



**Alphonsus House,
Tafara, Harare,
Zimbabwe**

11th February 2023

Dear Confreres, Sisters, Lay Associates and friends,

On this feast of our Lady of Lourdes, I send you very warm and good fraternal greetings from Zimbabwe where I am at the moment. I am conscious that I have not written to you before now, but I was waiting as I knew there were several matters of business in Zimbabwe which would have to be communicated to you all as they happened. So this is then the first letter I am writing to you since the Chapter elected me as Provincial Superior last month at the Provincial Chapter in our monastery in Kinnoull, Perth. I therefore realise that the Province now has a new Provincial Council. The Region now has a new Regional Council and our Region has a new priest, so there is much to say on these things. However, let me first of all focus on the news that has come through just this morning.

Brother William McDermott CSsR RIP.

It came as quite a shock when Fr Andrew Burns CSsR contacted me to inform me of Brother Willie's sudden demise. We must do two things here upon this news, and the first is, of course to pray for Br Willie's happy and peaceful repose, we pray that the Lord will give him a mighty welcome. The next thing we must do is thank God for the vocation that Br Willie had, and the example that he gave all of us, and so many more people in the world that we won't know, of what it is to be a Religious, a Brother and a Redemptorist. He has given the Brothers of many years and even to this day, a wonderful example of what it is to serve, and to look out for the poor, the under privileged and the abandoned. When funeral arrangements have been made for Brother Willie these will of course, be communicated around the Province. For the time being let us pray, *Requiescat in pace*.

Provincial Chapter

The Provincial Chapter which was held on January 9th to the 13th in Kinnoull Monastery was a privileged experience for all of us who participated in it. The Chapter sat through many reports, which led to animated discussion. When it came time for the voting for the new Provincial Council, the following were elected;

**Provincial Superior, Fr Richard Reid, CSsR,
Vicar Provincial Superior, Fr. Elias Gweme, CSsR,
Second consultant, Fr. Timothy Buckley, CSsR.**

The New Provincial Council

Those who were elected onto the Extraordinary Provincial Council, were

Fr Denis McBride CSsR, Br Richard Maidwell CSsR & Fr. Andrew Burns CSsR. I am delighted that the Chapter has given the Province a good Council, there is much experience and wisdom within this group. It should be noted that Fr. Elias Gweme CSsR is the first Zimbabwean to sit on the Council of the OPC so we can say *Makorokoto!* I very much look forward to working with these men as we try and steer the Province through the wonder and confusion of our present days.

The 'Old' Provincial Council

At this point I would like to express my gratitude for the outgoing Vicar, Fr Andrew Burns CSsR. He was an incredible support to me and for this I shall forever be in his debt. His experience of being a Provincial in South Africa and his natural wisdom enabled me to remain calm and firm in some difficult situations. *Thank you sincerely Andrew.*

Also Fr Charlie Corrigan CSsR has now come off the OPC/EPC within which he has served for many a year. For all these years of service, we salute you!

New Provincial Secretary

We were a comparatively small Chapter this time as we requested to the General Government to allow us to have only 12 capitular's present. Added to this was one of our student representatives from Zimbabwe, Brother Simbarashe Mashandudze CSsR. Added to this we also had the notary who took the minutes and recorded all the relevant and important material. The notary was Br David Nyamuronda CSsR, who, in the course of the Chapter was unanimously elected as the new Provincial Secretary. I therefore look forward to working with Br David more closely.

Safeguarding Consultant

At the Provincial Chapter on the penultimate day, we had a guest come to speak to the Chapter on the issue of safeguarding. Mrs Tina Campbell has been engaged as our Safeguarding Consultant that means she is the person to whom we can go to get advice and guidance on any of the issues surrounding Safeguarding. She will also work closely with Br David Nyamuronda who is now our Provincial Lead for Safeguarding. The input given by Tina Campbell to the Chapter was very much appreciated and as always with every session in Safeguarding, there is always something new to learn. We look forward to working with Tina in the coming years.

Zimbabwe

At the beginning of this month, myself, and Fr Elias Gweme, the Vicar, both travelled to Zimbabwe to be here with the Region to show them our support and our closeness. On Saturday, the 4th of February, Fr Kudakwashe Kariviro, was ordained to the Priesthood by His Excellency, Archbishop Paolo Rudelli, the Apostolic Nuncio in Zimbabwe. It was a truly wonderful experience and I will attach the news article written for Scala to this letter. The church was packed for this celebration, and there were many guests who could be noted, but I want to mention one who was the Vice President of Zimbabwe. He came

because he himself is a Catholic and a parishioner of ours in Saint Gerards Borrowdale. Fr Kudakwashe has been on the road of formation for a considerable period of time. I can even claim him as one of my students when I was a resident in Zimbabwe, and the same can be said of Fr Elias when he was Socius in the Noviciate. Therefore, I was full of pride and joy witnessing his ordination. We wish Fr Kudakwashe many many blessings on his priesthood and his religious life, and we ask the Lord to grant him a long and blessed life.

Regional Council - Old and New

We now also have a new Regional Council here in Zimbabwe. However, before I say anything to do with that, I would just like to publicly record and acknowledge my personal thanksgiving and thanksgiving of the Province to the outgoing Regional Council. Over the past few years they have faced challenges which they courageously met and dealt with, something which we all know is not a simple thing to do. And so my thanks goes unreservedly to Br Benjamin Posvo, the Regional Superior, to Fr Gift Mubayiwa the Vicar Regional Superior, and to Fr Kenneth Macharaga, the 2nd Consultant. The members of the outgoing, Extraordinary Regional Council are Fr Dominic Kofi CSsR and Fr. Gideon Sidinga CSSR. We give thanks to God for the wonderful work and the tireless dedication that they have given the confreres in Zimbabwe. May bless you deeply.

The new Regional council is

Fr Kenneth Macharaga CSsR, Regional Superior,
Fr Mark Chikuni CSsR, Vicar, Regional Superior,
Fr Francis Kunaka CSsR, 2nd Consultor.

The two other confreres who have been elected to the Extraordinary Regional Council, are **Br Tendai Tamai CSsR and Br/Dr Tendai Lemayu CSsR.**

We ask the Lord to bless them with wisdom, prudence and correct judgement. As a Province, I know that we can assure our Regional Council of our closeness and with our prayerful and otherwise support.

Holy Trinity College

On Wednesday, I have a meeting with the Provincials of the Carmelites and the Franciscans concerning our Theology Faculty, Holy Trinity College, here in Zimbabwe. The two Provincial's mentioned above are from their respective Provinces in Ireland. The Rector and the Dean of HTC are two of our men, Frs Kenneth Macharaga and Mark Chikuni CSsR.

Fr Elias and myself have much yet to deal with along with our new council so this will be a few more busy few days that lie ahead. After the business Fr Elias is having a long overdue holiday with his family. We wish him well!

It is a very real privilege to be here with the confreres in Zimbabwe. We have such a vibrant, energetic and committed membership here in Harare. I do sincerely give thanks to God for this and for their example. Please keep the confreres here in Harare in your prayers, as I know they hold all of us firmly in daily prayer.

Decrees from the General Council

The other day I received notification from our General Council in the form of a Decree informing us that Br Benjamin Posvo CSsR is now appointed to our General Formation Secretariat, followed by another Decree informing us that Br Michael Duxbury has been

appointed to our General Secretariat for Brothers. We congratulate these two confreres on their appointment and thank God these two men of "our own" have been asked to serve in such a significant role.

Provincial Ministry

As 2023 is hardly underway, and yet Parish Missions have already taken place. Frs Kieran Brady, Royston Price and Br Fabrizio Podda CSsR have been working away, preaching the Word of God. We give thanks to God for their zeal and vitality.

Added to this Fr Jim McManus has been in Rome, giving talks to those attending the course run by St Anselm's, a formation course, and those receiving his wisdom are many people from around the world, including Frs Victor Bushu and Peter Morris. So I know the work is certainly going on and the Lord's name is being proclaimed in many places.

I will return home on Saturday the 18th Feb. In the meantime, let us as always, pray for one another and keep one another's names sacred.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Reid CSsR". The script is fluid and cursive, with the letters "Richard" and "Reid" being more prominent than "CSsR".

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