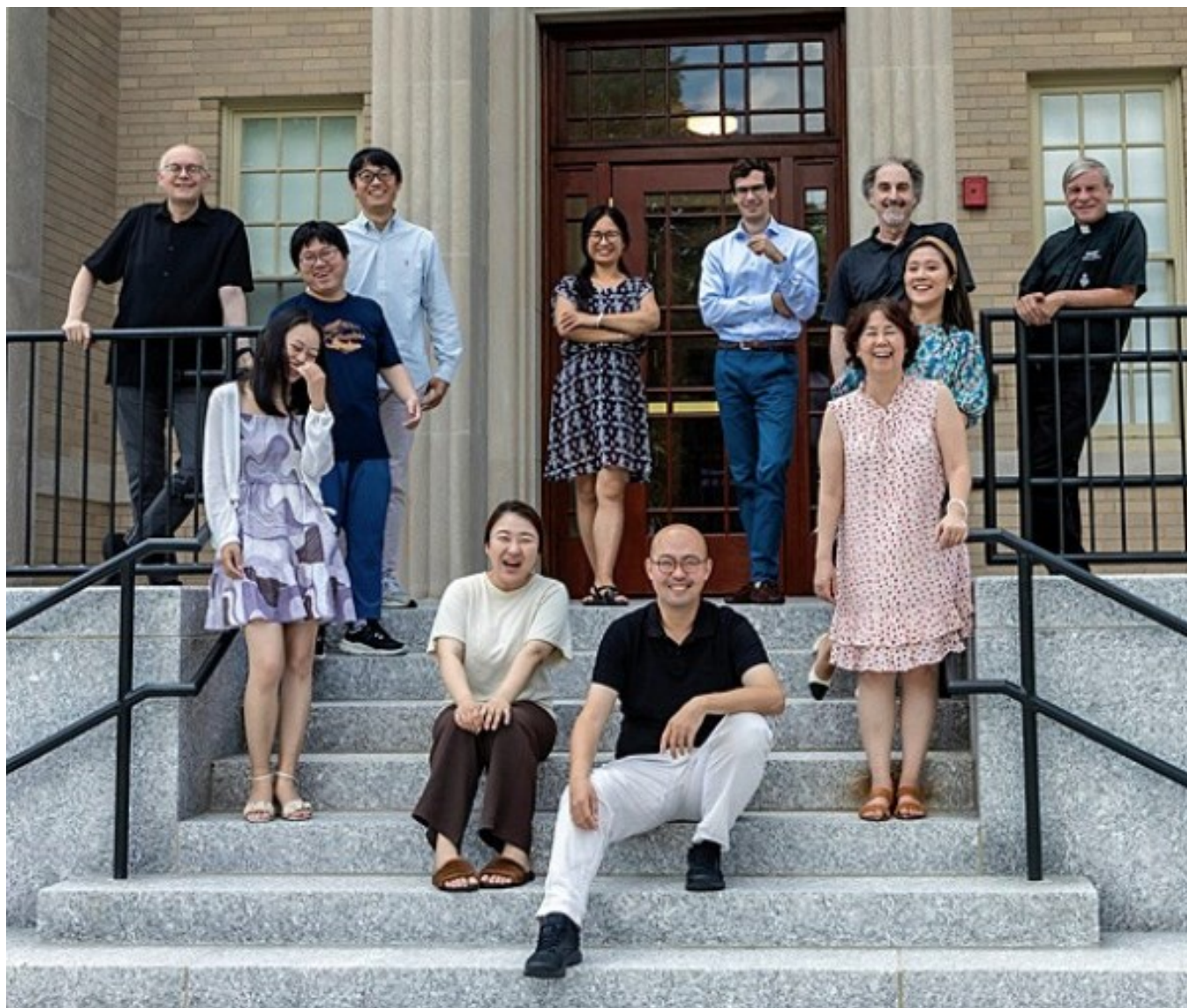
"We collaborate 24 hours a day, researching together, organizing seminars together, cooking together, relaxing together. It's not just a fellowship, it's a family relationship: Some of the former fellows come to visit, and they help us to make connections and discuss our research with us."

Fr. Ucerler said the Ricci Fellows program's philosophy echoes "one of China's long, great traditions: Friendship through learning"—a maxim that is all too relevant in an era of geopolitical tensions, in East Asia and elsewhere.

"What we see today is all the politics raging above our heads," he said, "while on the ground, we have these young people being nurtured at a Jesuit university. They are the future of East-West dialogue."

For more on the Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History, visit bc.edu/ricci.

Ricci Institute staff members and Fellows



Ricci Institute staff members and Fellows on the steps of their office headquarters on the Brighton Campus.

Front row L-R seated: Xiaomin WEN, University of Hong Kong (China) and Yi Wang, University of Cambridge (U.K.);

Second row L-R standing: Xiangyi LIU, Pennsylvania State University, Miwon CHO, Boston University;

Third row L-R standing: Qi WANG, Sun Yat-sen University (China), Lianghui SUN, University of Notre Dame; Back

row L-R standing: M. Antoni J. Ucerler, S.J., Ricci Institute, Boston College, Yaliang FU, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa (Italy), Zhangzhen LIANG, School of Theology and Ministry, Boston College; Manuel Parada López de Corselas, Complutense University, Madrid (Spain) Mark Mir, Ricci Institute, Boston College,

Robert Carbonneau, CP, University of Scranton.

Next Passionists E-Learning is on October 13th

Trinity: God Who is Giver, Given, Gift/ing

By Michael Downey, PhD



Michael Downey is the first layperson to receive a PhD. in Theology from The Catholic University of America. He has served as professor of theology and spirituality at universities and seminaries in the US and abroad. He currently teaches periodically on the graduate faculty of The Catholic Institute of Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City. He continues to work extensively with enclosed contemplative communities in the US, France, and Vietnam. Author or editor of nearly 20 books and recipient of three honorary doctorates, Michael has been awarded the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice by John Paul II. If you have not registered for this series, you will need to register now in order to received the link for the live presentation on October 13, 2022. Use this link to register: <https://form.jotform.com/212516545289158>