

Scalabrinians



Symposium on Spirituality Rome, 2023

"I will come to gather all nations"
(Isaiah 66:r8)

Scalabrinians in heart, mind and action

Colegio Camilo Díaz in Cúcuta,
Colombia held a thanksgiving mass.

St. Ann's Parish Celebrates Diversity

St. Ann Parish in Abbotsford, BC, boasts
a diverse community of immigrants.



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Do we welcome, protect, promote and integrate the least among us in society?




humilitas

SCALABRINIANS

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO PROVINCE

A Catholic priest blesses kneeling immigrants as they to leave their homes
and families in Ireland for North America during the potato famine. Ca. 1850.

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EDITORIAL

Bustle and Stillness as an influential voice

Throughout our journey, we have experienced both highs and lows, triumphs and tribulations. Some of us find ourselves tangled in intricate webs of consciousness that ebb and flow like the changing seasons or moods. Along the way, we strive towards achieving our goals, making resolutions, and learning from past mistakes.

Today, we celebrate the joyous occasion of the Incarnation. Christmas brings with it a special message each year, one that reminds us of the deep connection between all things and God. It's a time to pause and reflect, to show our loved ones how much they mean to us, and to cherish the memories of the past while embracing new opportunities for growth and generosity.

Let us rejoice in the spirit of love, peace, and gratitude that this holiday season brings.

Christmas is a time of celebration where we engage in various customs and traditions, particularly in the form of shared meals. These gatherings are the centerpiece of our Christmas celebration, and they are characterized by a spirit of sharing and a leap of faith. It is a step of trust based on the truth of the Incarnation of the Word, which speaks of Jesus.

However, tensions in today's culture may bring to light various aspects of our human interactions, including our ability to heal and create. These tensions can be like a slow-burning fire within us, causing us to ask questions such as:

How can we improve our lives? Is there hope for individual growth? In what ways do we still need to help one another? As we focus on shared values and what is essential in our lives, we are reminded of God's great love for us. He is there to sustain us, to inspire us more in our continuing quest for peace, love, and justice. As a community, we take pride in holding people accountable and creating meaningful change. It is important that we listen to each other and take strong action to address the issues at hand. We face a number of challenges, but our moral obligation is to remain open-minded and prioritize what truly matters, always striving towards higher goals with a spirit of kindness and compassion. //



*Wishing you all
a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!*

A Message from our Provincial Superior

GOOD-BYE 2023, WELCOME 2024

We have said goodbye to 2023 and welcomed the New Year of 2024. At this time, many people make the famous "New Year's resolutions." However, most of these resolutions tend to be self-centered, as we tend to focus on things that we believe are under our control. There are other things that we would like to change, things that are beyond ourselves and our immediate surroundings. For example, we might mention global problems such as hunger, wars, and natural disasters.

While it is true that we cannot solve the world's problems on our own, we cannot become indifferent to what is happening, even if it is far from us. If we choose to disconnect from the world at large and live in a bubble, detached from reality, we will miss out on valuable opportunities to make a difference.

It is important to note that being connected to the world should not lead to depression. Even as we see a world divided, people suffering, and human rights not respected, it can offer hope. As Christians, hope defines us and we can choose the path of solidarity by informing ourselves about the world. Even small local actions can make a huge difference, showing that

we care about people, our brothers and sisters, the environment, justice, and peace.

On December 17th, 2023, during his Angelus prayer, Pope Francis spoke about the difficult situation faced by migrants who try to cross the dangerous Darién Gap.

Today I want to remember the thousands of migrants who try to cross through the Darién jungle between Colombia and Panama. It's often families with children who venture along dangerous paths, deceived by those who falsely promise them short and safe passage, mistreated and robbed. Not a few lose their lives in the jungle.

Combined efforts are needed by the countries more directly affected and the international community to prevent this tragic situation from passing unnoticed, and to provide together a humanitarian response."

The Israel-Gaza conflict, the Russian-Ukraine war, and the Darién crisis are some of the tragic events of our time. However, the Darién crisis does not receive the same media attention as the other two. Over half a million people have crossed the dangerous jungle in the past year, with the dream of reaching the USA, the land of opportunities. Unfortunately, many of them will not survive

As we gather with our communities, both with our brothers in ministry and the people we serve, let's remind ourselves that our mission is to be a migrant among migrants. Even if what we do is only a drop in the ocean, it does make a difference.

We thank the Good Lord for another year ahead of us and renew our hope for the year we begin. We hope that wars will end, and just laws will facilitate the life of so many undocumented people who just want to work and live with dignity. This hope will keep us going in our ministry, wherever we are, knowing that we are all united as a family. Let's not allow fear to overcome us.

Have a meaningful year, full of hope for a brighter future.



Scalabrinians in heart, mind, and action

On October 9, 2023, the Colegio Camilo Daza in Cúcuta, Colombia held a thanksgiving mass to commemorate the first anniversary of St. John Baptist Scalabrini's canonization. Over 160 teachers were in attendance, making it a joyous celebration.

Leading the mass was Father José Ramos Guevara, the current director of the school. The Colegio Daza in Cúcuta is a community that is committed to its mission of guiding students toward becoming their best selves through a holistic approach to education. The academic curriculum at the school is globally-minded and founded on

faith, serving as a source of enthusiasm for learning.

Colegio Daza was founded by two Scalabrinian missionaries, Father Roberto Maestrelli and Father Francesco Bordignon in 1988. The school serves mostly Venezuelan students with 1,254 in addition to the 622 displaced people and 90 young people with disabilities.

Catholic Education offers a wealth of benefits beyond the academic realm, including addressing issues of economic inequality, prioritizing aid for the impoverished, championing human dignity, and other criti-

SCALABRINIANS MAGAZINE

Is published quarterly in full-color print editions. It shows the mission apostolates of the Scalabrinian missionaries in diverse communities across North and South America. It offers its readers a Scalabrinian perspective on migration and other expansive variety of topics.

The Scalabrinian Missionaries are committed to promoting the total salvation of humankind, leading migrants in particular, to connect their lives with the roots of their faith and cultural values. While we have more possibilities than ever to meet this diversity head-on with different cultures and ethnicities, our community aims at expanding spiritual and pastoral assistance to migrants. This dynamic process evolves within the context of every community and pastoral position we serve in Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, the U.S.A., and Venezuela.

Together with our readers, we pray that our ministry with and for the migrants will make us more Christ-like and serve in some way to draw others closer to God.

May the spirit of our Founder, St. John Baptist Scalabrini, help us strengthen our vocation as his missionaries in the world.

Scalabrinians Magazine welcomes letters and articles from readers. Letters and articles may be edited for length and clarity. Please include your full name and address.

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cal concerns of the Church and Scalabrinian Congregation.

Additionally, a deeper understanding of the Order's charism can be achieved through increased engagement with gospel proclamation and mission integration programs offered at the school.

The canonization of Saint John Scalabrini was not solely a

moment of gratitude, but also a call to remember the unwavering commitment of his missionaries to serving diverse cultures, particularly those most in need and marginalized in society.

Embodying the Scalabrinian spirit means being true in mind, heart, and action, consistently living out the faith preached to all believers. //



LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors:

I want to express my appreciation for the insightful content you consistently provide in your publication. The diverse stories and perspectives shared are both enlightening and enriching.

Some suggestions I could give would be to include more narratives about immigrants overcoming the challenges they face, showcasing resilience and triumph. Additionally, it features more ways to connect people with Jesus and his Church. As Faith enriches the spiritual journey of readers with an attractive publication.

I strongly believe that things like these could help everyone build up the church, affirm human dignity, alleviate poverty, encourage dialogue, and inspire hope.

Your magazine is excellent, but delving deeper into these aspects could make it even more impactful and resonate with a broader audience.

Thank you for your dedication to sharing these important stories.

Sincerely,

Alejandra Laines
Riverdale, MD

*Celebration of the 1st Anniversary of the Canonization of
St. John Baptist Scalabrini at Camilo Daza school in Cúcuta, Colombia*



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In the light breeze

EXPLORING THE BENEFITS OF A CONFERENCE ON SCALABRINIAN SPIRITUALITY

The maritime pines are not in good health in College Park. It will be pollution due to the many cars that continuously speed along the nearby ring road. It will be climate change that spares nothing and no one. Maybe everything passes, as the days of every conference pass. We get ready, we meet, we talk to each other, we leave each other. Happy, of course. But after? Like many other times, the commitment is not to reduce everything to memory, to group photos, or to new names in the WhatsApp list. The commitment is not to let the green become sad, that the words become books, that the book remains untouched.

We have learned that Scalabrinian spirituality is a gift. Gift received from the Spirit through the Founder, who left it to us as a legacy. Inheritance is often a source of contention. This time it's not worth fighting over. There is enough for everyone. Some have suggested that, due to its richness, Scalabrinian spirituality resembles a mosaic. There is always a new piece to add and if it is life in the Spirit it never goes out of place.

We are also aware that a spiritual inheritance is not acquired by passing through the notary. It is the Spirit that becomes life, individual life, and

collective life. For this to happen, a learning pedagogy is necessary. It is the great responsibility of formation. But it is also a great individual responsibility: do not neglect the ability to learn. There are always opportunities: meeting with brothers, the embrace of a migrant, the crying of a refugee, daily meditation.

We cannot talk about Scalabrini's spiritual legacy and ignore meditation. He considered it essential: "The priest who neglects daily meditation will never be a saint." He recommended it: "Now I want to recommend to you with all my strength the practices of piety and especially meditation."

He placed it in close relation with the ministry: "Daily meditation must always provide new nourishment to priestly life", including the ministry of charity: "Be convinced that charity grows and is nourished by meditation".

Above all, as a good teacher, he instructed that they learn how to do meditation: "They learn the method of prayer and meditation" and to help them not to neglect it, he demanded that meditation be done "in common according to the Rule".

If the conference resulted in a return to communal meditation in our communities, it would already be a great success.



Images from the Scalabrinian Symposium on Spirituality, 2023



The intercultural aspect was at the origin of the conference. The Congregation is alive, with vitality that transforms, starting from within. Diversity of origins becomes diversity of perspectives, of languages, of life in the Spirit. The Spirit who blows where he wants (Jn 3.8) continues to surprise. We are not given to know where it comes from and where it goes. However, we must hear its voice. If it is the voice of the Spirit it will put everyone in a position to be understood. One of the great difficulties in the world of migration is misunderstanding. Migrants are not included in their aspirations. They look for opportunities and are considered competitors, they offer

availability and are considered profiteers, they want freedom and are seen as invaders.

Languages are different, but misunderstanding does not arise from that. Now there are translators, and artificial intelligence that allows you to listen in your own language. But the misunderstanding remains because the voice of the Spirit is not listened to. The essence of intercultural is communication in diversity. It is a communication that becomes possible by recognizing the other as necessary to myself. It is in understanding others that I understand myself and I understand that there is always a limit to this understanding.

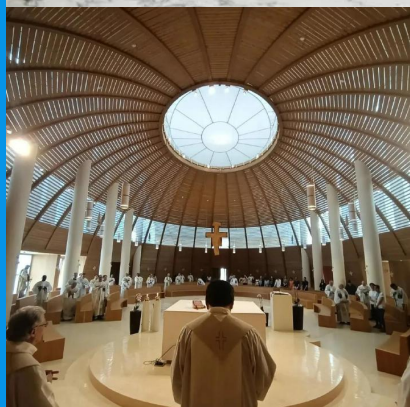
The limit generates respect. Intercultural, communication in diversity, arises from recognition and demands respect. But it goes further. It becomes available for personal and group transformation towards us that is not just the sum. It is a greater us, as Pope Francis would say. It is the communion generated by the Spirit and experienced by those who let themselves be guided by the Spirit. Despite its unpredictability, the Spirit does not act randomly. The mission of the Spirit is not different from the mission of the Father and the Son and has the same aim:



the union in God through Jesus Christ of all men of goodwill."



Fr. Leonir, Fr. Horecio and other members of the Scalabrinian family on a meeting with Pope Francis.



If interculture is first and foremost an internal disposition, a life attitude, intercultural dialogue is not something that occurs automatically. Like any dialogue, it has grammar and syntax. It requires learning, and pedagogy. As missionaries sent into the world of diversity it is our duty to play the role of teachers, to facilitate intercultural dialogue. In order for us to be able to teach migrants in our communities, we must first experience diversity and effective communication within our own communities. This will allow us to have a sufficient understanding of the necessary skills to become teachers. Scalabrini compared this to a bridge, with the bishop being the bridge, a divine tool to connect people across the divide. When we talk about more bridges, and fewer walls, we are not just talking about more inclusive policies. Let's talk first of all about our attitude, about the quality of our mission when it is lived as life in the Spirit. Knowing that we are at his service "to gather all the nations" (Is 66, 18).

It is along the river that brought us from Scalabrini and his missionaries to the present day. Sometimes the river became a trickle, sometimes the waters became cloudy, other times cataracts were overcome and the waters became clear again.

The tributaries swelled the flow and, having exceeded the banks, the waters irrigated the land around and divided into many streams towards other directions.

For many years we have been talking about *Traditio* precisely to remember the source but also to remember that many have contributed to what we are now. *Traditio* is not a *fait accompli* (accomplished fact), it is always in progress. We are the present today, which will be *Traditio* for others tomorrow. In addition to remembering and

passing on, we are therefore invited to create. Creativity cannot be programmed. But we can establish the premises. Among these, the conference invited us to make space within ourselves and to let ourselves be transformed; to stay on the path, because the Spirit is present in the journey; not to fear diversity, but division; to appreciate what I receive because it does not weigh down the journey but makes it more fruitful. For the intercultural dimension to become *Traditio*, it must become a shared expression of life in the Spirit.



In his message, the Pope recommended "closeness", because closeness is God's style. It is a piece, already present in the variegated mosaic of Scalabrinian spirituality, "becoming migrants with migrants", but which sends out a different glow. And he recommended adoration, so important for Scalabrini, so important for those who want to listen to the voice of the Spirit. "The modern mentality has taken away this sense of adoration from us a little. Take it back, please, take it back." The Eucharist is adored in silence. You can feel the Spirit in the silence, as it makes the branches of maritime pines or the foliage of the Darien jungle rustle, or the sand dunes in the desert. It is a voice that comes to life not in an occasional event, in a conference or demonstration, but in the light breeze (1 Kings 19:12) because the light breeze blows every day. //



Filipino Community at St Paschal Celebrates its 30 Years



St. Paschal Baylon Church, situated in the Archdiocese of Toronto, recently commemorated a remarkable milestone of 30 years of serving the Filipino community. The parish's first Scalabrinian missionary, Father Mario Lorenzana, a Philippine-born priest, began ministering to Filipino immigrants in August 1992, paving the way for the church's remarkable journey.

During this period, Agatha Chong, a member of the parish council, recommended having a monthly Filipino mass. This idea proved pivotal in the establishment of the Filipino Support Group (FSG), which emerged as a vital voice for Filipino immigrants devoted to the parish. Over time, it evolved into a non-charitable organization supported by St. Paschal Baylon.

Numerous groups have emerged, such as the Filipino choir, lectors, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The Filipino mass was first introduced in January 1993 under the leadership of Father Mario Lorenzana. The group has since expanded and is now recognized as a remarkable example of launching outreach programs within and beyond Canada.

The Filipino Support Group has evolved over the past few decades and shifted its focus to helping Filipino migrants at St. Paschal's by providing them with assistance and guidance. The recruitment strategies have been refined through the Government of Canada's caregivers program, which has established criteria for processing applications and resumes.

Additionally, they organize workshops and seminars such as the "Newcomers' Orientation Program" in partnership with the Catholic Community Services of York Region (CCSYR) to support newcomers in integrating into the Canadian way of life.

In furtherance of this, the Filipino Support Group has successfully utilized fundraising events as a means to generate funds and provide aid to numerous organizations operating under the Scalabrini faith-based programs in the Philippines, such as Scalabrini for People on the Move and the Scalabrini Formation Center, among others. Additionally, the group extends their support to St. Paschal's and extends financial assistance to other organizations., e.g., "Nazareth Bahay-Pag-big," a home for abandoned seniors under the care of Father Mardeo Reyes in the Diocese of San Pablo, Laguna, Philippines, St. Peter's Seminary in Laguna, Philippines with Father John Mark Batu in charge, The Fil-Ontario Seminary Scholarship Inc. (FOSSI) c/o Msgr. Expedito Joano, St. Peter's College Seminary in Laguna, Philippines (in charge Father John Mark Batu), Missionary Sisters of Holy Face of Jesus in Laguna, Philippines, "Alay Puso" in Tondo Manila,

"Arko ng Pilipinas" (*Le Arche Philippines*), Missionary Catechists of St. Thérèse of Infant Jesus in Tayabas, Quezon, Philippines, and many more.

FSG expresses gratitude and admiration for every member of its group, whose unwavering support and dedication over the past 30 years has been invaluable. FSG members have played a significant role in deepening one's faith through the dissemination of devotions and novenas to revered figures such as Sto. Niño, St. Lorenzo Ruiz, and St. Pedro Calungsod, among others. Additionally, their tireless efforts to promote devotion to the Blessed Mother have been instrumental, as has been the introduction of the "Simbang-Gabi" (a 9-night novena during Advent), which has now completed its 14th year since its inception in 2009.

Furthermore, the Filipino community at St. Paschal's has been a bastion of Christian

values, actively participating in the annual parochial celebration of the Feast of the Assumption, as well as upholding local traditions such as "Flores de Mayo" (May flowers) and "Visita Iglesia" for the past 25 years.

At a milestone like this, the co-

munity unites in expressing their gratitude to all the priests of St. Paschal Baylon Church, both past and present. These spiritual leaders have welcomed, guided, and supported the community throughout their journey, for which they are eternally grateful. //



Foundational Themes in St. John B. Scalabrini's Canonization

A REFLECTION

Among the sacramental actions of the Church, none is more important than the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.¹ Although it has been the source of major disputes and divisions within the universal church throughout history, however, it is “the central act of the worship of the Church, the People of God, God’s universal spiritual family.”² It is where one experiences the divine indwelling or an encounter with the divine through prayerful worship. Schmemmann, for instance, in his work, stresses the primacy of that liturgical encounter with Christ.³ His most important contribution to the Orthodox Church is his fo-

cus on the centrality of the Eucharist in the life and practice of the Church. His theology should not be understood as an abstract or something that resides in texts, but rather, it is an ongoing movement firmly rooted in a body-centered perspective or embodied before God.⁴ It is within the liturgical experience that Schmemmann advocates that theology should be formed within that inner encounter with Christ.

The canonization of Bishop John B. Scalabrini has brought attention to his significant life and impact on the Church's mission, especially his role as bishop and father to migrants.

His perspectives and priorities on pastoral work with migrants serve as a benchmark for sanctity. Through his life, which reflects the centrality of the Eucharist, we can clearly see God's presence in the congregation. The Church recognizes him as an important figure who embodies the values of faith, compassion, and service.

This realization is not only in the discourse of thoughts and history but in the entire experience poured out into our lives. It is an awakening based on the mystery of life in the congregation and which should be celebrated.



St. John B. Scalabrini is an iconic figure who is revered across cultures, and on his journey, he exemplified the qualities of a *homo-viator* in his sanctity. His inspiring journey has instilled qualities of character and spirituality among migrants. The legacy of his discipleship has been realized through his imitation of, identification with, and intimacy with Christ. This legacy has been manifested in diverse practices and teachings that are tailored to the wide range of contexts in which the Gospel has been received.

Insofar as we share a common faith and human striving, certain features of our mission are brought to the fore like a *fermentum*, the small fragment of bread consecrated by the bishop and mixed on Sunday by each presbyter in his own chalice during the Eucharist. It points to our communion as a true absorption into the culture of Christianity.

As missionaries, we are drawn to religious content that enhances our human bonding opportunities with the fundamental aspect of our religious life. It provides us with an is-

land of life-giving transformation. The movement of change is revealed by it, which signifies the conversion of the heart. It is a journey, and what Teresa of Avila refers to as 'spiritual marriage' can happen as a state of union with God in the innermost part of the soul, which is known as 'the unitive way'.⁵ This is one aspect, which is understood as more interior and totalizing within the parameters of our lived experience.

As St. Augustine puts it, "Since God is everywhere, we cannot approach God by moving our feet, but only by moving our

hearts"⁶ Without its felt connection to our lives, we become numb to many things and lose that important perspective.

Our founder's canonization represents the new hallmark of our entire congregation, expressed through symbols and images. This canonization signals a realignment of our basic priorities in ministry and within our prayer life, leading us back to the sacred source of our shared goal as Scalabrinians. Amid this heightened awareness of reality, we also reaffirm our consecration which is a gift to the church.



1. Austin, Flannery, ed. "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 1975), art. 7.

2. Arthur Gabriel Herbert, *Liturgy and Society: The Function of the Church in the Modern World* (London: Faber & Faber, 1935), p. 3.

3. Alexander Schemmann, *Liturgy and Tradition*, ed. Thomas Fisch (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 13-4.

4. Schemmann, *Liturgy and Tradition*, 13-4.

5. Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, ed., Benedict Zimmerman (London: Thomas Baker, 1988), 68. 119.

6. Augustine, Letter 155, PL XXXIII.

Our congregation has evolved to include a vibrant group of young members eager to explore and embrace our mission. We are at a pivotal point where our vision and dedication may lead to a "millennial sing" - a harmonious blend of adapting and integrating Gospel values into the unique cultures of our community. New stories and perhaps testimonies with varying attitudes and insights bring some changes and clarity as far as migration experiences are concerned.

Our commitment to peace and justice explores the surge of our attention anew as we reflect upon the suffering, turmoil, and pain of differences among our migrant people. It is vital and thus involves a dynamic interaction between society and the church.

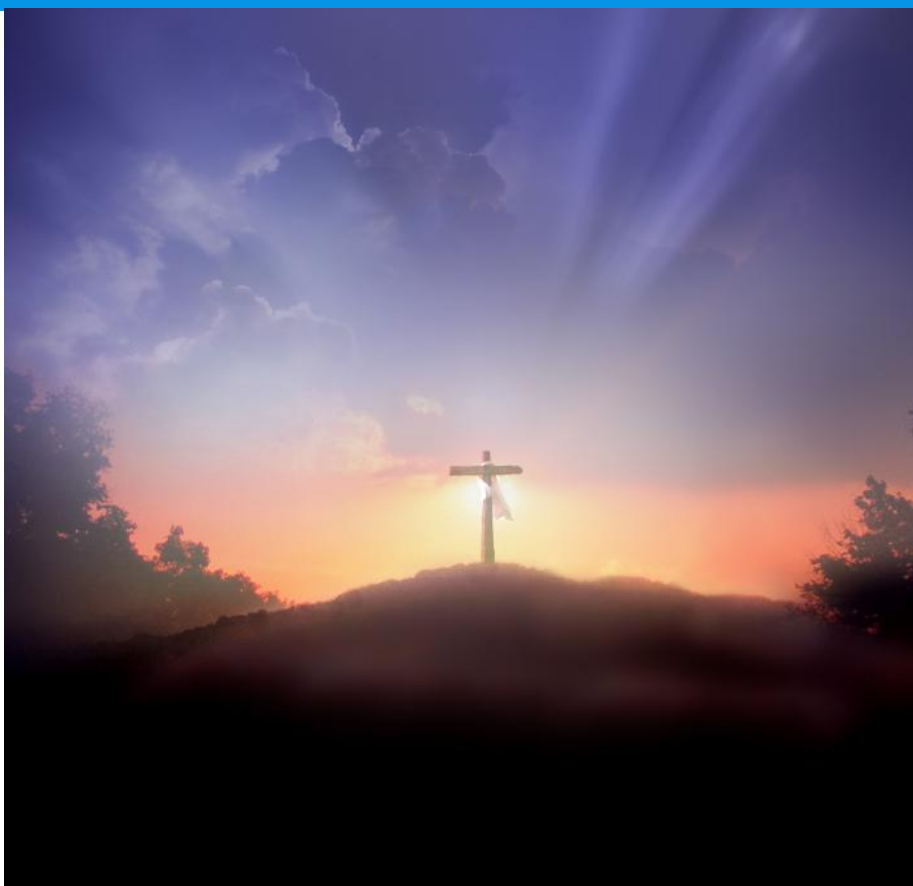
We can all benefit from having a mentor like St. John B. Scalabrini, who led our congregation through a difficult journey and helped us understand our connection with all people in various contexts. As Cardinal Yves Congar noted, history has demonstrated that personal holiness alone is not enough to effect change.⁷ Like St. John B. Scalabrini, who guided our congregation through a challenging journey, we all need a

mentor like him who can help us realize our solidarity with all people in different settings.

St. John B. Scalabrini had a profound understanding of human suffering, which embodies the same essence of life that we strive to rediscover in ourselves. We should be ready to traverse obstacles and work towards bringing to life the Word of God, which is evident in the agony and distress caused by social issues. His message is universal and carries a prophetic tone that resonates with our historical struggles, enabling us to discern God's actions and connect with Him.

We affirm our commitment to our spiritual values of hospitality, compassion, and solidarity with migrants in various situations, and will continue to respond to their needs.

St. John B. Scalabrini has been canonized as a saint, and his example serves as a foundation for our modern concept of discipleship, which emphasizes building meaningful relationships. His life is an inspiration that has transcended time and space, and his memory is cherished not only by the Vatican City Church but also by churches around the world. //



7. See Gerard O'Connell, "Last Among Equals," in *The Tablet* (6 July 1996).

St. John B. Scalabrini statue unveiled at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church & Shrine

On Sunday, November 12, 2023, the unveiling of the statue of newly canonized Saint, Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini, took place at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. In celebration of his one-year anniversary as a saint, a bronze statue of St. Scalabrini has been created. It now stands outside Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church & Shrine in Melrose Park, as of August 23.

Bishop Scalabrini, the founder of the Missionaries of St. Charles (Scalabrinians) and the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles, is considered the patron saint of immigrants and migrants. A statue of him now stands in

front of the Mt. Carmel Church and Shrine, welcoming everyone. Fr. Leandro Fossá, CS, Pastor and Rector, unveiled the statue, along with Provincial Superior, Fr. Miguel Alvarez, CS, and members of the Missionaries of Saint Charles Congregation.

A year ago, Scalabrini Immigrant and Refugee Services, Inc. was established as a not-for-profit organization. It is located at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Melrose Park and belongs to the Province of St John the Baptist. The main objective of this organization is to provide assistance to the migrant commu-

nity in the area. Additionally, it has the potential to expand its services to all the missions of the Province located in the United States of America.

St. Scalabrini once exclaimed that "Religion and Country are the two primary loves that God has instilled within the hearts of humanity." This statement has become a glowing motto on the banners of civilized Christian nations. "It is our individual duty to utilize our unique abilities to ensure that all Italians overseas share the same values, determination, and courage in support of Religion and Country."

Images by Fr. Leandro Fossa, c.s.



The Center actively works towards fostering good citizenship, while the Missionaries of St. Charles provide a welcoming space for worship.

Our goal is to support, encourage, and offer affordable or free programs and services to immigrants, refugees, and economically disadvantaged people and families. Our vision is to create a safe and nurturing community where individuals and families can thrive and achieve their full potential.

Our mission is to offer all-inclusive services in close proximity to the community, where each individual is taken care of in a linguistically and culturally considerate environment, spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. We do not turn anyone away.

Scalabrini Immigrant and Refugee Services was established in August 2022 with the aim of continuing and expanding the fifteen-year legacy of programs and services established by Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Melrose Park, IL.

We are located at the Scalabrini Community Center, where we offer a range of services in a one-stop Service Center. Our model is unique in that we collaborate with partner agencies located in the same Community Center to provide

additional services, activities, and collaborative events.

Another important component of our work is the Community Alliance. It is an essential part of our work. This coalition brings together community stakeholders, non-profit organizations, local parks, libraries, officials, school districts, univer-

sities, community colleges, businesses, and others who share our goal of building a vibrant community. Our Lady of Mount Carmel initiated the Community Alliance 15 years ago, and it meets monthly to build relationships, increase capacity, reduce duplication of services, and combine resources to achieve our shared vision. Cu-



Currently, fifty entities regularly attend these meetings.

During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, the Center at Our Lady of Mount Carmel screened over 10,000 calls and provided comprehensive case management to 1,020 individuals. They also resolved 147 crisis interventions, conducted 18 workshops that served 199 people, and processed \$500,000 in emergency rental assistance for economically vulnerable community members. These services continue under Scalabrini Immigrant and Refugee Services.

The organization has added the Southern Border Asylee Program to assist asylum seekers transported from southern states and housed in regional hotels. The impact of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Scalabrini Immigrant and Refugee Services on the community is evident through their dedication to serving those in need. //



St. Ann's Parish Celebrates Diversity

St. Ann Parish in Abbotsford, British Columbia, boasts a diverse and thriving community of immigrants. The richness of its many cultures is reflected in the unique worship and ministries maintained by each group.

Despite their distinct backgrounds, all members of the parish come together to share facilities, participate in parish activities, and provide leadership.

St. Ann Parish falls under the Archdiocese of Vancouver and is served by the Scalabrinian Missionaries, also known as the Missionaries of Saint Charles. Father Richard Zanotti currently serves as pastor, with Father Jaime Aguila as vicar.

In 2019, the Scalabrinians took over the pastoral leadership of the parish. St. John Baptist Scalabrini (1839-1905), bishop of Piacenza, Italy, founded the

Scalabrinian Missionaries to serve migrants worldwide.

The parish community is a diverse group that offers masses in English, Spanish, and Korean. Their vision is to enrich the fine traditions and religious practices of each cultural group.

The parish has humble beginnings in a city mostly comprised of farming communities but has since grown in legendary





proportions with the addition of a second Catholic parish, as well as a Catholic elementary and high school.

One of the remarkable characteristics of this parish is its foundational insight to be open, friendly, and caring. Their welcoming culture is best described in the context of liturgical celebrations, educational programs, fundraising projects, and social and recreational events. The community predominantly gathers for grace-filled Eucharistic services over the weekends, which define the essential actions of the community as they pray, listen,

share, and celebrate their faith relationship with God and with one another.

St. Ann has identified several exciting opportunities for parish activities that celebrate multiculturalism and bring different cultures together. These include a multicultural celebration, a Christian Choir, and a Christmas market. Additionally, St. Ann proudly sponsors and supports refugees who have come from various countries and now call the area home.

The Scalabrinian community in three parishes of the Archdiocese of Vancouver extends out-

reach to numerous farm workers in the Fraser Valley and the entire lower mainland.

While this is the focus of their ministry, the pastoral plan for the Hispanic Ministry remains missionary in nature.

This involves hosting a monthly mass at six different parishes, followed by a simple meal with socialization. They also provide welcome kits to newly arrived workers, facilitate evangelization-type groups on individual farms, arrange visits for medical care, and prepare these workers to receive the sacraments. //

1. and 2. Refugees from Congo | 3. Archbishop Miller with Fr. Richard, Sr. Karina, Angela and Bob... Seasonal Farm Worker Ministry | 4. Youth of parish at Ordinandi dinner. | 5. Korean parishioners at multicultural celebration.
6. Relic of St. John Baptist Scalabrini. | 7. Social with farm workers after mass.

Spotlight on Vocation Promotion - Its unfolding events and movements



My name is Father Thanh Khan Vu, c.s. I belong to the Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles, also known as the Scalabrinians. I am originally from Vietnam, a country in Asia. In 2007, I started my studies at a seminary in Vietnam where I stayed for three years. After that, I went to the Philippines to continue my formation and spent four years there before taking my first religious profession.

In 2014, I moved to Colombia to study theology and stayed there for almost five years. In December 2019, I was ordained as a priest. My first assignment was as the vicar of Holy Cross Parish in San Jose, California, U.S.A. I worked there for three years and four months, serving migrants from Italy, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Latin America.

It was a diverse parish, working with people from different nationalities. Now, I am in Mexico serving as the new Vocation Promoter and living in Zapopan, Guadalajara. I am still adapting to this new culture and assignment. In this new role, I have encountered some interesting challenges and insights that I would like to share as a vocation promoter.

When my superior, Father Miguel Alvarez, called me and asked me to go to the new mission in Mexico, I had no idea what my role would be. Mexico was a completely new place for me. I had never been there before and did not know where to start. I remember pondering in my mind, asking, 'What am I going to do, Lord?' It was a big challenge for me, but I accepted it with the hope that the Lord would guide me.

I came to Mexico to work as a vocation promoter. I put my trust in the Lord and decided to do my best, believing that God would help me with the rest. After nearly five months of searching for new vocations for my congregation, I am grateful to the Lord for always being good to me. I am happy to be here in Mexico, especially among the young people. The locals are kind to me and call me "Padre Chinito" as they find it hard to pronounce my name.

In these past few months here, I have been visiting some cities such as Veracruz, Oaxaca, Puebla, Mexico City, Michoacan, and Guadalajara. I have experienced that the people especially the young here are very faithful and friendly, which makes me so impressed. They are still very faithful in prayer, in meetings, and in participating

in celebrations and events. Many of them asked me about our mission, what we are doing, and why I am from another country far away and have been doing this service here. I am so happy to tell them about our Congregation and the mission that we are doing with the migrants and the refugees. They are so impressed and excited to commit their life to helping our mission.

Over the past few months, I have visited several cities in Mexico including Veracruz, Oaxaca, Puebla, Mexico City, Michoacan, and Guadalajara. During my visits, I have noticed that the people here, especially the young, are very friendly and faithful. They are committed to prayer, attending meetings, and participating in celebrations and events. Many of them have asked me about our mission, what we do, and why I, being from another country, am doing this service here. I am delighted to share our Congregation's mission with them, which involves helping migrants and refugees.



They are impressed and enthusiastic about committing their lives to support our mission. Reflecting on the past few months, I am feeling grateful to God for His constant presence in my life. It can be quite challenging to start a new job or

take up a new position in a new place, but I always trusted in God. Despite the difficulties I encountered in this country, I believe that fresh opportunities will emerge, and the youth will heed God's call to serve Him.

As I conclude this sharing, I would like to pose a question that has been incredibly helpful to me, and I hope it will inspire us in our service: Are we genuinely satisfied with what we are doing? //



Scalabrinian Ministry from a task-centered to a being-centered identity



In any program designed to train individuals for ministry or pastoral work, educators typically stress the importance of pastoral identity. This identity is rooted in the personal development of the priest or minister and expressed through their performance of ministry duties. At its core, pastoral identity is embodied in the quality of relationships the minister or priest forms with others.

To have a real identity is important in any relationship.

Robert Kegan, for instance, sees identity in “interpersonal” meaning-making as if “I am my relationships.” It is central to something that we have to pursue and make, that makes and keeps humans “human” and search for something to love that loves us. In his book, *The Evolving Self*, Kegan includes a brief passage from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1913) to note Stephen’s method of identifying his relationship with the world. In a similar vein, James believes that there is a “social me,” made up

of a person’s view of himself, herself through the eyes of others and it is his/her awareness.

Identity in pastoral ministry has evolved with the influence of behavioral sciences, generating numerous images and models that offer valuable insights. Identity has become more distinctive from the experiences and perspectives of ministers in parish ministry, pastoral care with the sick and elderly, and those involved in counseling.



However, the demands and expectations faced by priests and ministers have increased over time, making clarity on one's pastoral identity crucial for fulfilling and sustaining pastoral duties. The relationship between the priest and a particular community is significant for pastoral identity as it connects personhood and ministry.

When serving as a priest in a nursing or retirement home, like Villa Scalabrini in Sun Valley, CA, the main focus is on the well-being of the patient, regardless of their age or afflictions. This focus brings up various issues such as suffering, sacramental practices, prayer, compassion, and hope. The question of care is what unites the changing fields of health care, pastoral care, and the work of institutions. Healthcare workers and chaplains play a crucial role in caring for people, especially those with dementia. They provide soul care or *cura animarum* for residents, which helps discern their spiritual and emotional composition more effectively.



Though their work requires a great deal of patience, they believe that spiritual care and the exercise of one's faith can help remedy a disquieted soul. Members of families also respond positively to this approach, as depression is common among residents.

Father Adilso Luiz Balen, c.s., executive director of Villa Scalabrini, Retirement Center & Special Care Unit, expresses his gratitude for the institution's success in keeping its doors open to thousands of residents and their families from different cultures and backgrounds. He is thankful for the spiritual and economic support shown to the institution and hopes to continue counting on people's love and assistance.

Father Balen welcomes the 40th anniversary of Villa Scalabrini on April 22, 2024, with delight and gratitude.

This institution has kept the tradition of Christian service alive by feeding, caring, and nurturing its residents (1 Pet. 5:2), and providing support for one another (1 Cor 12:25), thanks to its dedicated staff, directors, and the zeal of Scalabrinian Missionaries.

Connecting with patients and residents of different cultures on a spiritual level promotes well-being, a sense of peace, and human dignity, reflecting the priority of the spiritual and psychological aspects of the person's inner world in soul care. //



Brazilian and Portuguese Immigrants on Gaining Perspective

The St. Bernard and Our Lady of Fatima Church in Riverdale, MD has seen a significant increase in Portuguese-speaking community members. This community has been instrumental in strengthening the Catholic faith among young people. The community is composed of two distinct cultures, Brazilian and Portuguese, each of which brings its unique perspectives and experiences to the parish ministry.

Despite their shared bonds, Brazilian and Portuguese immigrants face challenges in passing on their Catholic faith to their children. Immigration from Catholic countries has prevented a decline in the Catholic population in the United States, but young immigrants need spiritual guidance to become active adult Christians.

On December 2-3, members of the community came together to organize an Advent retreat aimed at strengthening their faith. The retreat was led by Raphael Longhini, a seminarian from the Diocese of Worcester in Massachusetts. During the retreat, participants prayed and meditated on the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which symbolizes the start of the relationship with Christ. The message delivered by the angel Gabriel encouraged them to become true disciples in our



daily lives, as Mary did when she said "yes" to God's call to become the mother of Jesus.

Father Rivaldario Silva Santos, a Brazilian Scalabrinian priest who works in this parish, emphasized the importance of community collaboration in building a community where members can grow in faith, gain new perspectives, and serve God through various ministries. //





New Leadership and Engagement of the San Juan Bautista Province Unfolds

On January 1, 2024, Fr. Giovanni Bizzotto, c.s. takes his leadership as the new provincial of San Juan Bautista Province. As per the Rules of Life, the provincial leadership is responsible for guiding, encouraging, and administering the works of the congregation in a particular geographic region for three years. The Saint John the Baptist Province, which is headquartered in Chicago, covers the Scalabrinian missions in British Columbia (Canada), California, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Texas, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico.

Fr. Giovanni is an Italian-born Scalabrinian missionary from Rosà, Province of Vicenza. He took his first religious profession as a Scalabrinian missionary on June 15, 1980, and was ordained as a priest on September 13, 1986.

He has extensive pastoral experience and has served multicultural parishes, in vocational promotion, migrant homes and weekly newspapers. Although his ministry has been in formation for several years, Fr Giovanni's heart and mind could not separate migration involvements from pastoral work. He is like a bridge across the well-spring of his Italian identity with the spiritual dimensions of his openness to other cultures.



Fr. Giovanni Bizzotto, c.s.

Fr. Giovanni has been given the important responsibility of leading and providing support to his confreres as they work towards fulfilling the mission entrusted to them by Saint John Baptist Scalabrini. This mission involves sacrifice and openness to the challenges of migration.

He also helps bring comfort and solace to the migrants by helping them connect with their faith and culture. Fr. Giovanni's role includes ensuring that the missionaries can achieve this objective and make a positive impact on the lives of the migrants they serve.

With his leadership and guidance, the team of missionaries can work together towards the common goal of bringing hope to those who have left their homelands in search of a better future. //



An August Personage

Long have I painted him in my memory,
this great man who speaks volumes about faith,
Saint John Scalabrini whose name rings now a bell,
becoming God's grace to be revered and called a saint.



Mirrored in the reality of migration experience
his ongoing dialogue to a marginal existence
that seeks salvation, liberation, and integration
in expressing the gift of being with the poor.

In vivid and concrete ways, show many faces.
human suffering is linked with structures and cruelty.
Disputed aspects worked out with care and thoroughness,
to identify them and be swept along with our compassion.



Such a hard and complex life indeed,
that made Scalabrini unite his missionaries
To cross borders and be prepared to cope
with proper attitude, conversion, and hope.

Seeing how we honor him today
amid indifference and skepticism,
we claim with great pride and commitment
to spread his splendid meaning to the church.

Like other people who sowed the seeds of foundation
he transcended and lived in his vocabulary of service,
Beyond reason, he gave himself totally to serve
this *raison d'être* is of concern for migrant people.

As a way to see more and more,
a close relationship with God demands
Maybe creative and largely consistent
to allow perfection sketched in human interactions.

While we define Scalabrini as ever in the world
his singularity goes beyond private exaltation
His glory however is a church proclamation
that stresses totality typified in redemption.



Thorns and Thistles

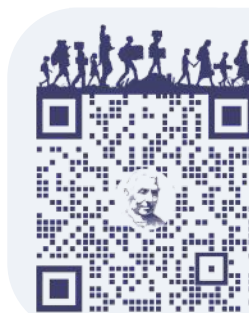
Scalabrini Mobile

Find out everything about our Congregation

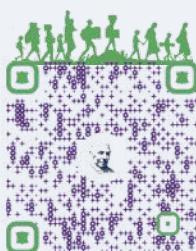
- The history of Saint J.B. Scalabrini.
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After giving himself to us, He will top his benefits by giving himself to those he chooses, to be their eternal reward in the brilliance of his glory: his kingship will be our reward.



(St. John Baptist Scalabrini,
Christmas Homily, 1894)

