

Major Superiors Meeting Rome, October 18-27, 2010

REPORT 4 It's Over



October 27, 2010

As with all good SCJ meetings in Rome this one ended, or I should say began to end, last evening. **Vila Aurelia** put on a special meal for the participants and members of the house community. Anyone who has spent time in Rome would probably agree that Italians do not do beef well, but other meats are another story. One of the great Roman traditions is *the pig roast*, and that's just what we all enjoyed last evening. Above is a picture of our *guest* in all his glory before the chef began to carve it up for us to enjoy.

After the meal one of my least favorite *traditions* took hold of many in the sala di pranzo (dining room), i.e., a sing-along. Once these get going it's hard to carry on any kind of conversation and I usually bug out as quickly as I can. The Spanish, Portuguese and Italians are all song lovers and can sing verse after verse of Lord knows how many songs. We Americans are lucky if we know a verse or two of some of the old standbys. Often these song-fests turn into singing contests and we Americans and Canadians can't begin to compete in songs or singers.

This morning the *official* close of the major superiors meeting did take place. We met briefly in the hall for some closing observations by the participants, as well as Fr. General's closing remarks, which I'm sure will appear sometime today on the SCJ website. At 11:00 we had the closing Mass with the General as main celebrant and **Claudio dalla Zuanna** the homilist. As you might recall, at the last general chapter we created the position of *vicar general*, the post Claudio now holds.

It was good to see **Francis Vu Tran** at both meals yesterday. During much of the time that **David Nagel** and I have been in Rome we did not connect with Francis. For most of last week Francis had family and friends in town marking a major step in the beatification process of **Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan**. By chance we met his relatives and friends when we went to **Sardos** last Saturday evening.

Francis is busy with languages at the moment. He's trying to master Greek and Hebrew in preparation for his studies at the Gregorian University. Actually, the courses in Greek and Hebrew are part of his studies and are prerequisites before delving into the scriptures. He also has an Italian test he has to take next month to prove to the Gregorian that he has mastered the language well enough to carry on his studies.

Tomorrow I am going to Assisi and will leave for home on Friday. My first stop is going to be Chicago where I'll do the visitation before heading back to Milwaukee and a Provincial Council meeting next week. As I'm sure I've said more than once, Assisi is a favorite of mine, and I think this may be my 30th visit to pay my respects to Francis and Claire. I also have a task to perform in purchasing several sets of *salad tongs* that my sister likes using, and also giving as gifts.

I'll close with this photo taken from my room. While it is not that easy to see you can pick out the dome of St. Peter's, and in the background, the mountains that surround Rome. More often than not those hills are invisible due to the smog that plagues the city. Rain and wind are the only things that bring them into view. It's too bad as those mountains provide a wonderful backdrop to la bella città!

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



