

NEWSLETTER 11

COVER: 'A THAI GOOD SAMARITAN'

***BEING ABANDONED IS THE GRAVEST 'ILLNESS' OF THE ELDERLY,
AND ALSO THE GREATEST INJUSTICE THAT THEY CAN EXPERIENCE***

**SOME THOUGHTS OF POPE FRANCIS TAKEN FROM HIS SPEECH TO THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY FOR LIFE
(Rome, 5 March 2015)**

Palliative care is an expression of the specifically human aptitude to take care of each other, and especially of those who suffer. It attests to the fact that **the human person is always valuable, even if marked by old age and sickness**. Indeed a person, in whatever circumstances, is a good in himself or herself and for other people, and is loved by God. For this reason, when his or her life becomes very frail and he or she draws near to the end of his or her existence on this earth, **we feel the responsibility to assist and accompany him or her in the best way**.

The Biblical commandment that calls us to honour our parents, in a broad sense reminds us of the honour that we owe to all elderly people. God attaches a dual promise to this commandment: 'so that you may live a long time (*Exodus* 20:12) and 'so that all may go well with you' (*Deuteronomy* 5:16). Faithfulness to the fourth commandment assures us not only the gift of the earth, but also and above all else the possibility of enjoying it. **Indeed, the wisdom that makes us recognise the value of the elderly person and leads us to honour him or her is that same wisdom that allows us to appreciate the numerous gifts that we receive every day from the provident hand of the Father and to be happy about them**. This precept reveals to us the fundamental pedagogical relationship between parents and their children, and between elderly people and young people, as regards the stewarding and transmission of religious and sapiential teaching to the future generations. To honour this teaching and those who transmit it is a source of life and blessing. In contrary fashion, the Bible contains a severe warning for those who neglect or mistreat their parents (cf. *Exodus* 21:17; *Leviticus* 20:9). The same judgment applies today when parents who have become elderly and less useful are marginalised to the point of being abandoned; and we have so many examples of this!

The word of God is always alive and we will see how the commandment is of stringent contemporary importance for today's society where **the logic of utility prevails over that of solidarity and gratuitousness, even within families**.

'To honour' today could even be translated as the duty to have extreme respect for, and to take care of, those who because of their physical or social condition could be left to die or 'made to die'. **The whole of medicine has a special role within society as testimony to the honour due to the elderly person and to every human being. Evidence and efficiency cannot be the sole criteria governing the conduct of doctors, nor the rules of health systems and economic profit. A state cannot think of earning through medicine. On the contrary, there is no more important duty for a society than that of protecting the human person.**

Your deliberations of these days have explored new areas of the application of palliative care. Hitherto, such care has been valuable support for cancer patients but today there are many and variegated illnesses, often connected with old age and characterised by a steady chronic

deterioration, which could make use of this type of care. Elderly people need first and foremost the care of their family relatives – whose affection cannot be substituted, not even by the most efficient institutions or the most competent and charitable health-care workers. When they are not self-sufficient, or when they have advanced or terminal illnesses, the elderly can enjoy truly human and receive adequate responses to their needs thanks to the palliative care that is offered to supplement and to support the care that is provided by their family relatives. **Palliative care has the goal of alleviating suffering during the final stage of an illness and ensuring at the same time that the patient has adequate human accompanying** (cf. encyclical letter *Evangelium vitae*, n. 65). This is an important support, especially for the elderly who, because of their age, always receive increasingly less attention from curative medicine and are often abandoned. **Abandonment is the gravest ‘sickness’ of the elderly, and also the greatest injustice they can experience: those who have helped us grow must not be abandoned when they are in need of our help, our love and our tenderness.**

Therefore, I appreciate your scientific and cultural commitment to ensure that palliative care can reach all those who need it. **I encourage professionals and students to specialise in this type of assistance which does not have less value because of the fact that it does ‘not save life’.** Palliative care achieves something that is equally important: it appreciates the person. I exhort all those who, in different ways, are involved in the field of palliative care to practice this commitment keeping their spirit of service whole and remembering that all medical knowledge is truly science, in its most noble meaning, only if it acts as help with a view to the good of man, a good that is never achieved ‘against’ his life and his dignity.

It is this capacity for service to the life and to the dignity of the sick person, when elderly as well, which measures the true progress of medicine and of society as a whole. I repeat the appeal of Saint John Paul II: ‘Respect, defend, love and serve life, every human life! Only in this way will you find justice, development, true freedom, peace and happiness!’ (cf. encyclical letter *Evangelium vitae*, n. 5).

LVIV (THE UKRAINE)

Fr. Arnaldo Pangrazzi describes his work which has been going on for a number of years with the church of Lviv (the Ukraine) where for nine years he has organised lessons within the programme of bioethics (the psychology of health and illness), lectures to medical doctors and health-care workers, and meetings with chaplains and seminarians. A few weeks ago, at the Seminary of the Holy Spirit at *Lviv*, he met family relatives who have lost a son or a husband in the conflict (over 100 people). In addition, he has directed the training of 25 psychologists from various parts of the Ukraine who are interested in activating **self-help groups for families in mourning.**

PHOTO

TAIWAN

Fr. Giuseppe Didonè offers us a brief immersion in the **Chinese zodiac**. On 19 February the new lunar year was celebrated in China – the most important traditional event in Chinese culture. The Chinese zodiac is made up of the mouse, the buffalo, the tiger, the rabbit, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the goat, the monkey, the chicken, the dog and the pig.

In China people identify with the animal of the year when they were born. This year is the year of the **goat**. Those born under the sign of the goat have affectionate, sensitive and timid characters.

At times they can be generous and kind but only if they like you. Their principal characteristic is their inventiveness, they never stand still and always love to have something to think about.

Our religious brothers took advantage of this great popular celebration to hold a Holy Mass of thanksgiving and a ceremony to venerate and pray for people's ancestors.

On the fifteenth day of the Chinese new year the 'Day of the Lantern', which this year will take the shape of a goat, will be celebrated

There have been many religious celebrations to welcome the workmen who after the celebrations of the new year were going back to their places of work. Red envelopes were also distributed within which small sheets, on which were written a short passage taken from the Bible, were placed.

PHOTO

THAILAND

On Saturday 21 February 2015 a new 'chapel' was opened, even though it is the size of a church, at the Camillian Social Center of *Sampran*. This was a great choral celebration with the participation of many religious brothers who had come from all the communities of the religious Province, of priests from the diocese of Bangkok (amongst whom the Cardinal Emeritus and the Apostolic Nuncio in Thailand), of elderly people of the health-care institution, of benefactors and of friends. On Sunday 22 February another major celebration took place for the opening of the recreational area of the Camillian Social Center of *Chanthaburi*. The celebration of the Eucharist and the solemn lunch with the animation of songs and dances made a splendid setting for the day.

Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon returned on 27 February from his fraternal visit to our religious brothers of a number of Camillian communities of **Thailand and Vietnam**. Below we will share with you some of his reflections at the end of his visit.

Text in Italian. Text in Spanish. Text in English. [Link article camilliani.org](http://camilliani.org)

AUSTRIA - HUNGARY

Fr. Alfréd György offers us a brief account of the fraternal visit of the Superior General to the Province of Austria of 17-23 February 2015. 'This meeting was truly fraternal. Father Leocir really set himself to listen, talking with the religious brothers at a community and personal level. Knowing about the faces and the life histories of the religious, made grow within us and amongst us a climate of fraternity. He also encouraged in us membership of the Camillian Family, membership of a special charism in today's world and Church. He also met the men and women volunteers of the various areas of our ministry. Our volunteers very much appreciated his simplicity and his immediacy in his way of relating to people. We carry with us his message: 'Look at the past in a spirit of gratitude, live the present with enthusiasm and passion, and in service to the sick live with Samaritan and Camillian compassion, looking towards the future with hope! We do not only have a history to remember and recount – we also have a history to construct together with joy and hope in the future'. Thank you Fr. Pessini for your fraternal and paternal presence amongst us!'

Below is the message that Fr. Pessini sent to the religious brothers of the Province of Austria at the end of his visit.

Text in Italian. Text in English. [Photographic gallery.](#)

THE PROVINCE OF ITALY

The team entrusted with the animation of ongoing formation in the Province of Italy has sent us its brochures with all the initiatives for *Ongoing Formation for the Year 2015*, emphasising in particular those connected with the celebration of the year dedicated to consecrated life. **INSERT BROCHURES**

ROME – THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE

Prayers and Adoration, on the evening of Saturday 7 March 2015, with young people, together with the Daughters of St. Camillus and some of our religious brothers of the Province of Rome, in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene which had never been so full!

PHOTO

ROME –CAMILLIANUM

On 11-12 and 17-18 April, Prof. Eugenio Saponi, a lecturer at the *Camillianum*, will give a course on pastoral care in health with the title 'The Management of Frailty in the Family'.

[Click here](#) to download the programme and the enrolment form.

For all questions, apply to the secretariat of the *Camillianum*

LUCCA (Italy) – WOMEN MINISTERS OF THE SICK

Once again we send our best greetings to Sr. Candida Bellotti who celebrated her one hundred and eighth birthday, thereby being a candidate for the position of being the oldest woman religious in the world.

Born in Quinzano (Verona) on 20 February 1907, Sister Candida entered the Congregation of the Women Ministers of the Sick of St. Camillus in 1913 and worked as a professional nurse in various cities in Italy. Since the year 2000 she has lived in Lucca in the mother house of the institute where, despite her age, she still takes an active part in the life of her community.

PRESS INFORMATION SISTER CANDIDA

ROME – THE WOMEN DAUGHTERS OF ST. CAMILLUS

We have learnt from the web site of the women Daughters of St. Camillus of the first visit of Mother Zelia Andrighetti, the Superior General, to her religious sisters in Portugal.

PHOTOGRAPHIC GALLERY

BROTHERS OF EBOLA – MAKENI (SIERRA LEONE)

Since 30 January of this year, **Br. Luca Perletti**, a Camillian religious of the Province of Italy, and **Fr. Sam Cuarto**, a Camillian religious of the Province of the Philippines, have been working in Sierra Leone, in Makeni, to provide service to the [Camillian Task Force Central](#) within the framework of the 'Brothers of Ebola' project.

Below is the first report of Br. Luca on the situation of emergency generated by the Ebola virus.

Text in Italian. Text in English. Link site

CAMILLIANI/CAMILLIANS

The new cover of *Camilliani/Camillians*

[Download here](#) the latest edition of *Camilliani/Camillians*, the quarterly review of the Camillians.

ACTS OF THE GENERAL CONSULTA



Appointment of the Councillors of the Province of Spain for the three-year period 2014-2017

Fr. Jesús María ZURBANO (first Councillor)

Fr. Dionisio MANZO

Fr. Juan Antonio AMADO

Fr. Luis Armando De Jesús LEITE DOS SANTOS

INSERT LINK PROVINCE OF SPAIN

AGENDA OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL AND THE CONSULTORS

1. Fr. Leocir Pessini returned, after his fraternal visit to our religious brothers of the **Philippines and Taiwan**, on Friday 13 February of this year.

<http://www.camilliani.org/la-giornata-del-malato-a-taiwan/>

Below is the message that Fr. Pessini – together with Fr. Aris Miranda, the Consultor for Ministry – sent to our religious brothers of the Province of the Philippines and the Delegation of Taiwan at the end of his visit.

Text in Italian Philippines Text in English Philippines.

Text in Italian Taiwan. Text in English Taiwan.

2. On Friday 6 March, in the Vatican, Fr. Leocir Pessini took part in the Workshop on **‘Assistance for the Elderly and Palliative Care’** organised by the Pontifical Academy for Life, reading a paper entitled ‘Guidelines for Good Accompanying’. **Insert brochure.**
3. On Monday 9 March and Tuesday 10 March Fr. Leocir Pessini, together with Br. José Ignacio Santaolalla, the general financial administrator, took part in *Naples* in the general assembly of the Province of Sicily and Naples.

PHOTOGRAPHIC GALLERY

4. On Friday 13 and Saturday 14 March of this year Fr. Leocir Pessini, together with Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon, will go to Venice for a fraternal meeting with our religious brothers of the community of *Lido-Alberoni*, visiting the sick and meeting the administrators of the institutions.
5. On Sunday 15 March he will also pay a visit to our religious brothers of the community of *Bologna*–San Michele in Bosco who provide pastoral service at the Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institutes.
6. At the generalate house in Rome from Monday 16 to Wednesday 18 he will chair the deliberations of the second meeting of the *Central Economic Commission*, together with Br. José Ignacio Santaolalla, the general financial administrator.
7. From 24 to 27 March of this year Fr. Leocir Pessini will be in Costa Rica to take part in a conference on pastoral care and bioethics. After that he will engage in a fraternal visit to our religious brothers of the community of *Ecuador*.
8. He will spend the Easter celebrations in *Brazil* and then on 15 April he will begin his fraternal visit to our religious brothers of the Camillian communities of the Vice-Province of *India*.
9. From 1 to 12 April Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon will be in *Taiwan* where from 6-11 April he will animate a course of spiritual exercises at the community of religious brothers of Italian origins.

DECEASED RELIGIOUS

‘See, now they vanish, the faces and places, with the self which, as it could, loved them, To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern’ (T.S. Eliot)



Lucia Merli – The Easter of the Resurrection 2013. The Risen Christ

FATHER FRANCISCO ALVAREZ

We here offer the thoughts of Fr. Jesús Maria Ruiz Irigoyen in memory of our religious brother Fr. Francisco Alvarez who died in Tres Cantos (Madrid) on Saturday 9 January of this year.

Text in Italian. Text in Spanish. Text in English.

Saturday 7 March 2015, at the Camillian community of Venice-Lido, the death took place of Fr. Emilio Stenico.

Fr. Emilio spent many years of his life as a missionary and providing formation in Peru.

'Now they live in Christ whom they met in the Church, followed in their vocations, and served in the sick and the suffering. Trusting that the Lord, the Holy Virgin our Queen, St. Camillus and our deceased religious brothers will welcome them in their midst, we commend them in our prayers, remembering them with affection, esteem and gratitude'.

BEST WISHES FOR A HOLY EASTER IN THE RISEN LORD!

By now we are in the middle of Lent and the celebrations for the **Easter of the Lord**, the heart of our faith, are not so far away! Let us take this opportunity to send out on behalf of the Superior General, the Consultors and the religious brothers of the Camillian community of 'St. Mary Magdalene' (Rome) their very best wishes!

This year our Easter card is based upon of a high-relief located in the apse of our beautiful Church of St. Mary Magdalene: *Noli me tangere* (Francesco Gesuelli, XVIII century).

Do not lose heart (Jm 5:8)

Suffering of the other constitutes a call to conversion because the need of my brother reminds me of the frailty of my life, my dependence on God and my brothers and sisters.

'Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum': Make our hearts like yours. We will then have strong and merciful, vigilant and generous, hearts that do not close up in themselves and do not fall into the vertigo of the globalisation of indifference.

Pope Francis