

**Monsignor Anders Arborelius,
Swede of the year, 2017**

The prestigious, Swedish news magazine 'Fokus' has named our brother, Cardinal Anders Arborelius, OCD, Swedish citizen of the year, taking into account his unwavering and inclusive character as the most visible head of the Catholic church in Sweden, where everyone is able to find a space in which to share faith, hope and love.

In an interview on the Spanish web page www.religionconfidencial.com, the priest, Andrés Bernar states that Monsignor Arborelius has always been a voice which is a reference point not only for Swedish Catholics, but who is also forthright when it comes to explaining the doctrine of the Church with simplicity and clarity, always placing himself on the side of the most vulnerable.

On Vatican Radio, Anders Arborelius stated: 'Sometimes I ask myself if I am a true Swede, because people think that it is impossible to be one, when one is a Catholic priest, bishop and cardinal, all at the same time. I am happy for this recognition and consider that the magazine has been courageous in making this choice. It shows that the Catholic Church is becoming more and more of a Swedish reality and is part of the fabric of the society of our country'. For their part, the panel recognised that our brother, Cardinal Arborelius, OCD, is a courageous man, when it comes to representing the Catholic Church with dignity in a country whose identity is mainly secular or Lutheran. He also plays a crucial role in the integration of Swedish people and immigrants who have come from other countries. In conclusion, 'Focus' states: 'The Swede of the year for 2017 is Anders Arborelius, Discalced Carmelite, priest, bishop and cardinal'.

News from Central Africa

From the Carmel in Bangui we have received some news from Fr. Federico Trincherro this past month of December about the Republic of Central Africa and the situation of the Teresian Carmel there. Unfortunately, the situation is still very difficult, despite the fact that there is scant coverage in the social communication media in the rest of the world. Eighty percent of the land is occupied by rebel groups and the State has not managed to curb them and has been unable to reestablish its authority in much of the country. Furthermore, according to the statistics of the UN, the Republic of Central Africa occupies the 188th place out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index, therefore the poorest country in the world.

As to our brothers, two from the Republic of Central Africa and five Cameroonians began their novitiate in September in the monastery of St. Elijah of Bouar. Three other young men, two Cameroonians and one from Central Africa, made their simple vows after completing a year in the novitiate. Two of them have become members of the community of the Carmel in Bangui.

A solemn profession and priestly ordination were celebrated and as part of a programme of collaboration with the mission in Cameroon, which is dependent on the Province of Lombardy, some young Central African students will continue their theological and pastoral studies in that country.

The Tolentino Discalced Carmelite Nuns

In this information service, we frequently receive enquiries about the situation of our Discalced Carmelite sisters in Tolentino, who, as we informed you on the 3rd of November 2016, had to abandon their monastery after severe damage caused to it by an earthquake on the 30th of October that year. The earthquake happened just as the community had begun to celebrate Mass, at which was presiding the then Provincial of Central Italy, Fr Gabriele Morra. They were taken in on that very day by the Sisters in Fano and, right from the beginning, the nuns began to look for alternative solutions in order to liberate the monastery and community of Fano from the material overload implied by the added presence of nineteen extra nuns, even though the good will and fraternal love were greater than any difficulty. By finding a suitable place, the Tolentino community could also recover a certain autonomy, always necessary.

Finally, on the 22nd of July 2017, thanks to the interest taken by the Augustinian Fathers and the generosity of the Augustinian Sisters of St Rita of Cascia, the nuns were able to transfer to the "Saint Augustine" vocational discernment house close by. Since this date they have been there, hoping to be able to restore the Tolentino monastery. The effort they must make is by no means small and they must still gather a lot of help. Already, some supportive efforts have been initiated, which we have reported in our social sites, but the community lives through the journey they have taken on, with hope and abandonment to God's will, after that painful day of the 30th of October 2016.

On this site you can download, in Italian, a written chronicle by the sisters themselves, which we have synthesized in this news item: <http://www.sannicoladatolentino.it/files/Bollettino-luglio-settembre-2017--DEF.pdf>

Death of Mons. Adeodatus Micallef

Recently, on the 3rd of January, we received the sad news that Monsignor Adeodatus Micallef had died. He was a Carmelite Bishop, born in Birkirkara, Malta, on the 17th of December 1928.

Mons. Micallef entered the Order on the 15th of August 1947, was professed a year later and took the religious name of Brother Adeodatus of the Assumption. On the 15th of October 1951, he made his solemn profession and was ordained priest on the 9th of May 1954. In his Province of Malta, Mons. Adeodatus held many offices: Prior of Birkirkara, Master of novices and, for one year (1972-1973), Provincial. In 1973 he was elected Definitor in the General Chapter, being mainly in charge of the missions of the Order. When this period finished in 1979, he became Rector of the Teresianum, an office he held for two years, when he was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Kuwait and was consecrated Bishop by Pope St John Paul II on the 6th of January, 1982.

During the first Gulf War, Mons. Adeodatus refused invitations to abandon the country and remained in Kuwait during the whole conflict. When his retirement was accepted on the 14th of July 2005, he was farewelled by the Christian pilgrim community on the 20th of October that year, in a Eucharist in the Cathedral of the Holy Family, at which a multitude attended. When he retired, the Holy See decided to withdraw care of the Apostolic Vicariate from the Order, so Mons. Adeodatus was the last Discalced Carmelite Bishop of Kuwait. This decision particularly saddened Mons. Adeodatus who, despite showing his disagreement truthfully and sincerely, finally accepted it with humility and love for the Church.

Returning to his Province, he sought to live as a friar once again, placing himself at the service of his Superiors, with special care for the very sick, happily accepting whatever office entrusted to him, including barber for the friars who required his services.

After an illness lasting two months, which he accepted with great serenity, our much-loved brother died in great peace, surrounded by a goodly number of friars from the Province, who then accompanied him, together with a large number of the faithful, at the funeral at which presided Mons. Scicluna in the Valeta cathedral in Malta.

The funeral was transmitted live by means of YouTube and can be seen at this site:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHKfED-7AjGM>

News from the Carmel in Tangiers (Morocco)

The community of Discalced Carmelite Nuns in Tangiers have sent us some news which we wish to share with you. During 2017, two Sisters arrived to build up the community by their presence: Sister Sidioly, originally from Bolivia, who came from the Telde Carmel (Canary Isles, Spain) and Sister Julia, who came to Tangiers after spending one year in her community of origin in Pescara (Italy). In May, Sister Elizabeth returned for good to Peru. After her departure, Sister Alice was elected as Councilor.

The Sisters continue to learn French and Arabic, thanks to the helpfulness of Father Joël Colombel, ofm, and the generosity of the Sisters of Vals Près le Puy in France. Sister Mary Anne, after improving her French, was able to obtain her Moroccan driver's license, essential for the community in that situation.

Thanks to the generosity of some benefactors, they were able to carry out necessary works in the house.

Some of the Sisters were able to take part in formation courses as well as receiving support from the friars of the Iberian Province, who came right to Tangiers to preach retreats to the community, give courses, be chaplains and, finally, to share fraternally the Teresian charism held in common.

Mons. Silvio Báez, Man of the Year in Nicaragua

Some days ago, we reported the naming of Man of the Year in Sweden by the "Fokus" magazine of our brother Cardinal Arborelius. Today arrived the news –which we happily share with you– of the naming of Monsignor Silvio Báez, a discalced Carmelite, as the Nicaraguan Man of the Year by the "La Prensa" daily.

As can be seen in the link below, which reports the interview given by our brother, the "La Prensa" newspaper appreciates his commitment to democratic values and to liberty, which have earned him some disagreement with the regime that currently governs the country.

Monsignor Silvio, well prepared theologically and biblically, does not wish to enter –as he explicitly states– into political questions, but to defend human values tied to the Gospel of Jesus. His simple and approachable spirit, his desire to give a voice to those who lack it are the values standing out in the speech granting him the prize.

A great communicator, Silvio Báez evangelizes also by means of the internet and has recently produced a pocket book titled #Evangelio-DeHoy: Tuits de la Buena Nueva de Jesús de Nazaret, [Today's Gospel: Tweets about the Good News of Jesus of Nazareth] which gathers together evangelizing tweets taken from his personal Twitter account which has thousands of followers.

<https://www.laprensa.com.ni/2017/12/31/suplemento/la-prensa-domingo/2353427-monsenor-silvio-baez-dificil-sacar-ortega-esque-mas-politicos>