

Third Age Newsletter

*Nemi (Roma) ITALIA
February 24, 2008 – Sunday
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Message

As we take part in the Third Age Program of our Society we are filled with excitement and hope. We want to share with you our journeying and our stories which you'll find here. This is our way of getting in touch with you...



This is where we live

Third Age Program and Profile

Ray Quetchenbach, SVD

The thirty participants in the Third Age Program come from ten different nations of the world. The largest contingent of 9 came from India. From Germany and the United States are five each. The next largest group is from the Philippines with 4 representatives. Ireland sent two while Indonesia, Spain, Chile, Portugal and the Netherlands are represented by one person each.

Age was the first qualifier for taking part in the program. Sixty-five years was the minimum age. Fr. Hermann Hagenmaier from Germany is the most qualified since he will shortly celebrate his ninetieth birthday. Fr. Joseph Puthumana was unable to join the program because at this time he is preparing to defend his thesis for a graduate degree. One applicant from Indonesia might still join if he gets his visa.

Our presenters include Fr. General Tony Pernia and the members of the General Council who happen to be in Rome at this time along with the Coordinators of the Four Characteristic Dimensions.

During the course of the six weeks, Fr. Herbert Scholz will treat "Third Age Journey in the Bible" and Fr. Frank Gerry will speak on "Third Age Vowed Life and Identity. Fr. Roger Arnold is assigned the topic "Designing Third Age Transition" while Fr. Fullenbach will tackle "Kingdom Spirituality for Third Age."

During the week of March 10th to 15th there will be a guided retreat. Finally the program will reach a climax with a pilgrimage to the home of St. Joseph Freinademetz in Ojes-Abtei in northern Italy.



Fr. Gen. Tony Pernia's
"State of the Society Address"

Our Expectations

Lenny Mercado, SVD

The participants of the Third Age Program were asked about their EXPECTATIONS prior to their coming to Nemi (Rome). Third Age means the period after middle age and youth. The Nemi staff clustered their response under six headings:

1. *How to grow positively and creatively, which includes acquiring skills and insights in gracefully and joyfully getting old.*
2. *To assess one's life journey, with ample time to reflect on one's relationship with God, fellow humans and with a fast-changing world.*
3. *To deepen a spirituality with a space for prayer and mysticism.*
4. *To acquire a sense of mission befitting a senior SVD today.*
5. *In the internationality context, to be enriched by the mutual sharing of experiences.*
6. *To orient one's life journey towards the final fulfillment in the Lord.*

The future of this new Program will depend upon active participation of the group and its evaluation at the end of the course.

After 42 Years
Tom Akkara, SVD

It was on 20th February 1966 that I was ordained a priest along with ten confreres from 8 nationalities in the chapel of Nemi, Rome.



Fr. Tom Akkara and Fr. Hermann
Hagenmaier

It was a very happy coincidence that I was fortunate to celebrate the 42nd anniversary of my ordination at the same house at Nemi on 20th February, 2008. More than 30 confreres from 9 nations, who had come to Nemi to take part in the Third Age Program, joined me in thanking and praising the good Lord. In the morning during the concelebrated Mass the confreres prayed for me very specially. In the evening the confreres organized a special celebration with various programs. As a token of their love they gave me a beautiful gift: a well prepared wishing card, with signatures of each one of them as a souvenir. Thank you, dear Confreres, for your thoughtful gesture.

A Day in Rome

Dom Flores, SVD

It was one of those free days. All of us in the Nemi course were free that day to go to the city of Rome or to the Collegio del Verbo Divino. But the day before, we were given instructions how to travel safely in the city. For instance, we were told not to carry with us excess money, not to give charity to suspicious beggars, not to carry personal documents unless it's very necessary, etc. Equipped with these directives we went off confidently to explore the city.

Then this episode happened to me. I was waiting for a bus at the bus stop. Then I saw them coming: three women. One of the women was nestling a baby in her arms. As they came closer to the bus stop I noticed them coming straight to me. Then one woman extended her hands to ask me for alms. Following the instructions the night before, I made it plain to them that I don't have money to give (to them, that is). Then in a jiffy one woman grabbed my right hand and would not let it go. The 2nd closed up on me and grabbed my other hand. I began to struggle like a trapped bird. As I struggled the mother with the baby approached me. I was now surrounded. And the mother came so close to me that she was too close for comfort.

Then I felt a hand slipping inside my breast pocket. I remembered suddenly that that's where I placed my passport. My reaction was instantaneous! With all my strength and might I tried to free my right hand and I succeeded. Angrily I stared at the mother with the baby. I raised my hand to whack her face. But something prevented me from slapping a lady or mother! I whacked her hand

instead. Lo and behold! My passport dropped from her hand right to the ground. As I bent to the ground to pick up my passport, the women quickly scurried away. People were at a distance that may have seen the incident. But they did nothing. When I related the incident later in our community, someone said: "Oh, my...! Not again!" This was not an uncommon happening. It happened to others before. Nevertheless, for me it was a unique experience that will linger in my memory. End

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Fr. Gregory Pinto, one of our General Consultors who gave a talk to us, introduced his talk with these quotes:

** Beautiful young people become beautiful old people.*

** The spiritual eye-sight improves as the physical eye-sight declines. (Plato)*

We learn to grow gracefully and take on responsibilities suited to our age and ability (SVD Const. 307.1)



Singing and sharing the "Days of our Lives"

Everyone smiles in the same language. –

Unknown

In Rome the narrow streets are often marked “One Way” streets. One day Fr. **Tom Leyden** phoned a friend and asked him to pick him up. His friend asked where he was. Tom said: “Wait a moment while I run outside and look at the name of the street.” When he returned he informed his friend that he should have no difficulty finding him at *100 Sensu Unico Street*.

Bro. **Jim Mullen** narrated how he had at one time been introduced at a meeting: “You all know,” the speaker said, “that Brother live in the SVD cemetery in Bordentwon.”

Fr. **Eugen Nunnemacher** began his presentation saying he would speak for a moment and then took five minutes defining the meaning of the word “moment.” He also stated with great agitation that he wanted to make a confession. We all waited breathlessly until he mentioned his sin was deferring his report on a significant event in his vocation story until everyone else was finished.

Fr. **Gregory Pinto** told the story of a dying woman who had a legal case over ownership of land. Since she was dying she wanted to drop the case, but added that if she lived she wanted to continue the litigation. *

Editorial Staff:

Dom Flores, SVD

Ray Quetchenbach, SVD



Constructing a Tower of Tiles

*“I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit within
you.”
(Ezek. 36:26)*

The Senility Prayer

Bob Mertes, SVD

God, grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

Now hat I’m ‘older’ (but refuse to grow up), here’s what I’ve discovered:

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats have turned into prunes and All Bran.
3. I finally got my head together; now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don’t remember being absent minded...
5. If all is not lost, where is it?
6. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
7. The only time the world beats a path to your door is when you’re in the bathroom.
8. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.
9. It’s not hard to meet expenses... they’re everywhere.
10. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter... I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I’m hereafter.

Did I already send this to you?