



para el mundo - pour le monde - for the World - para o mundo - per il mondo

PARISH ACTIVITIES

Brother Gabriel Taborin's experientia

Gabriel's initial experience is very much marked by his attraction to parish celebrations; first almost as a childish game with his childhood companions, and then in a more thoughtful and better organised way, but always with the same enthusiasm and creativity.

Gabriel embodies in his village a traditional figure that existed in many places even before the French Revolution, that of the "clerc". This figure concentrated a plurality of activities with a double aspect: social and ecclesiastical. He was at the same time sacristan, church steward, bell ringer, animator of liturgical chant, catechist and teacher (in some cases also secretary of the town council).

Gabriel lived these activities as a true lay vocation in the service of his parish in collaboration with both the parish priest and the mayor, sharing the goal of rebuilding a community on the foundations of Christianity.

In response to his vocational call to the life of a religious Brother, instead of joining an existing congregation, he was providentially led to found the community he was looking for.

And when he tried to translate the purpose of the new Congregation into a Rule of Life, moved by his inspiring charism, he proposed to his followers the same plurality of activities that he had lived: "The Society of the Holy Family will have as its purpose all kinds of good works. The principal aim will be to help the priests of the villages and of the city as teachers in parish schools, assistants in worship, catechists, cantors and sacristans" (Constitutions, 1836).

In his work as animator of the Brothers' communities and in his writings, Brother Gabriel often explained the meaning of these activities and their importance for the parish community. "Religion holds the office of sacristan in high esteem. The Brothers to whom this honour is entrusted are charged with the care of the sacristy and all that pertains to divine worship" (NG 838). "The Brothers should always be ready to teach singing and to join with their pupils the ministers of the Church in singing the praises of the Lord" (NG 880).

Brother Gabriel attached great importance to the "call to conversion" value of the liturgy because of its beauty. It is a language that appeals to the deepest emotionality and ultimately to the sense of transcendence that every person has.

For Brother Gabriel, education, catechesis and parish activities were integrated into the same evangelising purpose: "Dear Brothers, the teaching of youth is not the only purpose of our Institute. We have to assist the priests in the ceremonies of divine worship. Those of you who have been entrusted with such an honour must fulfil your task with great zeal, piety and mastery; above all, you must do it with a deep faith, which fills you with great respect for our Lord Jesus Christ".

Brother Teodoro Berzal. Sigüenza, February 2024



The Sa-Fa misión in the parishes

In Ars... from the time of the Founder: 1849



Bros. Basile Ramdé, Robert Nabi and Joël Sandwidi

The Community of Ars was founded on 10 March 1849 by Brother Gabriel at the request of the Priest of Ars. From the beginning, the mission has been linked to parish and social needs with a permanent presence of Brothers. Since 2004, the mission has been assured by the Brothers of Africa.

Although the Brothers for years took care of education and even work in the municipality, today the mission is focused on the tasks related to the help in the parish, especially in the liturgy. We prepare all the necessary material for the liturgical celebrations, in particular the Masses, scheduled or not. We have three official Masses on ordinary days and four on Sundays. In summer there can be at least 15 Masses a day. It means having the altar ready, the readings and everything necessary for a good celebration. These are simple services where we can show what it means to be a Brother.

Our presence in the sacristy is almost permanent to respond to the needs of priests and pilgrims, some to celebrate Mass, others to get information or simply to chat with us. We also give guided tours when requested. This is a good occasion to be able to give a proper catechesis. With the pandemic, a

very important service we used to provide was closed: listening to pilgrims who wanted to be heard instead of, or in addition to, confession. Hopefully this activity will be resumed soon.

We also provided candles in the basilica, in the candle lantern and in the "chapel of the heart". As well as opening, closing and taking care of these places. We are also in charge of the Saint's house and the underground church.

One Brother is a member of the Shrine Council, which meets every Wednesday. A very important responsibility is the guard and custody of the main relic: the heart of the Holy Priest. Lately, the community has been in great demand to accompany this relic, whose presence is requested by some dioceses in France and abroad. As the person in charge, a Brother must travel with the relic.

Our mission is very beautiful and enriching, according to our charism, but it requires a certain availability and discernment to know where and how to be at each moment. May the Holy Priest and his great friend, Venerable Brother Gabriel Taborin, help us to know how to respond to the mission that the Congregation has been carrying out in this Shrine since the time of the Founder.



Br. Basile guards the heart of the Holy Curé

The parish animation in Spain today

Although education is the most prominent part of the mission in the Province, there have always been communities whose mission has been centred on parish animation. In addition to the activities that many Brothers have personally carried out in this field. Several communities have had in the past a strong activity in the parish. With the closure of the house in Navaluenga, today the two communities with a “parish” mission are: La Horra and Finisterre. Today it is a challenge for the Province to recover, with the retired Brothers, some help in other places as well. The community of Sigüenza, which traditionally carried out this mission as well, is now recovering it.

In La Horra the concrete mission is carried out with the tasks of catechesis and the direction of the parish choir. The parish priest is responsible for several parishes, so the Brothers sometimes accompany him and sometimes substitute for him in some villages by celebrating a “Liturgy of the Word”. But the activity is not limited to the strictly “ecclesial”. Other tasks of assistance to people are carried out: classes for immigrants, children or adults and other children who ask for them, accompanying the association of retired people... And, of course, the availability of the house for the reception of groups, meetings of priests, family celebrations, etc.

In the case of the Finisterre Community, the work is, on the one hand, educational in the Our Lady of Carmel School since 1973. In addition, the Brothers animate the parish catechesis, help in liturgical celebrations and in other social activities, such as helping in Caritas. At certain times, due to the qualities of certain Brothers, the existence of choirs of young people and adults who animate the liturgy has been encouraged. Today they are choirs which continue their activity on their own

Parish Choir of La Horra, directed by Br. Crispín



The parish animation in Italy today

For half a century now, some communities of Brothers in the former Lauretan Province of the Italian sector have been following the direct thread of the Taborinian Charism, which already at the time of its Founder had a special eye on the parishes, and even today has not interrupted this thread despite advancing age and diminishing strength.

An example today is still the community of Verona and the community of Marocchi, which is currently composed of two Brothers, Brother Mariano the local animator and Brother Ettore. We have been in the Poirino area for 25 years. Our presence and participation in parish life as religious is also important: we have remained the only consecrated community present in the parish, which is made up of several communities of Christians.



Caring for popular piety in a procession

The Brothers' activities have also changed, adapting to the new ecclesial realities and the age and health of the Brothers present. Clearly in the first place, the commitment is to Catechesis and supporting the local Catechists. There is also the care of the altars, ranging from the simple function of sacristans to the animation of liturgical celebrations including external events such as processions and Stations of the Cross. The Brothers are also involved in welcoming groups, in the pastoral unit and also in the diocese of Turin in the Migrant Pastoral Office.

Bro. Ettore Moscatelli

The Community of Ouahigouya. Burkina Faso

The Saint Jean-Marie Vianney Community of Ouahigouya was founded in 2002. It is located in the heart of the city, near the Cathedral. The city has a Muslim majority and the Community strives to live in accordance with the cultural realities of the place, promoting inter-religious dialogue and welcoming and helping all men and women without distinction of religion or language.

Assistance to High Schools and Colleges is a privileged framework of pastoral ministry for young people in general and pupils in particular. It was born in 2004 from the desire of the Bishop of the diocese to pay particular attention to youth and school pastoral ministry. The pastoral ministry of secondary school pupils is under the direct responsibility of a chaplain and a Brother. It offers young people ways to recognise the Risen Christ, to love him and to limit themselves. It is a space for dialogue and exchange, a place where young people



can express themselves, discover and affirm themselves personally, respecting each other. This activity is intended to be a framework for prayer, study, meetings, fraternal life and work for all young people, especially young Catholic Christians.

The activities assigned to the Brother who works in it are essentially the following: listening to and spiritual accompaniment of young people; vocational animation in schools; catechesis for young people; conferences and formation for movements, associations and spiritual groups; Eucharistic adoration in the absence of the priest; rosary; liturgy, choir rehearsals and the management of a library.

We can say that it is a work very much in line with what Brother Gabriel dreamt of as a mission in the parishes. The 3 Brothers who form the present Community are happy with this work.

Bros. Boris Kiendrébéogo, David Kombetto and Jean Paul Ouédraogo.

Like Br. Gabriel: Indonesia and East Timor

In the development of the Vice Province of St. Joseph the Worker, after the initial years of foundation, the first mission communities arrived in 2020: Ndona (Diocese of Ende) and Naga Tayap (Diocese of Ketapang, in Borneo). Since then, four more have been opened in Indonesia: Balai Berkuak (2021), Noehaen (2022), Noemuke and Pangkalan Bun (2023) and one in Timor-Leste: Ponilala (2024).

All of them, being the first mission communities, the Institute does not have any works of its own, are inserted in rural parishes. The work of the Brothers is very similar to that of the birth of the Congregation in this sense. Hosted in parish houses, the Brothers work in pastoral animation in their own parish or in "parish stations", far away from the parish where the priests are not present or go only from time to time. There they mainly lead the celebration of the Word of God with communion. In addition, depending on the circumstances, they teach catechesis, prepare for the sacraments, family, children and youth ministry, visit families... For greater identification with the origin of our mission, some Brothers also work in Church or State schools. Their work is highly appreciated because of the preparation that our Brothers have acquired in the Scholasticate. Most of the work, in parishes or schools, is unpaid or very low paid, so that none of the communities can live on the work of the Brothers. In the comings and goings of the young Brothers one can see the first steps of the Brothers in Brother Gabriel's time. May the future, also in God's hands, be the same as our beginning 200 years ago



"Called to walk together in a participatory style"