

Major Superiors Meeting Rome, October 18-27, 2010

REPORT 2



October 22, 2010

I am writing this during day five of our gathering with the weekend about to open up before us. These gatherings are not all work; they are also a marvelous opportunity to meet other SCJs and get reacquainted with old friends. David Nagel has had the opportunity to see many parts of our congregation as a member of the General Finance Commission. He is here at the meeting in that capacity. Yesterday we had the report from the General Treasurer on the status of the congregation's financial picture as well as how financial matters are treated in the Six Year Plan.

Aquilino Mielgo Dominquez is in his second six-year-term as our general treasurer. He said something today that made great sense; it is something that we have already put into practice in our current council. Aquilino urged all major superiors to have their treasurers sit in on all council meetings. Practically all that we do has financial impact.

As the weekend approaches much of the time at the assembly has been spent in geographic groups, i.e., continental gatherings. The general administration would like to hold continental meetings upon the conclusion of the visit from the general superior and the councilor responsible for that geographic area. It was proposed that all of the Americas (North and South) meet as one, but SCJs in

both regions decided that the issues on these two continents are different and so will plan for separate continental meetings. Of course, in our case that means Canada and the United States.

The European Continental Conference will take place next October and deal with the issue of secularity in European culture and religion. Since secularism also touches North America (in varying forms in Canada and the United States) we will be invited to attend this important gathering. Plans are well underway and the dates have been set: October 18-20, 2011 in Clairefontaine, Belgium.

While we find ourselves busy during the day with the various meetings, as I wrote, it is not all work. Meal time is an important social experience in the Italian context. The photo of David Nagel, John van den Hengel (General Council) and Peter Surdel (South Africa) was taken in the Villa Aurelia dinning room. We are following the practice of the last general chapter in taking breakfast and the evening meal in one building and the midday meal, called "pranzo" in the other (Villa Aurelia and the Generalate buildings). Everyone has pranzo and the evening meal together while breakfast has those attending the meeting eating at Villa Aurelia and the Roman community in their dinning room.

On Tuesday evening the English language group went to my favorite Roman restaurant, Dar Buttero in Trastevere. We took the opportunity to say buon viaggio and good luck to Élie Muzungu Kasongo Ngoy of the Canadian Region. He left on Wednesday for his new assignment in the Congo. Eli was born in the Congo but immigrated to French Canada and became a member of our SCJ Canadian Region. After several years of study here in Rome he is finally fulfilling a long-time dream of going back to the land of his birth to work with the SCJs of the Congo to bring our vision of God's love to a land so often marred by violence.

Since David Nagel has finished his business he will return to the States on Monday. While David wings his way back to America I'll still have two-and-a-half days of meetings and so there will be more from la bella città.

No meeting would be incomplete without a visit to Sardos, a small restaurant very near our house and one frequented by SCJs from around the world. The family that runs it are well known in SCJ circles and has been good to us over the years. I will definitely make a visit there before my own return.

Ciao from Roma,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Very Rev. Thomas Cassidy, SCJ
Provincial Superior