



BROTHERS CMM

2/19

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MISSION STATEMENT

Mercy belongs to all times and places.

Mercy is at the centre of all world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The movement of mercy has left traces throughout history.

The various forms in which mercy appears, are expressions of the society in which it arose, and of the spirituality that carries it.

The Congregation of the Brothers of Our Lady, Mother of Mercy, is rooted in Christian mercy.



The Prodigal Son, Rembrandt.



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COLOPHON

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Photograph front cover: Chemistry lab at
St. Justino Secondary School in Nairobi-Umoja (p. 6-8).

Photograph back cover: Vincent de Paul, stained-glass
window in Tiffany-technique (stained-glass window and
photo: Nathalie Bastiaansen).



IMAGES OF APOSTOLATE

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

When this magazine arrives in your mailbox, we are approaching the culmination of the jubilee year. On 25 August 2019, the Congregation will celebrate its 175th anniversary. The attentive reader may have noticed already that in the publications for this jubilee year we opted for a back page with Joannes Zwijsen, Mary, and Vincent de Paul. On page 4, Brother Lawrence Obiko elaborates on the motto of the jubilee year: 'Serve and enlighten, speak a redeeming word, be a helping hand'. We also write about a worldwide project for this year, under the heading 'Sheltering the homeless'. From Namibia we received an account of a special 'Walk with Christ'. The series 'Images of apostolate' presents photographs of St. Justino, a school in the slums of Nairobi-Umoja. Brother Frans Linus from Indonesia writes about a specific task of brother-teachers in the postmillennial era. The series 'In the spotlight' shows drawings by Brother Christopher Akunga from Kenya, who in his own way keeps alive and continues a piece of the heritage of the brothers in Kenya. In Brazil brothers and Ambassadors WWB went into the neighbourhood as missionaries. They were welcomed there by simple people with a remarkably strong faith. "I have learned to discover Christ in the other", shares Thais, one of the ambassadors who went along with the brothers. In the section 'See my people', Brother Wilfridus Bria writes about his mission on the Kei Islands. There he discovered that mercy is often to be found in small and simple things.



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CONVERSATION

WITH THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

In this interview, Brother Lawrence Obiko speaks about our mission and its purpose.

As brothers we are sent to do what Jesus did: "Serve and enlighten, speak a redeeming word, be a helping hand" (Const. I, 10). This appeal from our Constitutions was chosen as the motto of the jubilee year. The appeal has a purpose. We do not answer this call for the sake of ourselves. We answer this call for the sake of God's Kingdom. Our Constitutions are clear about the purpose. "Our Congregation tries to contribute towards making the world a better place to live in and to bring more humaneness into society" (Const. I, 188).

Over the last 175 years, we have tried to be constantly available to serve those who are in need. Will it continue? Are we still needed? Do we, as Brothers CMM, still have a reason to exist? I believe we do! I also think it is good to reflect on the *how* of our mission of today and towards the future.

How to carry on with the same inspiration and enthusiasm, serving those in need, the marginalized, the forgotten ones? Our approach must be characterized by the attitude of Jesus. He did not reject people, he did not condemn them. He gave hope, he served, he enlightened, he spoke a redeeming word, he was a helping hand.

By doing what Jesus did, we can make people see their own importance. We can give them a sense of well-being. It is our call to make people feel recognized and appreciated as they are. To achieve this, we need to reach out to them. It is not only about words, but also about being a helping hand.

"Do what Jesus did." Jesus is our example. If we do what He did, we will be able to radiate his spirit in our daily life and activities. Vincent de Paul understood this very well, and it was for that reason that our Founder Joannes Zwijsen gave us St. Vincent as patron saint. To us, Vincent de Paul is also an example. He showed us how we can do what Jesus did in our own reality, in our own time and context, in concrete acts. He was able to transform society and make it a bit better. We are blessed that our Founder gave us this very practical example to identify ourselves with.

With the above in mind, I would like to ask you to reflect on the following: How can each of us remain faithful to our mission? What resolution can each of us make towards the future of our mission?

Brother Lawrence Obiko
in an interview with Nathalie Bastiaansen



Photo collage
'Walk with Christ'.

WALK WITH CHRIST

Each year the Namibian Ambassadors of a Worldwide Brotherhood organize an event called 'Walk with Christ', a Lenten pilgrimage of all the parishes from Windhoek to the Poor Clare Monastery in Brakwater. On 30 March 2019 it was the 11th time that this event took place.

The pilgrimage is the brainchild of Father Edmund Michaels OMI and the Ambassadors of a Worldwide Brotherhood, to unite through prayer Catholics as well as other Christians of Windhoek. The first 'Walk with Christ' pilgrimage to the Poor Clare Monastery in Brakwater, 12 km north of Windhoek, was held on 14 March 2009, with the theme; 'A Lenten Pilgrimage'. It brought together more than 750 pilgrims, young and old, religious and laity: a true representation of the Pilgrim Church. Since then this pilgrimage has become an annual event.

Theme

This year the reflections of the Stations of the Cross were taken from the World Youth Days' reflections in Panama, in January 2019. The main theme of the Panama World Youth Days was: 'I am the servant of the Lord, may it be done unto me according to your word' (Luke 1:38). It was adopted for the Walk with Christ in Namibia. Most of the prayers were dedicated to Our Virgin Mother Mary who said 'YES' to the call being the tabernacle of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and who accompanied Jesus on his journey to Mount Calvary where He was crucified.

A dedicated team

Each year the Namibian Ambassadors of the Worldwide Brotherhood work hard in preparation for this pilgrimage. Different committees are established

to make this event successful, such as the finance committee, administration committee, logistics committee, marketing committee, food committee, T-shirt committee and the supervisory committee. The T-shirts were sold to finance the event. The organizing committee is grateful for all the donations and other support they received. There were some challenges regarding the sound system that was used on the way. The speakers did not reach all the pilgrims. As a result, pilgrims could not hear and participate in all the prayers on the way. For next year the organization will elicit suggestions and assistance to improve the sound system.

Reflection

The Walk with Christ offers a chance for Catholics and other Christians to reflect on their own lives as pilgrims in this passing world and to deepen their understanding of the season of Lent. The Ambassadors hope to continue with this Lenten tradition with the commitment and support of parishes, congregations, other youth groups, families and individuals to keep on witnessing mercy not only to Catholics but to all people of God.

Moringa Johanna Goagoses,
Hortensia Uupindi, and Maya Lisa Makgone
(Ambassadors WWB Namibia)





Main entrance of the school.

ST. JUSTINO

Worldwide the Congregation is being confronted with all sorts of material and spiritual needs. The brothers, together with others, are trying to alleviate these. The twelfth edition of this feature showcases an extraordinary school: St. Justino Secondary School in Nairobi-Umoja, Kenya.

In 1999 the Brothers CMM opened St. Justino Secondary School. The school is in the middle of the Soweto district, one of the slums of Nairobi-Umoja. Initially the school started as a Coaching Programme (CP); an 'informal' secondary school for the poor. These CPs were successful and developed into full-fledged official schools. Meanwhile, there is free education in Kenya at all government schools, and as a result the number of students at St. Justino temporarily decreased. However, many students have returned to St. Justino, because parents found out that the 'free' education at government schools still had a lot of additional costs. St. Justino is now recognized by the government as a private school, and the students pay some school fees, but for those who cannot afford it, there are still arrangements possible.

The school building was first made of corrugated iron, but with the help of St. Joris College from the Netherlands and a contribution from the general board of the brothers it was possible to build a stone building in which all classes, the library and the hall were housed. This new building was opened in 2007.

Currently the school has 156 pupils. Many of the pupils who preceded them are now studying at a university or college of higher education or have already graduated. Good education has given them the opportunity to leave life in the slums behind. Yet, the former pupils do not forget their origins: alumni associations have been set up, and through charity work they try to support the people in the slums.

Brother James Makovo CMM (Kenya)



Students of St. Justino.



Students dancing with Brother Andrea Sifuna CMM.



Brother James Makovo CMM teaching geography.



The library.



The neighbourhood 'Soweto' in Nairobi-Umoja.



Sports.



Headmaster Brother James Makovo CMM in his office.





Scouts at the school yard.



A street in the Soweto slums, Nairobi-Umoja.



Scale model of the school building.



Chemistry practicum.



St. Justino's team for a music festival in 2016.

POSTMILLENNIAL BROTHERS

What is important for a brother-teacher today? Brother Frans Linus wrote a reflection on being a teacher in the postmillennial era.

As teachers we are now dealing with children from Generation Z, the postmillennial generation. They were born between the years 1995 and 2010, and you could say that they arrived in this world with a tablet and a smartphone. Most of them spent their time anywhere and anytime in front of a touch screen.

Education in the millennial age

In general, the millennial and postmillennial generations hardly see any negative aspects in using the internet. Not because they are blind: they simply cannot imagine life without it. It is just a part of their life, like eating, sleeping and breathing. But this does not mean that they do not need guidance.

Being a teacher in this postmillennial era implies that we prepare children for a world in which human life and digital technology are inextricably linked. Young people not only need to learn how to read and write, do maths, and know a bit of history, geography and biology. They also need literacy in information technology. What could our role be in this? What is expected of the brothers as educators in this postmillennial era?

The ethics of digital media

First, we should admit that the internet is a given fact; it makes no sense to ban the use of it, or just limit the use of it. As brothers we are expected to teach children how to make good use of the internet. We can inspire our students and encourage them to develop their potential in the field of information technology. We can teach them the standards and values of social media use. Which, in fact, is no different from what



*Pupils in the computer class,
Frater Don Bosco School Tarakan.*

we already try to teach them: "Do to others as you would have them do to you, and don't treat others in a way you yourself do not want to be treated." We can also show them that not everything they read on the internet is necessarily true; we can teach them how to distinguish between fake news and reliable news. We can encourage them to think critically and be creative and inventive in the field of information technology, but also to work with integrity and good intentions. The postmillennial generation is decisive for the future. Their unique behaviour can change the landscape of the future.

Brother Franciscus Linus CMM (Indonesia)



SHELTERING THE HOMELESS



In 2019 the brothers celebrate the Congregation's 175th anniversary with various events. The motto of the jubilee year is derived from the rule of life of the brothers: 'Serve and enlighten, speak a redeeming word, be a helping hand' (Const. I, 10). The brothers want to take this motto seriously, so they can share the joy of their jubilee year also with others, especially with the poor. One of the events in the jubilee year is the project 'Sheltering the Homeless'.

The project is in line with the *Famvin Homeless Alliance* that started in 2017, on the 400th anniversary of the Vincentian Charism. The aim of the Famvin Homeless Alliance is to reduce homelessness. The brothers use a broad definition of homelessness: people living on the streets, refugees and displaced persons, people in slums with inadequate housing and people who do not have a 'home' in the sense of a social network that they can count on in times of need.

The provinces and regions of CMM were asked to make an inventory of the needs of the poor and homeless in their own countries and to make a concrete and sustainable plan to do something about this need. The general board will provide a budget for each province/region to carry out their plans.

Slums in Brazil

The slums in large Brazilian cities are called *favelas*. The houses are of very poor quality, and the sanitary facilities are even worse. Electricity is often illegally tapped, resulting in dangerous situations. There is a lot of crime. But despite the poor living conditions and all the violence, the residents often see their neighbourhood as a safe and familiar place. Their slum is a world of its own, in which there is a social order and hierarchy that is clear to the residents.

Brother Damasus Dobat announced that the brothers in Brazil are going to support several families in the favelas of Belo Horizonte and Coronel Fabriciano. Together with some members of the SSVP (*São Vicente*

de Paulo Society; the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul), the brothers visited a few families to assess the situation: their difficulties, the financial problems and the challenges they face every day. Based on the results of this research, the brothers in Brazil are now looking at how best to help the most distressing cases.



Kitchenette in a favela in Brazil.



Remnants of a 'house' that burned down in the slums of Huruma, Kenya.

Poverty in the Netherlands

The brothers in the Netherlands will cooperate with the *Quiet Community Tilburg*. This foundation works on a local level for people in poverty situations in the Netherlands. By asking sponsors to make a small effort, a small sacrifice, they send a signal to people in a poverty situation that they are seen and that there is understanding for their problems. For example, that there is a 'bed project' for children in Tilburg who are living below the poverty line and do not have a bed of their own.

Natural disasters in Indonesia

In September 2018, the city of Palu (Sulawesi, Indonesia) was hit by an earthquake followed by a tsunami. Villages were wiped out and many people were killed. First aid came in among others from the brothers' community in Palu, which had been spared. In the meantime, the people living in the distressed zones are working hard to resume normal life. The rubble is being cleared away and houses and infrastructure are being restored. Within the framework of the jubilee project *Sheltering the Homeless* the brothers in Indonesia will contribute to the reconstruction of affected houses in this area. In addition to assistance for Palu, plans have also been submitted in Indonesia to renovate the dilapidated houses of two families in Tomohon.

Brave women in Kenya

In Kenya as well, the brothers have been looking for a good implementation of the jubilee project. There is a proposal to build a house in Oyugis for a divorced

woman with three children, and to renovate a house with a leaking roof in Mosocho. Two other proposals came in from the brothers in Nairobi. Brother Michael Mbogo tells about a 54-year-old mother of 10 children in the slum of Huruma (Nairobi, Kenya). Besides her own children, she often takes care of the four children of her deceased daughter and six children of a deceased brother. Four years ago, her house burned down and since then she has been in despair. Especially in the rainy season it is hard. There is no roof anymore, so all the bedding gets wet. The children are susceptible to diseases. And although this is the only place the woman can call 'home', she doesn't feel safe there. This family needs a better home, and the brothers want to help.

Brother Michael also mentions a single mother who lives in the slum of Kiambiu (Nairobi). She has three children. The woman is handicapped, so her possibilities earning an income are limited. But she is a hardworking woman. She washes clothes for people in the neighbourhood and rents a sewing machine to repair clothes. This gives her a modest income of two to three dollars a day. She rents a house made of scrap wood and corrugated iron. There is no running water, no toilet. The roof has many holes through which the rainwater enters. Unfortunately, the owner of the house is just as poor and can't afford any repairs. Also, this family deserves a better house, and they too will get it.

Nathalie Bastiaansen



BROTHER CHRISTOPHER AKUNGA'S DRAWINGS

In the past and today, there are quite some brothers with creative skills. They make paintings, drawings, sculptures, or beautiful craftwork. It gives a different, sometimes unknown insight in the makers. This feature puts a selection from this work in the spotlight. Part 5 of this rubric depicts drawings by Brother Christopher Akunga from Kenya. In this article he also explains what inspired him to start making his drawings.

Before joining the Congregation of the Brothers CMM – at that time I was still studying – I had visited already several times their community in Mosocho. I was always fascinated by the decoration on the wall in the dining room. I joined the brothers in 2009 and found that the Nakuru community also had nice drawings and inspiring gospel quotes on the walls, especially in the chapel. When visiting other communities in Kenya I found that it was everywhere the case. Especially the community of Umoja inspired me a lot. I started drawing in the same style and sent my drawings to relatives and friends. Through their reactions I realized that it also inspired them.

The paintings on the walls in the CMM communities were made by brothers. Some of them are not with us today... may their souls rest in eternal peace. When we read about the life of our deceased brothers, I am always interested by what they did outside their assigned apostolate. Some were good choirmasters, some were good farmers or skilled carpenters, some were creative artists, while others were good at sports, to name a few. They all discovered their talents and they used them in a positive way.

I believe each of us has a talent that can be used for the benefit of others. Some have discovered this talent, some have not yet. Let's find out what God has hidden in us, let us search for what God wants us to find and use for his glorification.

I have always been attracted by paintings and

drawings, especially when I discover that they were made by Brother Patrick Kapteijns (+ 2010) one of my own fellow brothers. It is a pity that some of their works have been removed without being replaced. I feel that we need to do something to bring that beauty back. These images and quotes that surround us always give us something to reflect on. It made me think: "If other brothers have been doing it, why not me?" So, wherever I see an attractive image, I take a picture and try to draw it in my own way.

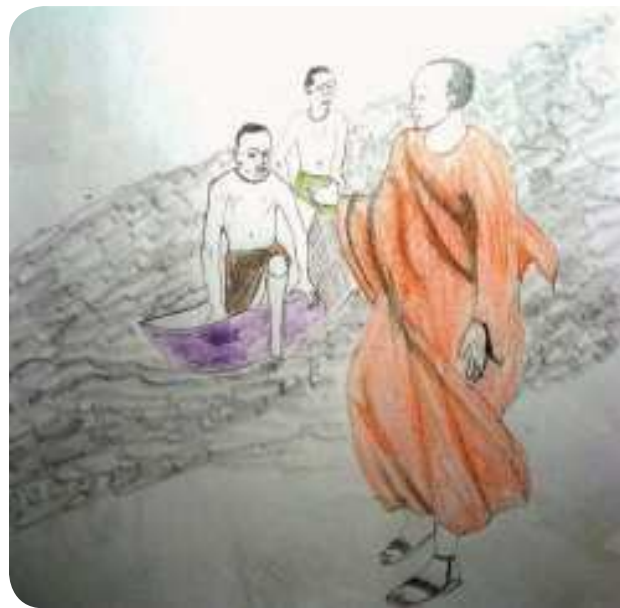
Brother Christopher Akunga CMM (Kenya)



"Peace"



David and Goliath
(1 Samuel 17).



"Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"
(Mark 1:17; Matthew 4:19).



Jesus washes his disciples' feet
(John 13:3-5).



"Let the children come to me"
(Luke 18:16; Mark 10:14; Matthew 19:14).



Flower.



"He who guards his mouth..."
(Proverbs 21:23).



Brother Christopher Akunga
CMM.



CONCERNING JOANNES ZWIJSEN

TWELVE STATUES OF SAINT VINCENT

In 1848 Bishop Zwijsen ordered twelve statues of St. Vincent from a studio for ecclesiastical art in Lille, France. He immediately takes twelve of them, because he can get the sculptures for a good price. These are not the only statues from St. Vincent that were purchased for the congregations of Zwijsen in these years. In 1850 he bought two larger statues in Amsterdam and in 1860 a life-size Vincent from Mayer in Munich (this statue is now in the brother museum in Tilburg). When in 1851 the new chapel of the mother house of the Brothers CMM is consecrated, on the feast day of St. Vincent, there is a large new statue made by the Utrecht sculptor and photographer Edouard Georges, a prominent Catholic artist who is one of the founders of the Vincent de Paul Society of Utrecht. It is not known exactly what the sculpture looked like, because it disappeared during one of the ensuing renovations. But this Vincent probably also carried a foundling on his arm and looked lovingly at the child.

Vincent de Paul was a popular saint throughout Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century. Many Catholics – and Protestants – admired his work for the poor. They recognized themselves in the idea of a church that came to the fore and cared about the fate of the less fortunate in society. The artists of the time no longer portrayed Vincent as a preacher of the Gospel, as in the previous century, but as a man who saved children and personally took them into his arms. The fact that Vincent had personally picked up children from the street and gave them a new life appealed to everyone.

Zwijsen's admiration for Vincent was in keeping with the spirit of the times. He did go further than many others in his imitation of the French saint. It was significant that in 1842, at the time of his consecration as a bishop, he was referred to by some good friends from Tilburg, with a mixture of admiration and teasing, as 'The Vincent of Tilburg'. However, the attention Zwijsen paid to St. Vincent was not just a devotion.



Statue of St. Vincent de Paul in the Generalate of the Brothers CMM.

Zwijsen wanted to follow Vincent's working method in practice. This meant that his congregations had to have a socially engaged and active character, focused on the execution of works of charity, in a spirit of simplicity and radicality, mercy and brotherhood. The St. Vincent statues in the brothers' and sisters' communities were an encouragement to keep this in mind in our daily activities.

Based on the historiography of the Brothers CMM, by Charles van Leeuwen (Valkhof Pers, expected publication: December 2019).

ORDINARY PEOPLE WITH A STRONG FAITH

In the Holy Week of April 2019, the Brothers Lukas Betekeneng and Rosario de Jesus Martins, together with four young adults of the Ambassadors of a Worldwide Brotherhood, went on a trip to Espinosa in North Minas Gerais. They entered the neighbourhoods and spent the week with the local people. The event was organized by the CRB (Conference of Religious in Brazil) of the State of Minas Gerais.

Ambassador Victor Francisco Lara Santos visited Pernambuco. He experienced it as a great privilege sharing the word of God in such a lively community. "I learned a lot from the local people and enjoyed the cultural wealth of the region. It was great because I was able to spread the call of Pope Francis in Panama (during the World Youth Days in January 2019) to the people of that region." Pope Francis said: "Realize that you have a mission and fall in love; that will decide everything."

The Ambassadors Thais Vitória Gonçalves Silva and Josiany Thamara Alves Souza visited Mingu. Thais discovered seeing Christ in the other. "I listened to their stories, experienced new customs and got to know the people from Mingu as persons who are incredibly powerful and strong in their faith. I received more than I could give!"

Ambassador Josiany also found it enriching to enter the district as a missionary. "The community is simple, but the people are so generous. We listened, and together we talked about God. God does not necessarily choose the people who are already capable, but He enables the chosen ones to convey his message to others. So even though I am a laywoman, I now know that I can go out and share Christ's message with others."

Brother Rosario de Jesus Martins stayed in Santada. "I have learned that we should always be proud of what we have", he says. "I met simple people who live in difficult circumstances, such as drought, heat and



Ambassadors Josiany and Thais with a group of children in Mingu, Brazil.

political injustice, but they are so full of happiness." In a conversation with an 82-year-old gentleman he told me that the world has changed a lot. In his eyes it is not getting any easier, but people should never give up or lose hope for better days, because as he said to me: "God is always good and will never let us down. Let us do what we can, and He will bring it to its completion." That was perhaps one of the most valuable lessons I have learned in my life. He showed me pure faith and I think that such a faith has the power to move mountains.

Brother Rosario de Jesus Martins CMM (Brazil)



GENERAL CHAPTER 2020



Chapter Hall in the Generalate of the Brothers CMM, Tilburg.

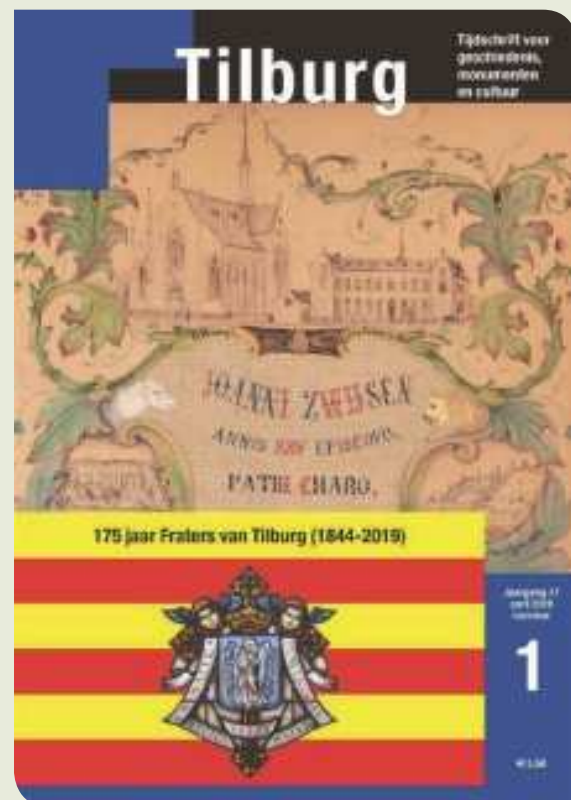
From Monday 18 May to Friday 5 June 2020, a General Chapter will be held in the Generalate of the Brothers CMM in Tilburg. The General Chapter exercises the highest authority in the Congregation and is formed by representatives of the entire Congregation. The task of the General Chapter is to protect the heritage of the Congregation, promote appropriate renewal, deal with matters of great importance to the Congregation and make regulations which are binding for the whole Congregation. The new general board is also elected during the General Chapter. The term of office of the current general board expires in June 2020.

The motto of the General Chapter 2020 will be: 'Called to be merciful brothers, joyful and courageous in today's world.'

BROTHERS IN TILBURG MAGAZINE

Earlier this year an edition of the magazine *Tilburg. Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis, monumenten en cultuur* (Tilburg. Magazine for History, Monuments and Culture) was published. It is a Dutch magazine about the history, monuments, and culture of Tilburg. The edition of April 2019 is entirely devoted to the history of the Brothers CMM, and it contains contributions by various authors. Study Secretary Charles van Leeuwen tells the story of the brothers by highlighting several special moments in their history. Archivist Rien Vissers writes about the special congregational archive. Joost van Hest, heritage specialist of the Catharijneconvent Utrecht, writes about the inventory of the brothers' cultural heritage. From Ton de Jong and Jeroen Ketelaars there is an article about the unique Caribbean photo collection of the brothers. Sjak Rutten, earned his PhD on a biography about Brother Caesarius Mommers, and explains what was - and is - so special about Mommers' reading method. Finally, Ronald Peeters shows the places in Tilburg where the history of the brothers can still 'be read' in the streetscape.

Tilburg. Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis, monumenten en cultuur is only available at local bookshops in Tilburg (at 5.50).



Tilburg. Magazine for History, Monuments and Culture (volume 37, April 2019, nr. 1).



BROTHER

EUGENIUS (P.J.) VAN DONGEN

Brother Eugenius was born in Gilze-Rijen, the Netherlands on 29 November 1923. He entered the Congregation of the Brothers CMM at Tilburg on 29 August 1945. He made his profession for life on 15 August 1950. Brother Eugenius died at Hospital Virgo Jesse in Hasselt, Belgium. On 18 March 2019 he was taken to his final resting place among his fellow brothers who preceded him.

Brother Eugenius studied at the Business College St. Denis in Tilburg and worked for a few years at the city council administration. After WWII he presented himself at the Brothers CMM where he began his religious formation. In 1948 he obtained his teacher's certificate and was appointed at primary schools in Tilburg and Goirle. Some years later he earned the qualification of headmaster and became the headmaster of St. Thomas Primary School in Goirle. The Congregation asked him to become superior of the community in Goirle to care for the welfare of the brothers there. When that community was suppressed in 1995, Brother Eugenius moved to Tilburg and became the interim superior of the community in Kruisvaardersstraat. At that time, he was also a member of the provincial board of the brothers in the Netherlands. Changing circumstances forced him to move in 2012 to the community of the brothers in Zonhoven, Belgium, where he was received with brotherly love. Together with the other brothers he found accommodation in 2013 at the residential care facility 'Het Dorpvelt' on the estate of the former brother house at Kleine Hemmenweg. At the advanced age of 95, Brother Eugenius placed his life into the hands of his merciful God.

mercy brotherhood

simplicity trust in God

Are you being called?
We welcome new brothers
and others who want to join us.

 [join-us@
cmmbrothers.nl](mailto:join-us@cmmbrothers.nl)

READERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The previous edition of the magazine Brothers CMM contained a questionnaire. We received many responses for which we thank you. Because the English and Indonesian editions of the magazine Brothers CMM are being published later, including the responses in those languages, not all results have been processed. In edition nr. 19/3 we expect to be able to tell you a bit more. The winners of the book by Brother Wim Verschuren Loving Mercy, will also be published at that time.



BROTHER

FRANSISKUS UWEUBUN

Fransiskus was born on 27 March 1964 in Ohoiwang on the island of Great Kei (Moluccas). On 1 June 1986 he entered the Congregation of the Brothers of Our Lady, Mother of Mercy in Tomohon, Indonesia. In Medan he made his profession for life on 24 April 1994. He died in the early morning of 10 May 2019 at Gunung Maria Hospital in Tomohon and on 11 May, after a liturgical celebration, he was taken to his final resting place among his deceased fellow brothers in the cemetery of the brothers in Tomohon.

After making his first profession in 1988 Brother Frans was asked to follow the nursing training. After graduating he worked as a nurse in Pematang Siantar, Ambon, Makale and Ge'tengan. He specialized in Medan and Makassar, so that as a qualified teacher he could train others to serve the sick fellow man. In 2017 he had to give up all his work because his own health was failing him. Brother Frans is known within the Congregation as someone who had a special type of humour. He could also be quite critical of others. Several times he was asked to be superior or deputy superior of a community. With his talents he has tried to give substance and form to this. By human standards Brother Frans left us far too early. The last two years of his life he was brotherly cared for in the novitiate in Tomohon. In the mystery of Easter the Lord showed us that death is not the end. May Brother Frans now experience God's love in all its fullness.



BROTHER

MART (J.M.) KROEZEN

Mart was born 4 February 1936 in the township of Deurne, the Netherlands. He entered the Congregation of the Brothers of Our Lady, Mother of Mercy on 29 August 1955 at Tilburg. He made his profession for life on 15 August 1961. He passed away in the Joannes Zwijsen community in Tilburg on 13 February 2019. Following a liturgical funeral service on February 18 he was taken to his final resting place among his deceased fellow brothers at the Steenwijk Estate in Vught, the Netherlands.

Formerly Brother Mart worked at 'Uitgeverij Zwijsen' (Publishing House Zwijsen) in Tilburg. He took on the important task of proof-reader in addition to his work in offset printing. He worked very meticulously and after he was called to do other work within the Congregation, the publishing house continued to ask him to proofread and correct materials for publication. We all remember Brother Mart as a walker. Seven times he walked in Nijmegen's International Four Day Marches and participated in various Kennedy Marches. In all those trips he enjoyed nature; he did not just walk past it. He talked enthusiastically about the sunrise, the singing of the birds in the early morning, and the beauty of the 'Mergelland Route' in Limburg. Did Brother Mart feel close to his Creator during those walks? His physical condition deteriorated the last few years. He talked about it quite openly. He kept insisting that nature must follow its course. When we reflect on Brother Mart's life, we realize that he invited us to think about life and death, about continuing to walk despite obstacles. Brother Mart has reached the finish line after his life's journey of 83 years. We believe that God was waiting for him at his life's finish. Brother Mart now enjoys the Love that knows no finish.



*Brother Wilfridus Bria
at the island of Kei Kecil.*

DOING SMALL THINGS WITH A BIG HEART

Mercy and brotherhood are two key concepts in the charism of the Brothers CMM. Beautiful words. But what happens in the reality of the everyday life of the brothers? That's what is highlighted in this feature 'See my people'. Brother Wilfridus Bria tells about his work as a missionary at the Kei Islands.

The Kei Islands might not be seen on the world map and it is only a small dot on the map of Indonesia. It is in the eastern part and belongs to a group of islands in the Moluccas in Melanesia. The most famous islands are Kei Besar (Big Kei) and Kei Kecil (Small Kei).

In 2016, after finishing my studies at the university I was transferred to the community of Ohoijang at Kei Kecil. I took over the apostolate of the late Brother Placidius Siagian, who had died forty days before my arrival. Brother Placidius was really a man for others. Many people testified about him. People really loved him. This was also visible during his funeral. Thousands of people took part in the final procession from the community to the cemetery.

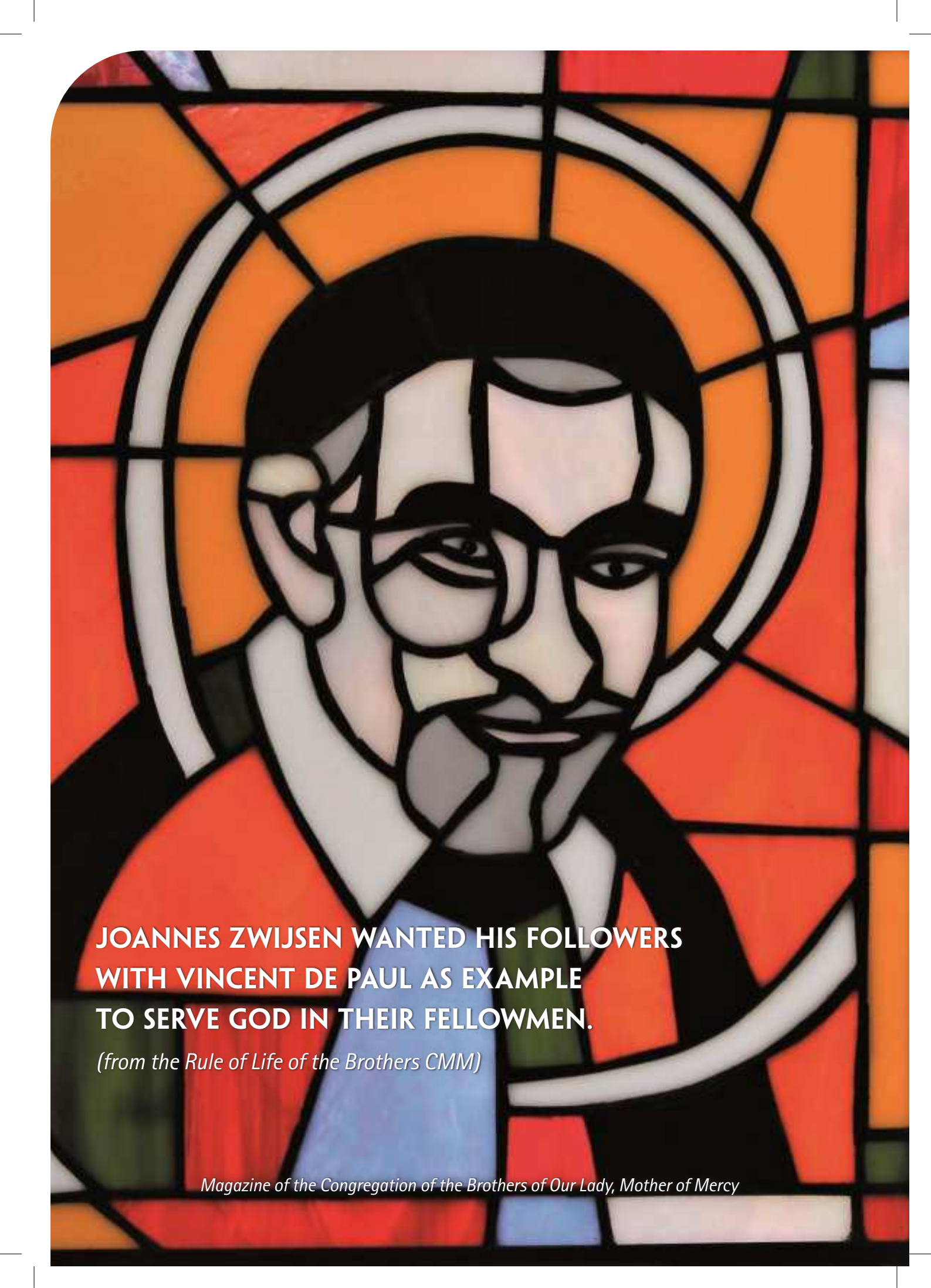
One week after my arrival, I started teaching at the junior high school where Brother Placidius had worked for almost ten years. Teaching has become my passion since my first profession as a Brother CMM. After school I taught extra English lessons to the primary school pupils. Many pupils came to the brother house to receive English classes. They also came to read, because we have a small library available with books for children.

As a community with only two members, it is difficult to do great things. But we did what we could. From morning till afternoon, we worked at school. We were also active in helping the parish priest in the small communities, facilitating prayer services and being actively involved in many other services of the church, such as youth work, teaching organ lessons and participating in the parish choir. Every Sunday we went to the small communities in the village. Every Sunday I visited three to five communities in different villages. Sometimes it was tiresome, but I really enjoyed that apostolate.

Being present to others does not mean you have to do great things. Doing small things with a big heart can bring happiness to others. What we did were only small things, but people really felt supported. Our presence in their midst gave them the courage to believe that together with others we can build God's Kingdom in this world.

frater Wilfridus Bria CMM (Indonesië)



A stylized stained glass portrait of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a red robe and a blue sash. The portrait is set against a background of orange and red stained glass panels with black lead lines. The man's face is rendered in a simplified, geometric style with black outlines. He has a halo around his head.

**JOANNES ZWIJSEN WANTED HIS FOLLOWERS
WITH VINCENT DE PAUL AS EXAMPLE
TO SERVE GOD IN THEIR FELLOWMEN.**

(from the Rule of Life of the Brothers CMM)