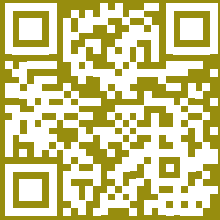




BROTHERS CMM MAGAZINE

1/23

| ANOTHER LOOK AT THE NETHERLANDS
| TIME AND SPACE | ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SCHOOL
IN URAMBO | THE CHURCH AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD |



Take a look at
the website
www.cmmbrothers.org

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OUR MISSION

We are called to be merciful brothers
and to do what Jesus did:
to serve and enlighten,
speak a redeeming word and be a helping hand.

Most of our work is in the domain of teaching,
accompaniment of youth and church ministry,
especially for the poor and the needy.

Through the quality of education
and religious formation
we want to empower young people
and contribute to the development of society.

We take care of the sick and vulnerable
and create places of hospitality,
and we help people to find meaning
and happiness in their lives.

Together with others we devote ourselves to building
a more humane world of justice and peace.

We are religious brothers and live in communities,
joyful and courageous, open to the world around us.
Trust in God, simplicity, brotherhood and mercy
characterize our life and work.

We honour Mary as our Mother of Mercy.
We cherish the memory of our founder
Joannes Zwijsen
and we follow the example of Saint Vincent de Paul:
serving God in the poor and the needy.
We carry in our hearts the words of Jesus:
"As you did it to one of the least of my brethren,
you did it to me."



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COLOPHON

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Photograph front cover:
A fashion show of the students of the St. Vincent De Paul School in Urambo (Tanzania).

Photograph back cover:
Detail of an alpine hut in the Dolomites.
Photo: Brother Ad de Kok



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FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

This time, the 'Conversation with the Superior General' goes back in time. Brother Lawrence Obiko speaks about his vocation. The memory of his mother's reaction to this is a particularly tender image. In the 'Portrait Gallery' we read about Father Barnabas Verhoeven. The poor man unfortunately does not come off so well, but that too is part of historiography. What stays is that we can learn from past mistakes. There is also an interview with two priests from India who lived in the Generalate for six months to learn the Dutch language and culture. For readers from the Netherlands, this offers a distinct perspective on the obvious, and readers from other countries may recognize several of the priests' experiences with a smile. The section 'In the Spotlight' puts the limelight on the impressive work of Brother Albanus, who made the concepts of time and space understandable. For 'Images of apostolate' we take you to St. Vincent De Paul School in Tanzania, a Catholic school where, surprisingly, other religions are also represented. In 'Stories from the past', Brother Johannes van Berkel shares a story about his time in Surinam. On the pages 16-17, Brother Theo Adams talks about the impact of the Basic Christian Communities in Brazil on the lives of religious. The interview was conducted shortly before his death. In the section 'See my people', Brother Januario Sani Quehi talks about his desire to share God's love with others. Let us all do that.



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CONVERSATION

WITH THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

"We are called..."

When and how did you experience your vocation to become a brother?

As a child I never had the ambition to become a religious brother. One thing that might have planted a seed, is seeing a handicapped man who taught catechism. I remember he could not walk so he had to crawl, but then the parish priest organized for an operation that enabled him to walk on crutches, and I thought: if this man is able to do this, then maybe I can do something for the Church as well.

After primary school I went to Cardinal Otunga High School. On the reporting day, I entered the office of the principal Brother Innocens de Kok. He called me by name and started chatting with me. This was a different encounter than I expected. The brothers in school inspired me. I saw their dedication and their genuine interest in students' well-being. I also visited the brothers' community from time to time. I was attracted to the attitude of the brothers and their attention for the poor and the needy. It was at that time that I started to feel the desire to become a brother.

How did your family react? At home I went picking tea together with my mother, and I told her about my desire. She did not answer but started singing. Did she even hear me? I repeated. She laughed and said, "I wanted to become a sister when I was young." When

I told my father I was interested to become a brother, he kept quiet, and I did not know how he felt about it. He might have had other expectations. When I made my first profession, I invited my family, although I still did not know my father's opinion. To my surprise he came, and he told me: "If you really want to become a brother, be a good one."

Did you face doubts or challenges? As a postulant, I was sent to a Cistercian monastery for a few months to learn about dairy farming, which I loved very much. They asked me if I was interested to stay with them, but I was very sure I wanted to go back. Another time, my postulant-master informed me that he had found an interesting study program that I could join, instead of becoming a brother. So, there were other options, but they could not convince me to do anything else.

I never felt that I made the wrong choice. It is fulfilling to know my life is made available for everybody, especially for those in need. As a brother, I must accept that I am human and that I can have my own desires. But human desires come and go, and my vows make me feel free to do what I find most important.

Brother Lawrence Obiko
in an interview with Nathalie Bastiaansen

THE SUPERIOR GENERAL WHO WAS ALWAYS RIGHT

By looking at the portrait of Father Barnabus Verhoeven, Superior General from 1912 till 1916, can you tell he had a difficult term of office? I think so. Watch carefully and you see the pride in his eyes as well as something testy and dogged in his posture. Verhoeven was a talented man, but cooperation was foreign to him.



Father Barnabus Verhoeven (1868-1938).

In 1912 it was already obvious that the board under leadership of Father Barnabus Verhoeven was going to face tough challenges. There were big problems in the field of education: the level of education left much to be desired, and many school buildings were in dire need of repair, but financial problems made repairs impossible. The religious training was desperately in need of updating. The fraternal spirit was not good, spirituality was slacking off and tension was growing between separate groups. The priests were not comfortable, the teaching brothers in the Congregation were unhappy and the brothers who were craftsmen or performed domestic chores felt neglected. The causes were deeply rooted in history and should have been dealt with much sooner. By 1912 the situation had turned critical.

Verhoeven was well aware of the problems, and he was eager to tackle them. Unfortunately, as an inexperienced and young administrator he made one mistake after another. As a result, the situation only got worse.

He took on too many problems at one time. Verhoeven was ambitious and made plans with his board members for large-scale reorganizations. Due to their inexperience however very few plans bore fruit. Verhoeven could not compromise and as a result he only escalated the situation. When he received negative advice from an educational committee, he decided to abolish the committee. The community of the teachers training college voiced criticism about his policy, and he decided to shut that community down. Brothers who disagreed with him were transferred to prevent any further comments from them.

The most serious mistake Verhoeven made was that he made decisions increasingly by himself. He hardly kept his fellow board members informed about what he discussed with the bishop and with the mediator from Rome. It became inevitable that the bomb was going to explode. In the fall of 1916 Rome intervened, the Congregation was split up and the priest had to leave. The consequences were serious, because many of the most experienced administrators left the Congregation and received large financial compensations. The Congregation nearly went bankrupt and because of this other problems became more acute.

Upon his departure from the Congregation, Verhoeven was placed in charge of a sisters' convent in Tilburg. The bishop transferred him soon afterwards to a small parish somewhere in the province. There he died at the age of seventy, embittered and forgotten. He had failed as a leader, but even that he could never admit.

Charles van Leeuwen



ANOTHER LOOK AT THE NETHERLANDS

Father A. Vijayan Rajan Babu and Father Antony Rosario are priests of the Diocese of Kottar, Tamilnadu, India. With several years of priestly experience in their diocese, they have come to the Netherlands to give their service in the Diocese of 's-Hertogenbosch. Before being assigned to a parish, they lived in the Generalate of the Brothers CMM to learn the Dutch language and culture. In an interview they share their experiences.



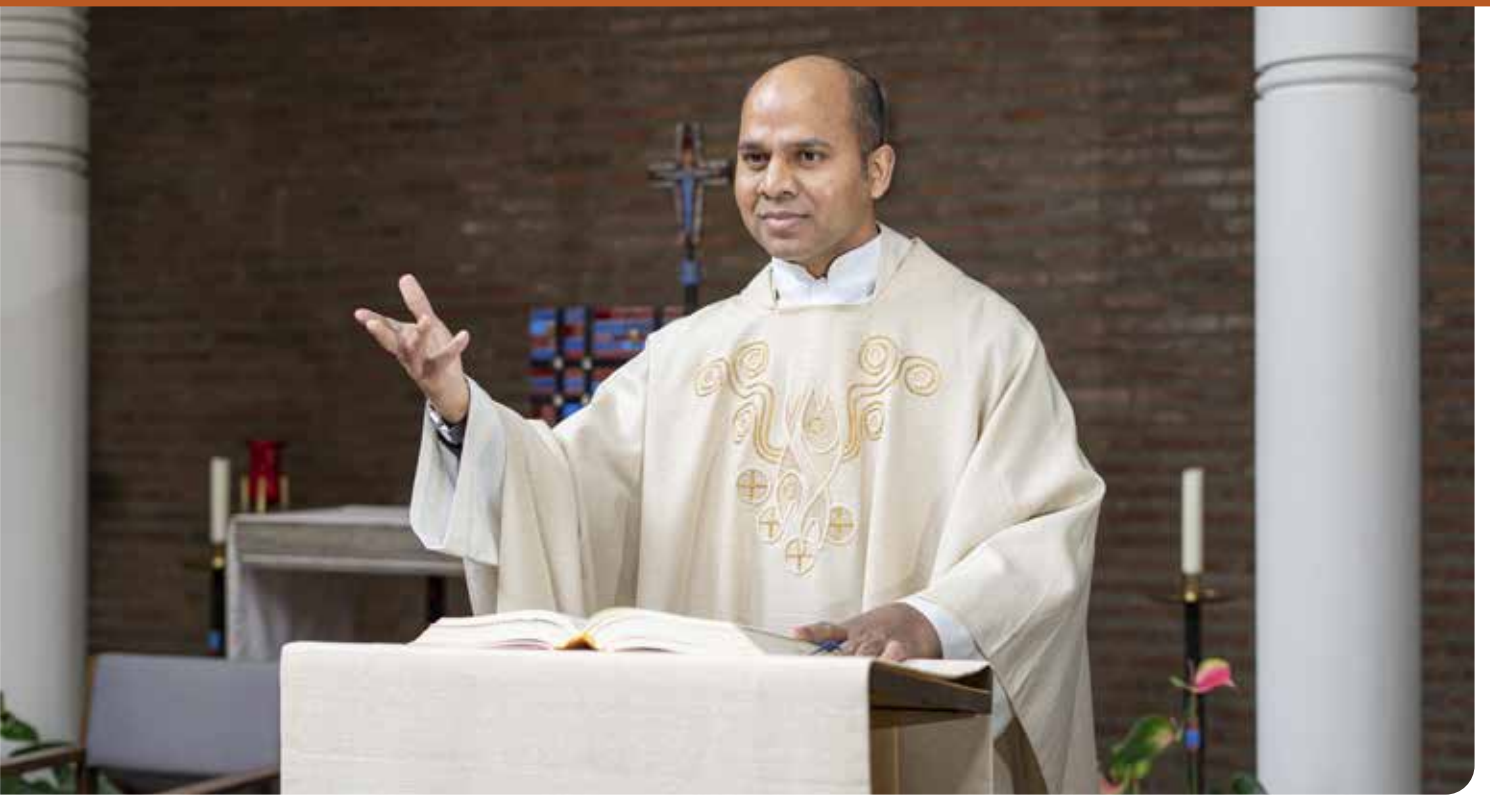
Father A. Vijayan Rajan Babu.

Father Babu compares the Generalate of the Brothers CMM with a mother's womb, where they are able to grow and prepare for their mission in the world that they are about to enter. "It is indeed a heaven-sent opportunity for me to have the company of the brothers here."

Before coming to the Netherlands, the two priests already heard about the Netherlands in stories from the past. Father Antony explains that he is from Colachel parish in India. The people there always speak of the war between the Dutch VOC and the Indian kingdom of Travancore in Colachel, in 1741. "That was a war for pepper and the local king won the war." When Father Antony saw the country of the Netherlands on the world map, he was very surprised to see that people from this tiny land came all the way from here to his land to fight for pepper. They also heard that the Netherlands is a land of tulips and that there are more bicycles than people. Father Babu mentions that the Dutch are known for their love for

cheese, and he adds that "it was said that the guest is expected to take only one biscuit, when it is served with tea or coffee." Once in the Netherlands, they soon found out that this was a bit exaggerated, as they were offered more biscuits everywhere.

The two priests saw more remarkable things: "In wintertime, the Dutch set all their clocks and watches one hour backwards in order to have a longer day time. They have calendars in the toilet room in which they write down birthdays of their near and dear ones." According to Father Babu, the Dutch never come too early or too late, and appointments are very important. "You have to make prior appointment before visiting anybody, even a doctor in hospital or government office." They also experienced that Dutch people are direct and to the point in any conversation or correction. Still, they are very accommodative, says Father Babu. "They welcome with open arms everyone from other cultures and countries."



Father Antony Rosario.

Rich or poor

The Netherlands is one of the richest countries of the world, and according to Father Antony, this richness has paved way to an individualistic life. "People here slowly lose interest in community life, including the Church, which is a community of the faithful. According to a survey, 1 in 4 people are living alone in the Netherlands, and above the age of 70 the number is even higher. It is difficult for a common citizen of India to live without a community and to live without a religion." Father Babu adds that in India, "churches are filled with people, in the Netherlands the church is filled with empty pews. In the Netherlands churches are sold or turned into apartments. But in India, every year new churches are mushrooming."

Father Antony finds the Netherlands rich in service, from the infrastructure to healthcare system, and the distribution of the wealth is better than in India. Father Babu noticed that "everybody is insured from their birth to their death", and that "equality of persons irrespective of sex, language, religion and culture is very apparent."

Mission

Father Babu sees the Church as a place of coming together to deepen interpersonal relationships. "Whether the home we live in is 300 or 3,000 sq/ft, loneliness is the same. According to him, "more of faith-forming activities in a more creative way and reaching out to the people to give them a taste of the spiritual and meaningful life can do wonders."

Father Antony hopes to reach out not only to the people inside the Church, but also to the people who chose to be outside the church, and even to the people of other faiths. He also hopes to be a bridge between the Netherlands, a land in poverty of faith and India, a land with financial poverty. Father Babu adds that there can be a lot of fundamental differences, but still, whatever we are or wherever we are, we can make the world a better place to live. Happy are not those who have the best of everything, but people who make the best of everything.



In the garden of the Generalate.



DEPICTION OF TIME AND SPACE

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 into the makers, or... into the world! This time, we highlight two paintings by Brother Albanus Verheijen (1841-1911). They are currently in the exhibition in the basement of the Generalate.



Frater Albanus Verheijen.

Brother Albanus Verheijen worked with deaf children in Maaseik (Belgium) and knew from his own experience that these children are in great need of visual support. He therefore made representations of time and space to explain these concepts. He wrote: "... in this way, Brother Hyacinthus and I were often able to read with satisfaction the amazement on the faces of the deaf and dumb, when their minds began to grasp something of the distant past that they had never suspected, ...". Both representations constitute a period document of the 19th-century worldview. This worldview has changed considerably in the second half of the 20th century, but the depictions remain impressive.

The division of time

In the top center we see the Trinity. Above left, the six days of creation, and above right, running downwards, figures from the Old Testament, ending with the birth

of Jesus. From there, a strip to the left depicts the history of the first century of Christianity. Below, we see the course of human existence from cradle to grave, with the associated sacraments. Going up on the left, Christian history up to 1900 is depicted, above which is the Last Judgement.

In the circle we see the 52 weeks with the number of days in the year. With each day, a saint or biblical figure is mentioned. Also depicted are the months of the year and the seasons, with the Church's festivals in their outer edges. In front a circle with the 7 days of the week, a circle indicating a 24-hour period and in the middle a lightning bolt, indicating one second.

The division of space

Again, space is considered from a religious perspective. At the top centre, we see the Trinity, in an all-controlling triangle. The lower point touches a monstrance on an open-air altar before a church in a walled city on earth. The depiction shows us the earth, the sky, the atmosphere, the firmament and no less than three heavens.

On the earth's left, we see a desert and palm trees: the tropics. On the right, we see rocks, waterfalls, and fir trees: the north. The mills, the bulb fields, the weaving mill, and the little farm indicate the working people, the castle, and the villa the wealthy. The distinction of classes in this depiction is God's will. Steamships, trams, and trains indicate that the age of technology was coming: the industrial revolution. The chapel on the right indicates that after one dies (the cemetery indicates this), one should take care not to go to hell, but as poor Lazarus strive to end up in the womb of Abraham.

Toe komst
voor ons
verborgen

SCHIPPINGS DAGEN

VOLLEDIGE VOORSTELLING

DER VERDEELING VAN DEN TIJD.



'Full representation of the division of time.'





'Full representation of the division of space.'

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SECONDARY SCHOOL IN URAMBO, TANZANIA

Worldwide the Congregation is being confronted with all sorts of material and spiritual needs. The brothers, together with others, are trying to alleviate these. In the twenty-fourth edition of this column, we visit St. Vincent De Paul School in Urambo, Tanzania.

St. Vincent De Paul Secondary School is a mixed secondary school. The school has a Catholic signature but is open to boys and girls from different religions. There is also a boarding school, for students coming from further afield. The school was founded in 2005 by the Brothers CMM.

The main reason for starting a school in this area was because of the need for quality and holistic education. The brothers consider it their duty to help build a more humane world, and to work for justice and peace. The school's motto is: "Seek that which supports and

promotes life". Education is a source of knowledge that, if used properly, serves human dignity, and frees us from ignorance and poverty of all kinds.

The brothers, assisted by lay staff, guide the students on their path to adulthood by providing academic, cultural, social, and religious knowledge and skills. Thus, students are prepared to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country in all sectors of society, in dignity and respect regardless of faith or gender.



This is the graduation ceremony of Muhewa Charles Kamando, a pupil at St. Vincent De Paul School from 2016 to 2019. He continued his education at a national government secondary school (form five and six). In 2021, he emerged as the third best student in all of Tanzania, and first male student in Tanzania. We are proud of him, and of all other young people who found their way in society after graduating from our school.





Classroom



The school is Catholic but is open to pupils of different religions.



Students perform for invited guests during the graduation ceremony.



An atlas on the wall.



Excursion.



Hands-on laboratory class.



School canteen where students can also buy basic supplies such as notebooks and pencils.



Library.



Taking a break in the schoolyard.

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



In 2018, the school received a certificate of recommendation from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for its quality of education and excellent results.





The new church.

BUILDING IN SURINAM

In 1902, the Brothers CMM were placed in charge of an orphanage in Paramaribo, Surinam. To keep the older orphan boys useful, various activities started over time. These included an agricultural business, a cattle breeding business, a rope-making business, a weaving business, a cigar factory, a carpentry business, and a printing business. Several enterprises ran well, while others were less successful.

In the 1930s, the orphanage gradually turned into a boarding school, the R.C. Boys' Boarding School St. Jozef. There was a constant lack of money, and partly for this reason the "Timmerbedrijf Internaat" (Carpentry Boarding School) (TIM-IN for short) was established. Besides the need to earn money, the main aim was to train the boys to become good craftsmen.

Brother Johannes Berchmans van Berkel was in Surinam as a missionary from 1967 to 2012. He held a Contractors' Diploma. From 1970 to 1980, he led TIM-IN, and in 1980 he was appointed by the diocese as an architect in the RK Construction Mission Interior Surinam. Here, too, he trained young Surinamese in construction.



The construction crew, with Brother Johannes van Berkel second from the left.



The steel structure was erected in 3 days.



Villagers help lug gravel.



The procession at the opening of the church.



Brother Johannes tells Bishop de Bekker how the church was built.

In 2006, Brother Johannes having retired by then, the diocese asked him to supervise the construction of a church. To build the simple church at Donderskamp, an indigenous village on the Wayombo River in Surinam, five local men worked under Brother Johannes' guidance.

Construction of the church, with 175 seats and a 12-metre-high tower, began by making cement bricks with savannah sand themselves. Many villagers lent a hand in transporting materials from the scaffolding to the construction site almost 1 km away. Everything was done by hand (wheelbarrow), including the heavy metal beams for the steel structure. On Sunday 23 April 2006, the new church, dedicated to St. Gerardus Majella, was consecrated by Bishop de Bekker.

An article about the opening appeared on 7 May 2006 in 'Omhoog', the Catholic weekly of the Diocese of Paramaribo. An excerpt from it stated: "Sunday 23 April was the big day. Some threatening and falling of rain, but that was the blessing we needed. Bishop, clergy, and villagers were welcomed, and in a procession, they were drawn to the church, in a procession around the church like a form of the capture of Jericho. But the building remained firmly on its foundations. The opening ceremony began with a brief introduction on the construction of the church by Brother Johannes van Berkel, after which the local executor handed over the keys to the bishop, who opened the doors."



THE CHURCH AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD

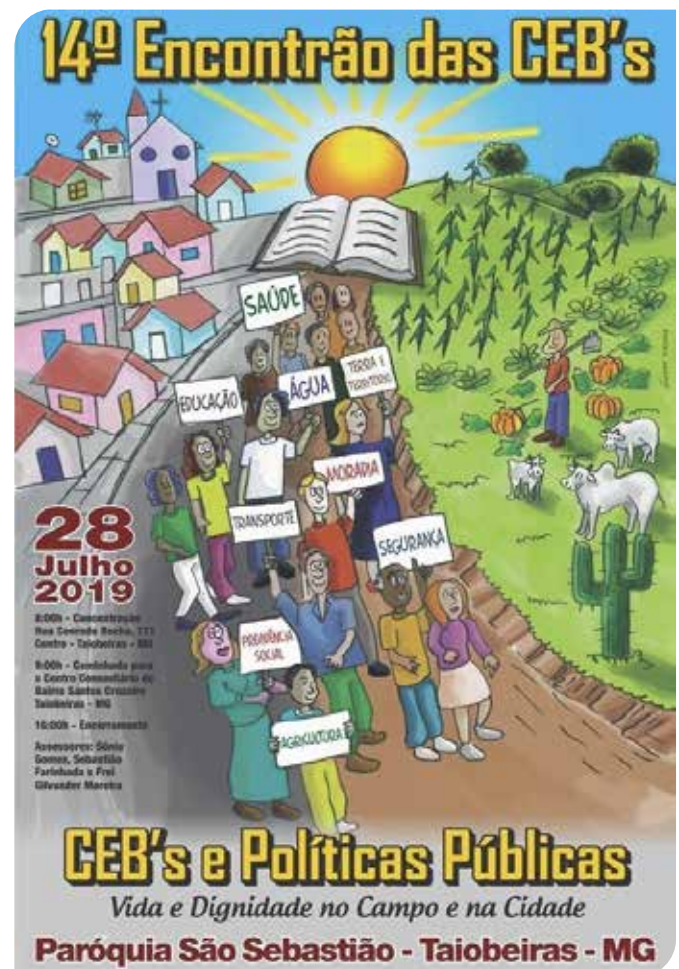
In Fraterklanken nr. 166 (News of the Brothers' Community Joannes Zwijsen) an interview appeared in February 2023 with Brother Theo Adams, shortly before his death. One of the topics he mentioned dealt with the church's basic ecclesial communities (CEB) in Brazil. These communities agreed very well with the way Brother Theo lived his vocation. In what follows we analyze this reality more deeply.

At Vatican Council II (1962-1965) a call was made for a more active role of Catholic lay people in the Church. In 1965 Brother Theo taught for a year at the Brother Andreas School in Eindhoven. He experienced this as a good first step, especially as this was a school for poor children. A year later he left for Belo Horizonte in Brazil – he was 23 years old at the time. Together with Brother Jo Huiskamp he initiated activities aimed at supporting the poor in the working-class district Pindorama. They organized various courses and Brother Theo set up a nursery. Meanwhile he was appointed as a teacher at Colégio Padre Eustáquio. Apart from his work as a teacher Theo remained occupied with social work such as erecting homes for orphans in the vicinity of the college. From 1987 till 1992 he lived and collaborated with Brother Leopoldo Remans in a poor district in Ibitaré. It really hurt him when this project could no longer continue.

Social work

In 1992 Brother Theo went to Rio de Janeiro for a sabbatical. There, with other young religious, he explored the causes of poverty in the country and what could be done about it. The basic ecclesial communities played a significant role here. In January 1993 Brother Theo left for the new community in Coronel Fabriciano, where he devoted himself to FUNCELFA, the organization which set up the Children's Village, called Cidade do Menor. For the next 20 years he lived and worked there in various functions, but his social work for the children appealed to him most. In those years education was provided in a small school at the square and there were sports activities for the children who were with a few educators (aunties) housed and accompanied – like families – in small home units. They created a vegetable garden and brought up the children with education and social activities till they found a job.

Theo has written a great deal about the Children's Village and other social work. In the interview for *Fraterklanken* he emphasised in the lecture from *'Shirikisho Monographs'* written by him for the General Meeting in Kenya in October 1988. What he saw in Kenya inspired him, and the text is a good presentation of what he saw as the ideal picture of life as a religious brother.



Pamphlet of the Minas Gerais, 2019, with the theme: 'Life and dignity in both country and city.'



Brother Theo Adams reading in Cidade do Menor (2008).

Changes in religious life

In the text mentioned above he writes about the basic ecclesial communities and about the process of growing awareness in Latin America intended to enlighten an important section of society, i.e., the poor and marginalized, about the unjust society that suppressed them structurally. This process of a growing awareness changed not only the life of the poor. The evangelical option for the poor and the reflection and engagement of many religious, also changed the life of the religious themselves.

Many religious moved their work and life surroundings from the 'tidy and respectable' areas to the slums. From a well-furnished monastery they went into a small home with little comfort, from their own chapel to prayers in the hall or outside at work. And instead of using a car they began to travel by bus or on foot. The monasteries opened wide their doors for guests and religious became more actively involved in activities outside the monastery – together with the local population. From solidarity with the reigning classes, they sided increasingly towards solidarity with the working class. The focus for charitable works concentrated on providing self-sustainability, freedom, and equality, rather than on monetary contributions.

Even in spiritual matters much changed. Monastic prayer of the breviary did not entirely disappear, but it was supplemented with participation in Bible groups with prayers close to people's hearts. Monastic silence made room for a more prophetic focus on solidarity with the oppressed – with the courage to protest injustice. The religious made themselves heard.

The Church as People of God

In 2007 the bishops of the 5th Episcopal Conference of Latin-America and the Caribbean (Council of Aparecida) embraced the basic ecclesial communities as a pastoral model, especially for the slums and the poor agricultural areas. Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio (later Pope Francis) played a significant role in that episcopal conference. The Council of Aparecida also restored the theological-pastoral method of "seeing, judging, acting" and the "preferential option for the poor". In 2021 these ideas were infused with new life in the First Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in November 2021 in Mexico City. This meeting had a special origin. When the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) asked Pope Francis for a new General Conference of Bishops, he suggested to hold a meeting with representatives from the *entire* People of God. The title of this first church gathering was: "Towards a Synodal Church which finds and moves itself in the periphery". The meeting was directed towards the transformation of Church and social structures, renewal of the missionary impulse and closeness to the poorest and most excluded. These ideas were Brother Theo's life and soul.

Nathalie Bastiaansen

With thanks to Brother Theo Adams (+11/2/2023) and Christianne van de Wal, associate member (Netherlands).





BROTHER

YVO (Y.C.H.S.) NIJSTEN

Yvo was born in Houthalen, Belgium, on 29 December 1940 and entered the Congregation of the Brothers CMM in Tilburg on 29 August 1957. He died at the residential care facility 'Het Dorpvelt' in Zonhoven, Belgium, on 4 February 2023. On Monday 13 February his fellow brothers, family members and friends paid their final respect to him in a Eucharistic celebration. Afterwards he was buried among his deceased fellow brother brothers at the cemetery of Zonhoven-Centrum.

Yvo made his profession of life on 15 August 1963 in Tilburg. At that time, he was already working as a teacher in Houthalen. He also continued his studies in the field of catechesis and economy. From 1973 till 1975, he worked as a teacher in Zaïre. A second mission followed, this time to Curaçao, where he taught at Radulphus College and served as vice-principal for several years. After twenty years in Curaçao he started his third mission, this time to Brazil. In Brazil he served the Congregation as the regional bursar. Brother Yvo was a humble man who did not like the limelight. He took his vocation as a religious very seriously as demonstrated by his loyalty to the communal prayers and through the punctuality by which he managed his assignments. The last years of his life were not easy. For an extended period, he lost his ability to speak; as a result, he withdrew increasingly more. Thanks to the loving care rendered at the residential care facility 'Het Dorpvelt' he was able to spend many years there, and from where he also passed away peacefully. May he now find himself secure with God. We are grateful to him for his brotherhood and faithful commitment to the mission of the Congregation in the countries he treasured in his heart: Belgium, Zaïre, Curaçao, and Brazil.



BROTHER

THEO (T.J.) ADAMS

Theo was born in Reusel, the Netherlands, on 4 November 1943 and entered the Congregation of the Brothers CMM on 29 August 1961. He made his profession for life in Brazil on 15 August 1967. He died in the community of Joannes Zwijsen in Tilburg on 11 February 2023. On 16 February his fellow brothers, family members and friends paid their final respect to him in a Eucharistic celebration. Afterwards he was buried among his deceased fellow brother brothers at the Estate Steenwijk in Vught.

After having worked a few years at the Brother Andreas School in Eindhoven he was sent at the age of twenty-three to Brazil. It became his home. He was invaluable to the people there and he was much loved. To become more qualified, he studied administration and education at the Catholic University in Belo Horizonte. His solidarity with the poor was typical during his whole life. This orientation was explicitly biblically grounded and inspired by liberation theology. He committed himself to find structural solutions but also kept personal interest in young people. These two qualities served him and the local community very well during the twenty years he was active at the children's village 'Cidado do Menor' in Coronel Fabriano. He felt at home in that setting. He was a living example of a religious with a consequential sober lifestyle, averse to all luxuries. His choice to live with his fellow brother Leopoldo Remans amid the poor in Ibirité, a poor neighbourhood, testifies to the radical choices based on the gospel preference for the poor. Theo also served with great merit in administration: for years he was community superior, member of the regional board and regional superior. After 56 years he had to return to the Netherlands for health issues. He barely had time to feel at home. We wish him a place in God's Kingdom, to which he had dedicated his entire life.

GOD'S LOVE IS TO BE SHARED

Who are these brothers? What motivates them? What are their dreams, their ideals? In what way do they give shape to 'mercy' and 'brotherhood' - the two core concepts in the charism of the Brothers CMM? Brother Januario Sani Quehi from Timor Leste talks about his desire to share God's love with others.



Brother Januario and parishioners during Bible study.

After my first profession of vows in Pematangsiantar, Indonesia, I returned to Timor Leste. I became bursar of the community in Gleno and also work at the school in Gleno, managing the institute's computers. Apart from these main duties, I also have pastoral tasks at the local parish, such as giving Holy Communion to the sick in their homes and facilitating Bible studies for the parishioners.

In the beginning, I was a bit uncertain, not having much work experience. Would people even listen to what such a young brother had to say? But the prophet Jeremiah inspired and strengthened me. Jeremiah also thought he was too young, but God said to him: "Do not say: 'I am too young'. To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak." (Jeremiah 1:7).

Serve with love

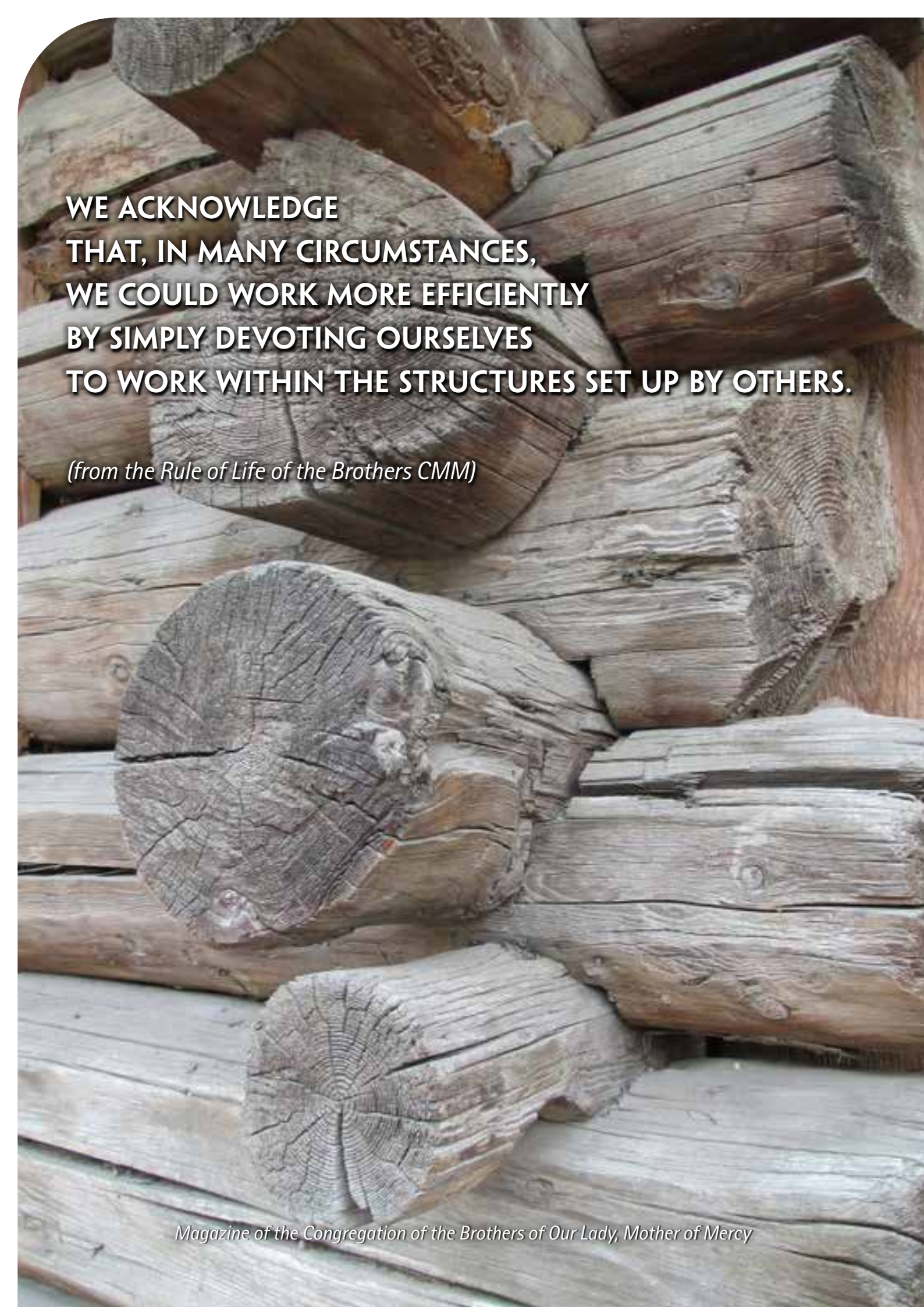
I try to do my work with compassion for everyone I meet, regardless of their ethnicity, race, or financial status. True love is free and without limits. There are lyrics, written by Rudy Loho and sung by Fanitta Posumah, an Indonesian singer, that inspire me:

There is no more reason for me to refuse Your call, to be Your witness. I cannot repay your love for me; your sacrifice made me fall in love. You are the only one I love, I love, I appreciate. Your sacrifice goes beyond my life. You are the only one I admire, I praise, I believe. Send me to be Your witness.

The lyrics of this song remind me of my vocation. All forms of service give meaning to fulfilling this vocation for me. These experiences have also increased my love for Jesus. Getting to know Jesus better requires time, time to read his Word and meditate on it. I seek Him in the inner silence of my heart and it is from this inner silence that I find out more about myself and hear what God wants from me. I know that God did not call me because of my greatness. God calls me in the shortcomings I have and because He loves me. With full faith in his love, I can grow into a person who loves myself. I hope that in my vocation as a Brother CMM, I can share God's love with others.

Brother Januario Sani Quehi CMM (Timor Leste)





**WE ACKNOWLEDGE
THAT, IN MANY CIRCUMSTANCES,
WE COULD WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY
BY SIMPLY DEVOTING OURSELVES
TO WORK WITHIN THE STRUCTURES SET UP BY OTHERS.**

(from the Rule of Life of the Brothers CMM)