

CHRONICLE OF THE RETREAT OF THE SPANISH PRIESTLY FRATERNITY GALAPAGAR (MADRID), AUGUST 20 TO 26, 2023

The Spanish priestly Fraternity celebrated its annual retreat from August 20 to 26 in the Madrid town of Galapagar animated by Bishop José Vilaplana (date of birth December 5, 1944; date of priestly ordination, May 25, 1972; date of appointment episcopal, November 20, 1984), auxiliary bishop of Valencia, and residential of Santander (August 1991) and, later of Huelva (July 2006) until Pope Francis accepted his resignation due to age from the pastoral government of the diocese on the 17th. June 2020. In the Spanish Episcopal Conference, he is currently a member of the Episcopal Commission for Consecrated Life and previously he was a member of the Pastoral Commission and president of the Episcopal Commission of the Clergy.



The August retreat, as is customary, is offered to members of the Priestly Fraternity and is also open to interested priests. Twenty-eight priests and one layman attended (10 from Valencia-Barcelona; three from Málaga; five from the southeast (Almería-Jaén); one from Murcia; three from Zaragoza; one from Extremadura, Gijón,

Madrid, Teruel and the Canary Islands; two from Toledo This year's retreat has had the uniqueness of having a layman in a period of personal and vocational discernment.

The distribution of days has been as usual in this summer retreat that revolves around meditations, adoration of the Eucharist for an extended time including nocturnal adoration on the night of Tuesday to Wednesday, moments of life review in the Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons and the desert day that precedes the community celebration of Penance.

The uniqueness of the retreat of the Priestly Fraternity is marked by the slow pace that favors prayer and encounter with oneself. In fact, prayer, in addition to the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours and the celebration of the Eucharist, is carried out practically throughout the morning, ending with the recitation of the Intermediate Hour and the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament.



At the end of the retreat, on Friday afternoon, a meeting was held to share the life of the Fraternity while informing about the lives and circumstances of those absent and lovingly remembering the elderly. It is time to schedule the dates of the next meetings such as the Christmas retreat, dated December 27 to 29, 2023 and which will be animated by the Brother of the Gospel José Luis Muñoz Quirós who lives in community in Roquetas de

Mar (Almería) and also the summer retreat that was set for the dates of August 18 to 24, 2024 pending the person who will provide the animation service. It was agreed that both retreats would be held at the Santa María de las Religiosas Javerianas Spirituality House in Galapagar (Madrid).

In the fraternal meeting, which we are in charge of, the information occupied a lot of space, especially about the European assembly held in Annecy last July (Southeast France), which was attended by our regional manager Aquilino Martínez Gallego, with the



singularity of the presence of the international team as it coincides with the end of the European team's service period and the need to proceed to new elections due to the expiration of the time for which they had been elected. At the assembly, Boris, a 54-year-old Swiss-German priest and five-year-old priest, was elected European leader. He is accompanied on the team by Eddy Lagae, a Belgian flamingo, and Fergal Cunnane, an Irishman. The regional manager reported that we are waiting for more information, including a video recorded by the attendees, where a new impulse for renewal is proposed to the fraternities.



Among other topics, the current situation and projects of the Jesus Caritas Bulletin of the C. Jesus Caritas Association in Spain were reported by the director of the publication; from the website of the same Association as well as some demands from the international website.

The working meeting ended with the obligatory information on the economy and the proposal to organize a pilgrimage to the Foucauldian places of reference in North Africa, in principle, for 2024 in the least hot months in the area (April or November).

A delicate detail in attention to the participants who were not members of the Fraternity was to advance the moment of meeting and party to the desserts of the midday meal to facilitate their participation.

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