

Scalabrinians



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Joyful and reflective moments shared with the community in Cucuta, Col.

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Six Jubilarians celebrate this year under the pope Leo's motto "In Illo uno unum"...

The first 100 days of Pope Leo XIV

A pontificate rooted in compassion for migrants and the marginalized.



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



humilitas
SCALABRINIANS

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO PROVINCE

Ukrainian refugees on Lviv railway station waiting the train
photo by Ruslan Lytvyn

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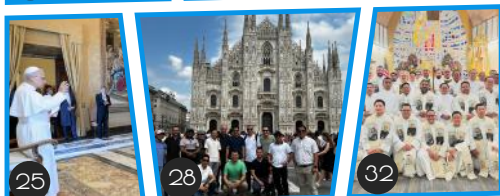
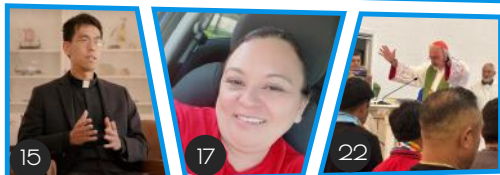
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EDITORIAL

A prophetic insight embodying the Christian faith

Every society produces its own distinct brand of social misfits, whether in politics, religion, or marriage. This reality becomes clear as we encounter those who attract public shame and controversy. Our social structure often revolves around a familiar mantra of moral judgment, which can lead to hypocrisy and division. These outcomes arise from people's choices, personality imbalances, and the powerful forces of pride.

We have grown accustomed to witnessing leaders and celebrities fall from power and prestige into a state of ordinariness, often viewed through a critical and moralistic lens. This decline marks a tragic chapter in their lives that can also affect some of us. What we argue, disagree on, discuss, and defend, such as those incidents and phenomena, is an ongoing reality that influences our lives. It helps us shape our Christian values, allowing us to become men and women for others who are willing to go the extra mile to reach out to those in need.

William Blake once wrote, “If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.” This suggests that the inner soul can see beyond the surface

reflecting our internal struggles where we suffer or face dilemmas because God is at work. We find God through our inner encounters in prayer, which serves as a window into spirituality. As we always say, “With God, *nothing is impossible*.” However, he is a God who does not give up on us. He is not like us, who can easily turn our backs and give up on something that we can no longer afford to cope with. It reflects a deeper trust in him, like “*fides quaerens intellectum*” (faith seeking understanding) of Saint Anselm of Canterbury. For this, we affirm that unless we first believe, we shall not understand.

In today's world, we are challenged to come to terms with secular shifts that affect many aspects of our lives, as well as issues that dominate our present and future choices. These familiar patterns keep unfolding like hurdles on the road or in circles, with some

being concentric while others overlap. At the human level, we seek God's help and reflect on his love through an inner dynamic that embodies our faith and trust in him. It is when God meets us where we are and welcomes us into our most vulnerable places that we experience transformation both from the inside out and on the outside. Thus, it explains how the mystery of Christ is made present in us.

These foundational principles, marked by a living faith in Christ's paschal mystery, reflect the essence of Pope Leo XIV's approach to his Petrine leadership: love and unity for the universal Church. He emphasizes God's redemptive promises and reinforces a missionary perspective on communal discernment. He provides a prophetic testimony that shapes the inner workings of his papacy, with Christ as the foundation of love and harmony. //

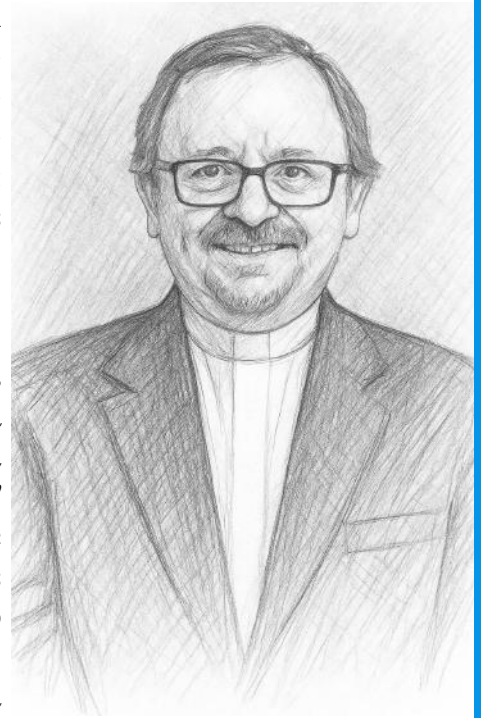


Hope for Peace

Pope Leo XIV's first words on May 8th in greeting the crowd gathered at St. Peter's Square, and the whole world watching on social media, was "Peace be with you". This is the traditional greeting for a bishop during the liturgical celebration, reminding us of the risen Lord greeting his disciples on Easter Sunday. However, given the context of today's world, this greeting brings to light a profound meaning. It is seen as the direction that Pope Leo XIV is giving for his papacy so far. In the middle of conflicts, most importantly, the war between Russia and Ukraine and the conflict in Gaza between Israel and Palestine, among others, the Pope has presented himself as a voice calling for peace and justice, the end of violence and senseless killing. In a recent message highlighting the weeklong celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Universal Christian Con-

ference on Life and Work, when leaders of Protestant and Orthodox churches met in Stockholm to explore ways to collaborate for peace, Pope Leo said: *"our world bears the deep scars of conflict, inequality, environmental degradation and a growing sense of spiritual disconnection."* However, Christians know that *"peace is not merely a human achievement, but a sign of the Lord's presence with us,"* he wrote. *"This is both a promise and a responsibility, for followers of Christ are summoned to become artisans of reconciliation: to confront division with courage, indifference with compassion and to bring healing where there has been hurt."* (from CNS, on the USCCB site).

We are all called to be promoters of peace, the Lord's presence with us, as the pope says. That is what our ministry is about. Jesus' message calls for a commitment towards the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of justice and peace. These two virtues go together, and one cannot exist without the other. Our Scalabrinian Congregation, in a humble yet effective way, aims to be a voice calling for justice and dignity for our sisters and brothers who, for various reasons, are on the move and, often, cannot defend themselves.



In a polarized world, our conscience must be guided by the Gospels, by Jesus' message and the teachings by the Church's Social Doctrine. Pope Leo helps us to stay focused on the dignity of every person when we discuss peace and justice. His name, Leo, brings us to reflect on pope Leo XIII and his famous encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (May 15, 1891) on human labor and the condition of the working class.

This is a time to stand with Jesus' side and believe that a new world order is possible when we promote human dignity, preach the good news and denounce all efforts to diminish the value of a person, created in God's own image. //

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Let's talk!

Provincial Assembly Brings Missionaries to Cúcuta

The Scalabrinian Missionaries from the Eastern Province of the United States gathered for their Annual Provincial Assembly, held from May 5 to 9 in Cúcuta, Colombia. This year's assembly sought to engage with current missionary priorities in a synodal style, exploring discussions on various pertinent topics.

Guided by the vision of our Founder, John Baptist Scalabrini, Fr. Horecio Carlos Anklan, the provincial superior, along with Fr. Leonir Chiarello, the Superior General from Rome, emphasized their commitment to responding to the pressing needs of the times.

In light of the changes the world is experiencing, missionary work faces new scenarios and challenges that are shaping the Church's current direction. To promote transparency and accountability, assembly members discussed and explored ways to reflect on religious life, ministerial teamwork, and communion. In his report, Fr. Anklan pointed out that, as consecrated Scalabrinians, the handling of material resources should be integrated into every aspect of our lives. He also highlighted the implementation of the Provincial Missionary Project at the local level and the scheduled canonical visitation for November 2025.

SCALABRINIANS MAGAZINE

Scalabrinians Magazine highlights our missionary work across communities in North and South America. It offers a Scalabrinian perspective on migration and related topics, reflecting our commitment to guiding migrants in faith and cultural values. Active in countries like Canada, the U.S., Colombia, and more, our ministry seeks to expand spiritual and pastoral care to migrants.

Inspired by our founder, Saint John Baptist Scalabrini, we strive to become more Christ-like through our service. The magazine invites reader submissions, which may be edited for clarity. Send your articles to:

info@scalabrinisaintcharles.org





Images of the Scalabrinian School Camilo Daza and its students, in Cúcuta, Colombia, welcoming the Scalabrinian Fathers.



The assembly welcomed Fr. Isaldo Bettin, a member of the General Administration responsible for overseeing the Secretariat of Mission, along with Fr. Leonardo Rocha, a representative from the Saint John the Baptist Province based in Chicago. Additionally, the newly assigned missionaries to the province who were ordained last year were also introduced: Fr. Patrick Bernard (Haiti), Fr. Oskar Kefi (Indonesia), Fr. Jonas Fernández (Venezuela), and Fr. Jacob Desile (Haiti). On the second day, a special invitation was extended to Most Rev. José Libardo Garcés, Bishop of Cúcu-

ta, who presided over Mass at Saint Anthony Parish.

With the goal of living life in oneness and a desire to build communion, reports were presented from various areas, including Economy (Fr. Sergio Dall'Agnese), Formation (Fr. Rubens Sylvain), Religious Life (Fr. Maurizio Maifredi), Mission (Fr. Jefferson Bariviera), and Scalabrini Migration Network, also known as SIMN (Fr. Marcio Toniazzo). Subsequently, Fr. Mario Geremia, alongside Fr. Oskar Kefi and Fr. Quynh Hoang, had the opportunity to introduce the new mission in

Panamá.

The Secretariats and confreres from the Panamá mission recognized the current circumstances, along with the province's priorities and concerns, highlighting the significance of intercultural living in alignment with Gospel values, collaboration in formation, and the spiritual energy infused within the community.

This fostered greater awareness of belonging and rootedness in the congregational commitment to religious vows, particularly in their roles as consecrated missionaries.



Camilo Daza School students greeting guests with music, dance, and sports displays.



While the kerygma is the core of apostolic preaching, migration literature serves as a steady anchor, reflecting a sense of hope for people seeking better opportunities in life. Colombia, for instance, exemplifies the challenges of human mobility as Dr. Wooldy Edson, a professor at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá, has argued and discussed, focusing on migrants, refugees, and displaced people. He has paid attention to current events with evolving insights on significant trends in sociology, demography, and hermeneutics in migration studies.

A community dedicated to fostering unity among its members, promoting sustainability, and collaborating on various strategies continues to address the challenges of migration, poverty, displacement, insecurity, and unemployment. Their involvement and commitment to the spirit of mission, dialogue, and fraternal respect evolve within their community. Lived in faith and shaped by the Founder's charism, the assembly members took the time to visit the border bridge in Villa del Rosario leading to Venezuela.

This visit concluded with a Eucharistic celebration led by Fr. Leonir Chiarello, superior general, along with newly assigned confreres from the province. //



Scalabrini Dukceovich Center in Providence, R.I., commemorates its anniversary

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the Scalabrini Dukceovich Center in Providence, RI. Since opening in 2010, it has provided a variety of services, including support for pregnant women, infants, and children, a food pantry, notarization services, English and Citizenship classes, and free medical ultrasounds. They also distribute articles of clothing to families in need.

Lay Scalabrinian Rosanna I. Grillo, director of the Scalabrini Dukceovich Center, reflects on her journey down memory lane, sharing how the center has grown from its roots of helping migrants and the poor integrate into their new country, along with its progress in fulfilling the vision, mission, and charism of Saint John Baptist Scalabrini. Her leadership exemplifies openness to building stronger, more cohesive teams of volunteers, advancing the center's legacy.

She embodies humility combined with strategic insight, ensuring alignment through continuous learning and collaboration.

From the perspective of missionary workers, the Center is seen not only as a place for charity and human services but also as a voice with significant implications for renewal in formation and discipleship. In this connection, its core remains focused on faith in Jesus Christ. Similarly, it advocates the primacy of the preferential option for the poor, particularly migrant people.

Ms. Grillo consistently expresses gratitude to the generous benefactors, especially Mr. Vlado Dukcevic, who donated over \$1.25 million to help build the Center—funds contributed for the purchase of land by the laity. By fostering a deeper connection with those involved in this ministry, she always remembers with gratitude the Scalabrinian Fathers she had collaborated with as well. The many opportunities she has received over time have broadened her perspective on integrating modes of application and interiority in loving God and neighbors. //



Jubilarians celebrate their priesthood anniversaries

This year's Jubilarians at Saint Charles Province include six Scalabrinians who are celebrating the anniversaries of their ordination to the priesthood. They are Fr. Giancarlo Massari (60 years – 13 March 1965), Fr. Roberto Maestrelli (45 years – 5 January 1980), Fr. Vilmar Orsolin (45 years – 15 June 1980), Fr. Edison A. Osorio Agudelo (30 years – 29 July 1995), Fr. Mark A. Escobar (30 years – 28 October 1995), and Fr. Alfredo Mosquera (25 years – 24 June 2000). Through their years of service, they intertwined themes of mission and oneness with the Scalabrinian Order and the Church at large. Their ministry with migrants and the poor in society has grown in ways that embrace belonging and foster community.

Pope Leo XIV's motto, "*In Illo uno unum*," which translates literally as "*In the One, we are one*," best captures the sense of belonging to Christ in his church, "*the author and perfecter of our faith*" (Heb. 12:2). As the Sacrament of God, Christ remains the foundation of the priesthood. This vocation fulfills the command of Christ to proclaim God's message of salvation to all nations by baptizing them in "*the name of the Father and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all the commands He gave*" (Matt. 28:19-20).

Jubilees, particularly in the priestly life, mark a significant milestone that embodies an inner dynamic for celebration. In gratitude to God, which is

essential for living a missionary life, the Jubilarians give thanks and celebrate the mystery of embracing the work of the Spirit in them. Their lives of witness and faithfulness to discipleship continue to proclaim the prophetic voice centered on service and teaching of holiness.

For decades, their selfless sacrifice and commitment to the priesthood have often been associated with the grace of perseverance through prayer, the breath of faith. Like a musical form that powerfully pushes harmony, their path for navigating life's countless decisions becomes clear through the lens of listening to God's guidance in prayer. In truth, the love of God operative within the Trinity has a strong foothold in prayer.

THE JUBILARIANS:

Fr. Giancarlo Massari was ordained on March 13, 1965, in Italy. He was born in San Giorgio Piacentino, Piacenza, Italy. His commitment to his faith began with his first vows on September 23, 1959, a moment that strengthened his desire to serve God. He further embraced his calling by taking his perpetual vows on October 4, 1962, deepening his lifelong devotion to the Congregation and the Church. Through the lens of the Second Vatican Council, he explored how God has revealed Himself through Christ in his ministry with migrants. As a missionary priest, he has served in various mission apostolates within the province and is currently residing at Notre-Dame-de-Mont-Carmel in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.



Fr. Roberto Maestrelli was ordained as a priest in Italy on January 5, 1980. He first made his religious profession on November 4, 1976, and took his perpetual vows on August 27, 1979.

His missionary work exemplifies the anthropological concerns of serving the poorest of the poor, echoing liberation theology. His passion for the grassroots level revitalizes his strong understanding of the ongoing importance and relevance of pastoral ministry. He has worked in various missions across Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and is currently serving in El Salvador.



Fr. Vilmar Orsolin was ordained in Brazil on June 15, 1980. He made his temporary vows on February 1, 1970, and his perpetual vows on February 24, 1979. He provides multiple ways for his leadership with core ethical responsibility within a broader network of relationships. He shares a common vision that leads to Christ as the source and bearer of grace. Similarly, he keeps the call to discipleship alive by engaging with the world and integrating God's Word into his ministry. Like many Scalabrinian missionaries, he has served in different locations within the province and is now the administrator of Misión San Felipe de Jesús in Atlanta, Georgia.

Fr. Edison Osorio was ordained in Colombia on July 29, 1995. He took his first vows on August 15, 1991, and made his perpetual profession on November 4, 1994. He has held various roles, especially within the province, that molded his missionary dedication, serving as a leader, pastoral worker, spiritual guide, and seminary rector. As a notable advocate for integration in Scalabrinian formation, he highlights that every aspect of life should be seen as a journey of relationships. His work has taken him to Chicago, Canada, and Haiti, and he is currently the rector of the Theological House of Studies in Bogotá, Colombia.



Fr. Mark A. Escobar was ordained in the Philippines on October 28, 1995. He made his first vows on April 22, 1990, and took his perpetual vows on November 4, 1994. He continually seeks to balance theory with experience, as evidenced by his clear expression of synergism in his ministry. His faith in the divine involves using language that becomes a “lived experience” through the interior work of the Spirit, achieved by engaging in, dwelling in, and experiencing oneself within the context of discipleship. Like many other missionaries, he has worked in various missions across Australia, Canada, and the United States.



Fr. Alfredo Mosquera was ordained in Colombia on June 24, 2000. He made his first profession of religious vows on December 8, 1995, and took his perpetual vows on October 3, 1999.

A key aspect of his priestly ministry is the insight he has gained through engaging conversations with the world. As a missionary in his home country, he stays focused on his love for the Church and the community. He served briefly in the Montreal, Quebec, mission before returning to Colombia, where he now cares for his elderly and ailing father.

“In the twilight of life, God will not judge us on our earthly possessions and human successes, but rather on how much we have loved.” *

“Never give up prayer, and should you find dryness and difficulty, persevere in it for this very reason. God often desires to see what love your soul has, and love is not tried by ease and satisfaction.” *

* “The Prayers of St. John of the Cross” in The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh & Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1991). ISBN 10 09352161416.

The Sign of Cain

When Cain murdered his brother Abel, he lamented, “My guilt is too heavy to bear. Today, You have expelled me from the land, and I must conceal myself from Your face, wandering as a vagabond on the earth. Whoever finds me will kill me.” God marked Cain's forehead. (Genesis 4:13).

The story is concise and straightforward. Although it presents the first murder in the family and among brothers, we cannot ignore the question that precedes God's encounter with Cain: “Where is your brother Abel?”

Today, this might go unnoticed in a mortuary record where murder and femicide are common. However, I wish to honor a well-known legend, if I may call it that, where the biblical story is altered. In this version, Cain, after killing his brother and returning home, tells his mother Eve, “Mom, today I invented war,” to which she simply replies, “No, son, today you invented pain!”

MURDER AND PAIN

From the first time I learned about this tradition, I remained thoughtful. The answer or definition of murder as pain, first of all, is not an adjective, but a noun, a state.

With murder, something changes definitively and irrevocably. A logic is broken, one that not even forgiveness can erase, the deep wound that death produces. It is a new experience, one not yet experienced, and one that leaves no solution. Faced with an unforeseen ending, there is no solution for either Cain or his mother Eve... it is an indelible mark that

will accompany him throughout his life. The biblical text of Genesis at this point introduces a new element to pain, as a permanent state of a person, when it describes a mark, a scar that God leaves on Cain, serving as a definitive trace. Applying this introduction to the displaced people of Catatumbo, I am focusing on and delving into some distinctive elements.



**DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE
MIGRATION PHENOMENON
—THE CRY OF THE POOR**

Moving from the specific case of displaced people in Catatumbo to a broader, universal experience, one that transcends national or continental borders and aims to understand the whispers, cries, and noise of an entire displaced population, is an essential step, especially now for a missionary congregation that views forced human mobility as a central aspect of its charism. Having spent years living among migrants, encountering another group with nearly all the characteristics of

acteristics of forced mobility, and even beyond, shifted my perspective.

I am discussing asylum seekers and various forms of displaced people. The very notion of a segment of humanity being compelled to seek assistance, to confront another human being, and to reach out for support on their journey raises profound questions. It calls to mind Hobbes's famous assertion: *homo homini lupus* (man is a wolf to man). How can it be that man, regarded as the pinnacle of creation "*cogito ergo sum*" finds himself needing to defend against another human, as if

confronting a wild beast? This latter category of those seeking refuge may seem like a recent development to many around the globe. Yet, we should not forget that the Bible made provisions for such individuals long ago. In the Book of Numbers, it states, "*You shall establish six cities, three beyond the Jordan and three on this side, for the Israelite, the widow, and the stranger who lives among you, so that anyone who has accidentally killed may find refuge*" (35:14). The Bible emphasizes the concept of unintentional death, highlighting the need for compassion and sanctuary. //



Engaged in a mission - a pathway toward hope

I am Father Hieu, originally from Vietnam and a member of the Congregation of the Scalabrinians. Following my priestly ordination on May 14, 2019, in the Philippines, the Congregation assigned me to serve in the United States, at St. Leo the Great parish in Houston, Texas.

Most parishioners in this parish come from Latin American countries, such as Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Chile. For me, it has been a very enriching, beautiful, and rewarding experience.

I have learned a lot by immersing myself in Latin American culture, including its cuisine and language. After spending five years living and working in Texas, I was sent by the provincial superior to Mexico City. I am currently working at the María Reina Parish in the municipality of Tlalpan.

Alongside my parish duties, I am also studying at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) to deepen my understanding of Spanish and Mexican culture.

Following that, I would like to share my experiences as a foreign missionary in a new country. Moving halfway across the world brings about adjustments and adaptations necessary for a fulfilling and joyful life for both myself and those I serve. Living in a foreign land, separated from family and friends, often stirs feelings of nostalgia, sadness, hopelessness, and even stress related to food, weather, and language. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that with faith and hope in God, He will support me in my circumstances and ministry.



Life as a foreign missionary includes not only darkness but also countless moments of light and joy. These moments inspire hope and happiness, helping me overcome challenges and fueling my motivation to continue my mission. I cherish moments when people express, “Father, I like your Mass; it brings me so much peace and blessing,” or “Thank you, Father, for the advice and prayer for my son to improve.” I recognize that all I have accomplished is due to God. I am His instrument to share His love and mercy with those in need of grace and blessings. I’m touched when people experience God’s blessings in their lives or the lives of their loved ones. This inspires and motivates me to continue my mission, despite my imperfections. Emigrants are known to travel with their dreams, families, and cultural heritage. In my case, I depend on my faith in God, who strengthens me in my ministry. St. Paul says,

“*faith is ‘the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’ (Hebrews 11:1)*

Although we may not always foresee the future, trusting in God and having faith allow Him to reveal His power and bring goodness into our lives. As we embrace the Church’s Jubilee Year of Hope, we should feel hopeful and assured in God’s strength and His work through us.



We are citizens of heaven and of hope.”

Concerning the challenges whether financial, health related, or otherwise these must not prevent us from pursuing a better life and a brighter future, both in this life and beyond. We remain confident in a brighter

tomorrow, rooted in God and His promises. Let us entrust our worries and concerns to the Virgin Mary, confident that God will intercede on our behalf. As “Pilgrims of Hope,” we should reaffirm God’s centrality in our lives, demonstrate mercy as a reflection of divine justice, and dedicate ourselves to creating a more compassionate world. //



**Be brave!
God is good
at all times,
and God is
always good!**

Faith in God - Its main strength in the migration experience

Hello, my name is Santos Humberta Benítez de Alemán, but everyone knows me as Betty. I was born in Sociedad, Morazán, El Salvador, on September 8, 1976. I am the second of three siblings, born to Ermelinda Benítez and José M. Benítez. My mother, Elia Blanco de Benítez, was a domestic worker, and my father, Santos Alberto Benítez, worked as a day laborer.

For a family of five, we received five pounds each of beans, corn, and rice, along with other food supplies. My parents were worried but did their best to cultivate the land. My father started working on the land to grow corn and beans, because bananas are common in Nicaragua, and we were not used to pairing them with other foods. He worked tirelessly in the field, plowing and teaching others how to farm, planting a variety of crops, including corn, oranges, mandarins, and lemons. Over time, mandarins and limes became my favorites.

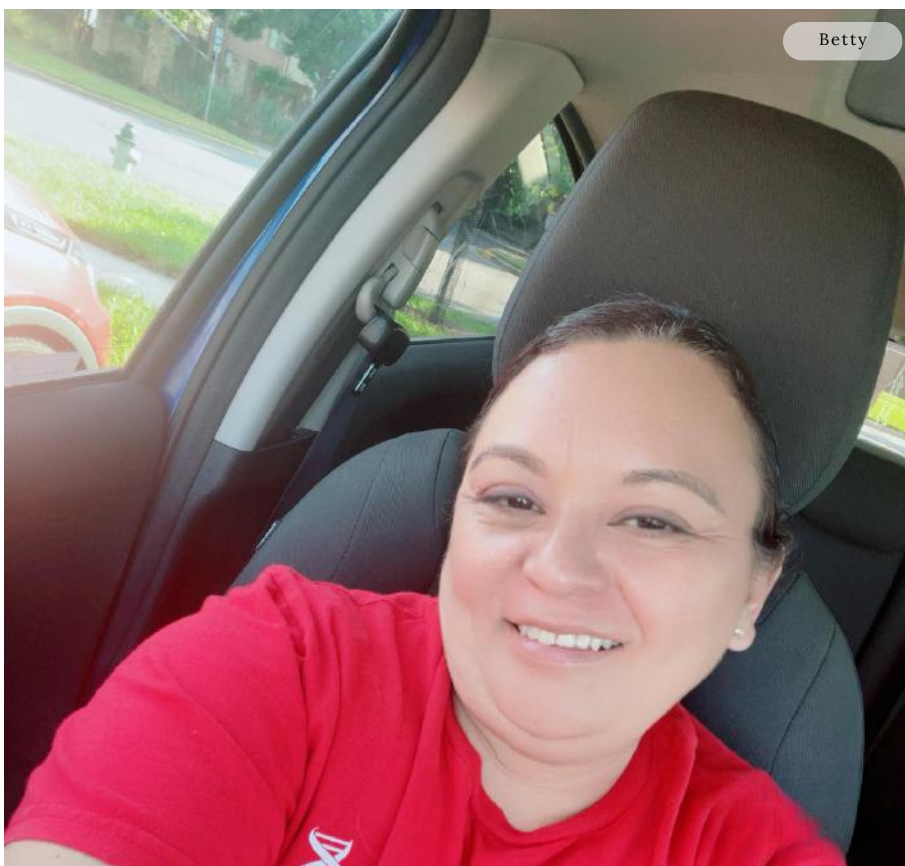
After harvesting the corn, my mother would make tortillas, atol, corn tamales, and montucas. She also cooked for the priests at the parish, and her dishes became favorites among them, including the seminarians.

From Nicaragua, vigorón was another favorite dish. After school, I would always buy it because I loved its taste. I learned to cook vigorón and gallo pinto, traditional Nicaraguan dishes, with my mother, who was the cook for the priests at the church. In addition, I had the opportunity to join a folkloric dance group led by Father Fruto Báez.

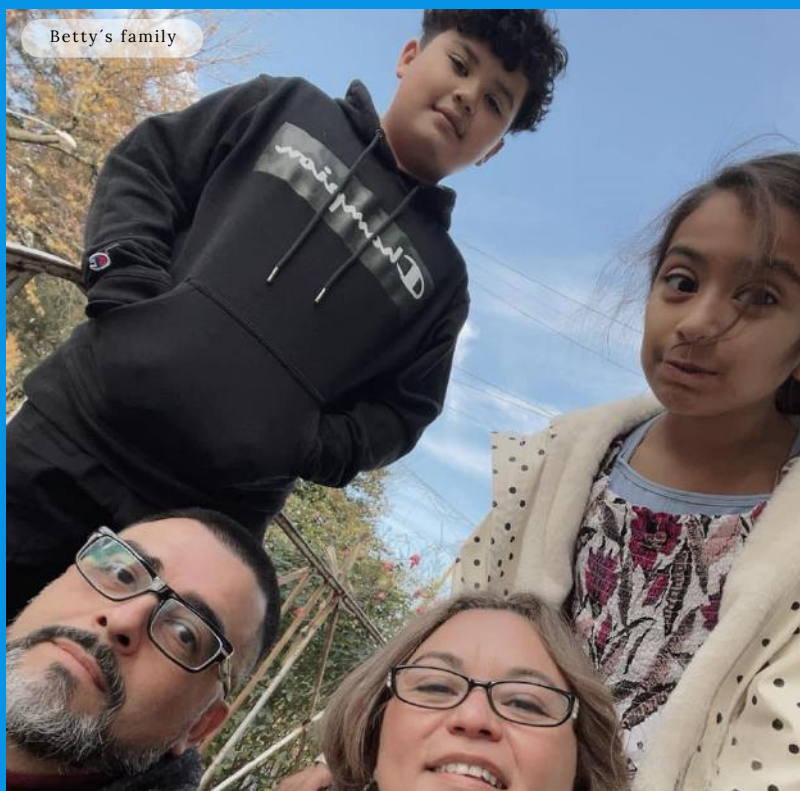
After eight years, we celebrated our First Communion at this parish. Soon after, my father received a letter telling him that my grandmother was critically ill. Three months later, we prepared for confirmation and our trip back to El Salvador.

Sadly, six months after that, my grandmother passed away. A year later, my parents separated when I was just 11 years old. At that age, I was eager to keep up with my education, but it was pretty challenging. We had to walk 45 minutes every day to get to school. We tried for a year, but it was tough for my siblings and me, and the changes we encountered were hard to manage.

My oldest sister discovered through some relatives that moving to the United States was possible, which led her to leave, a giant step with a drastic change. My life changed dramatically when I was invited to



Betty



Betty's family



Betty's family participating at Solemnity of Corpus Christi

Belize with my uncle and his daughters. In Belize, he handed me over to a family who supported my studies. I assisted him by cleaning his house and selling clothes at his boutique, all while studying in the evenings.

After completing my education in Belize, I returned to my home country, El Salvador. With my diploma, I was able to secure a job that allowed me to buy a small house for my mother. However, my salary was not enough to continue my education or cover household expenses. Motivated by a desire for a better future and the opportunities I lacked in my country, I considered asking my siblings for help to travel to the United States. My dream was to pay off my mother's house and further

my education. In 1999, I graduated while raising a one-year-old daughter and being pregnant again, I decided to pursue my goal of moving to the States. I arrived in Maryland in June 1999 and stayed at my siblings' apartment. It was a profoundly moving experience after a separation, though bittersweet, as I had to leave my parents behind. After that, I got a new job at a remittance bank. Although the salary was lower than in other jobs because of the language barrier, I found joy in serving my community. Sending remittances helped me stay connected to El Salvador and support my loved ones. With this income, I was able to pay for my mom's house and continue my

studies. Additionally, I had a second job helping homeless individuals without shelters by guiding them through the process and assisting with finding employment. Eventually, this organization closed and transformed into a clinic that offers more comprehensive support.

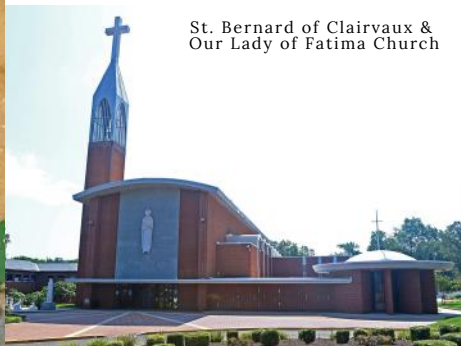
After being in a relationship for over 10 years, I looked for a good job while two more children were born. Now, we have four children: Jennifer, Gisselle, Xavier, and Ailany. We got married in 2012 at St. Bernard of Clairvaux during a community wedding.



Back then, my oldest daughter wanted to be a lector, my second daughter aimed to become an altar server, and I also wished to serve the Church.

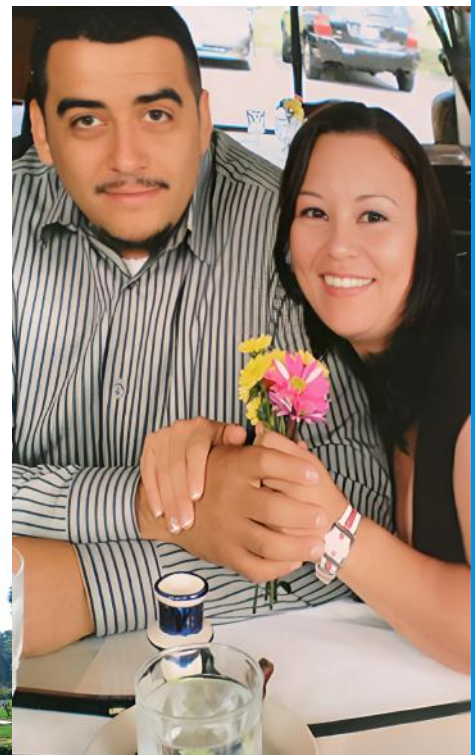
Father Sergio, the pastor, along with Deacon Candelario, who was completing his diaconate at St. Bernard, officiated our wedding in a community ceremony. For me, it was the most memorable wedding of my life, the greatest blessing God has given me. During my pregnancy with my youngest daughter, Ailany, I finished my studies while working two jobs and studying on weekends. I graduated as a licensed practical nurse. By then, I had my green card and had worked at Children's National Hospital in Washington, D.C., for over 14 years. I am dedicated to my profession, helping children, and I see the reflection of Jesus in each of them.

In 2014, my mother-in-law passed away. Despite the pain, my family and I moved on, staying united. We understand that in this country, love can fade and become superficial. Still, we strive to live fully during the limited time we have together, making the most of it.



St. Bernard of Clairvaux & Our Lady of Fatima Church

This country is a land of dreams. It gave my family the chance to find work and opportunities, and above all, my deepest encounter with my faith. We currently have commitments at St. Bernard's Parish. All my children have received the sacraments, and despite living over an hour away, we continue to participate actively in them. This parish truly feels like a second home to me. My two young children are actively involved: Ailani, 12, serves as an altar server, while Xavier assists with catechism. I sing in the choir, and my husband supports me as a fellow catechist. The priests from the Scalabrinian congregation provide exceptional spiritual guidance and are dedicated to serving immigrants. As an immigrant myself, I am deeply committed to helping my community in any way I can. //



Like an inner torch radiates God's light

The last time I had the opportunity to visit Europe, about eight years ago, I noticed a growing public interest in news about events happening in the United States. Modern media networks, for instance, continue to cover presidential campaigns, as well as current issues, such as the ongoing concerns of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency, accompanied by multiple commentaries and opinion pieces that reflect an undercurrent of tension and surveillance. The variety of languages, the aromas of different cuisines, and people from diverse cultures inspired me to reflect on the fabric of Europe.

Most of the time, I would take the train or metro, and trains in Europe are punctual and run like clockwork. Speed is one of the attractions of tourism; it is a key advantage of traveling by train in foreign countries, as you cross from one country to another. Italy and France, for instance, pride themselves on their so-called “train à Grande Vitesse,” which travels at 180 miles an hour or more. While I was on the train heading out to visit another place, I found a small book, along with a newspaper and a magazine, left on the seat. I took the book, and it was a collection of short stories written in English. I began to leaf through the pages and was fascinated to read

Andersen's *The Ugly Duckling*. The story served as a metaphor for inner beauty, particularly for individuals who struggle to belong to a specific family or society, for those who yearn to be treated with equal rights and dignity, and above all, to be happy.

In my mind, my learning tank contained a room, and as I absorbed everything from the story, it led me to see these white swans swimming in the pond symbolized acceptance.

They greeted him and embraced him just like any other swan. In light of that, the epiphany of countless events in institutions, communities, and society also



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reflects the same spirit of acceptance. As the world continues to seek vital answers and resolutions to its problems, we turn to God for assistance in becoming a community of connections, characterized by an attitude of acceptance or a welcoming culture that engages in the life of grace and humility.

Our experience tells us that, at times, God's call causes disruptions or difficulties in our lives. When we face problems in our families or careers, we often

struggle to discern and weigh things using human reasoning. Indeed, leaving home and renouncing our good careers takes courage and commitment. We must risk the future and trust God to guide us on our journey. In this case, we prioritize Christ as our top choice, enabling us to serve others and reflect on our life of witnessing.

Today's rough and tumble of first-world secularism has prompted us to rethink the be-

havior patterns we should embody in our lives, what it means to be human, what we care about, and what we value as we explore the foundational insight of our sacred mission. Each of us has a unique role to play in this world, and God has a message and purpose for every individual to use their gifts and talents for the greater good. We may need a new language, new ways or approaches, and new attitudes, but without a conversion of the heart, we will not be able to attain what we seek to achieve.



In the movie "The Name of the Rose," Umberto Eco puts these words to the lips of William Baskerville, "We are dwarfs... but dwarfs who stand on the shoulders of those giants, and small though we are, we sometimes manage to see farther on the horizon than they." I believe Mr. Eco has captured our insight as men and women in the world alongside others. Although we may be nobody, disfavored by others, or seem insignificant in the community, we share the same calling: a calling to serve others and to commit ourselves to love and service. Its character frame, which supports the experiential balance in describing its essence, allows us to see beyond the limits of our horizons. As Oliver Wendell Holmes famously stated,

“The great living in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving.”

La Comunidad de Laval con la presencia del Cardenal Baggio

El 27 de julio de 2025, la parroquia del Divino Amor en Laval se convirtió en un espacio de esperanza y fraternidad durante el 23° Peregrinaje de Trabajadores Agrícolas y Comunidades Latinoamericanas. En esta jornada, se realizó una emotiva misa de acogida para los trabajadores agrícolas que llegan cada año desde Centroamérica a Quebec. El objetivo de esta gran celebración es resaltar la labor e importancia de su contribución a la comunidad local. La ceremonia fue presidida por el Monseñor Noël Simard, obispo emérito

de Valleyfield, y el padre Pierangelo Paternieri c.s. v. e. Director de la oficina de comunidades culturales de la Diócesis de Montreal, quien brindó palabras de reconocimiento y solidaridad. Entre los invitados especiales estuvo el Cardenal Fabio Baggio, c.s., quien llegó para acompañar y apoyar a las comunidades latinoamericanas en su celebración. La misa incluyó la bendición de las manos de los trabajadores por parte del cardenal Fabio Baggio, como símbolo de su esfuerzo y dedicación. La comunidad presente

expresó su apoyo y gratitud a través de oraciones y gestos de bienvenida. Tras la celebración, se preparó un almuerzo, donde participaron todos los asistentes en un ambiente de compartir y alegría. Durante el encuentro, también se realizaron actividades culturales que resaltaron las tradiciones y raíces latinoamericanas, fortaleciendo así los lazos entre las comunidades. Este acto refleja el compromiso de la comunidad de Laval con los trabajadores agrícolas y su reconocimiento a su valiosa labor en la región. //





Summary at a Glance

On July 27, 2025, the Parish of Divino Amor in Laval became a space of hope and fraternity during the 23rd Pilgrimage of Peasants and Latin American Communities. That day, a moving, inclusive Mass was held for the peasants who arrive each year from Central America to Quebec. The objective of this great celebration is to highlight the work and importance of their contribution to the local community. The ceremony was presided over by Monsignor Noël Simard, Bishop Emeritus of Valleyfield, and Father

Pierangelo Paternieri, c.s. v. e., Director of the Office of Cultural Communities of the Diocese of Montreal, who offered words of recognition and solidarity. Among the special guests was Cardinal Fabio Baggio, who arrived to accompany and support the Latin American communities in their celebration. The Mass included Cardinal Fabio Baggio blessing the farmers' hands as a symbol of their efforts and dedication. The community present expressed their support and gratitude through prayers and

welcoming gestures. After the celebration, a luncheon was prepared, which all attendees enjoyed in a convivial and joyful atmosphere.

Cultural activities were also held during the meeting, highlighting Latin American traditions and roots, thus strengthening the ties between the communities. This event reflects the Laval community's commitment to agricultural workers and its recognition of their valuable work in the region.



The first 100 days of Pope Leo XIV - His voice of hope, dialogue, and welcome resonates

In just over three months since his election, Pope Leo XIV has started shaping a pontificate characterized by a synergism of a pastoral heart and a strong moral voice on one of the world's most crucial issues: the plight of migrants.

A PONTIFICATE BORN IN A TIME OF MOVEMENT

When Cardinal Robert Prevost emerged on the evening of May 8, 2025, as Pope Leo XIV, the world quickly learned that the new pontiff was no stranger to the struggles of the migrants. A native of Chicago and longtime missionary in Perú, he stepped onto the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica with a simple greeting, "Peace be with you," signaling the pastoral tone that would characterize his first days.

From the beginning, migration was not just a side issue but a central theme in his teaching. His words and gestures during the first 100 days reveal a Pope who views migrants not as problems to be managed but as people facing hardships, hope, and gifts that can transform their lives and societies for good.

One of the most symbolic moments came on June 26, 2025, when Pope Leo received bishops from the Scalabrinian





Pope Leo received bishops from the Scalabrinian and Redemptorist Congregations

and Redemptorist congregations at the Vatican. The Scalabrinians, founded by Saint John Baptist Scalabrini, are recognized worldwide for their commitment to migrants and refugees, just as their founder did, at a time when almost no one else cared and when migration policies were nearly nonexistent. In his address, the Pope praised their mission as “a sign of the Spirit at work in the Church,” and reminded them that their charism is more crucial than ever in a world affected by forced displacement. He encouraged them to persevere in building bridges and providing pastoral care to those “who have left everything behind in search of a future.”

“The migrant carries in his heart not only memories of home but seeds of renewal for the communities that welcome him,”

Pope Leo told them, words that resonated far beyond the Apostolic Palace.

A month later, on July 25, his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees deepened this vision. Leo XIV warned of “spiritual desertification” in societies that close themselves off and lose their sense of solidarity. Migrants, he said, often bring with them a resilience and faith that can reignite communities’ spiritual lives.

He called on Catholics not only to welcome migrants but also to “learn from them,” emphasizing that the Church must be a “pilgrim among pilgrims” in the modern world.

While immigration has been a major concern, Pope Leo XIV’s first 100 days also included him speaking out on other pressing issues:

Peace and Diplomacy:

He consistently advocated for peace in conflict areas by encouraging dialogue instead of division.

Ethics of Technology:

He addressed the challenges brought by artificial intelligence, calling for a human-centered approach.

Interreligious dialogue:

Following the footsteps of his predecessors, he met with leaders of other faiths to promote mutual respect.

Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling:

He denounced exploitation networks that target vulnerable migrants, and called for coordinated international efforts to protect victims and dismantle criminal structures.

Yet in nearly every theme, the thread of human dignity and the support for those on the margins remained woven throughout.

A PASTORAL STYLE WITH GLOBAL REACH

Observers note that Leo XIV’s warmth, combined with his missionary background, lends his advocacy for migrants a credibility that resonates with both policymakers and ordinary believers. His visits to communities, his prayer at the tomb of Pope Francis, and his encouragement to religious congregations show a leader who views the Church not as an institution behind walls, but as a field hospital walking with the vulnerable.

As Pope Leo XIV moves beyond his first 100 days, his vision is becoming clearer: a Church willing to engage and unafraid to get its hands dirty in serving humanity’s most urgent needs. For the Scalabrinians and others dedicated to migrant ministry, his papacy offers not only affirmation but a renewed mandate, rooted in the Gospel, focused on the margins, and open to the world. In his own words:

“When we welcome the stranger, we welcome Christ. And in doing so, we may discover that the one we thought was poor has brought us the greatest treasure: hope.”

Course in Scalabrinian Spirituality held

The permanent formation in Scalabrinian Spirituality took place throughout June 2025 in Italy. This year's participation included 13 missionaries from different regions and provinces of the congregation. It was a month dedicated to deepening the understanding of Scalabrinian spirituality and exploring the foundation's history and mission within the church.

The program began with the first two weeks spent at the Mother House in Piacenza, where participants started our integration. We had the opportunity to share our vocation stories and parish ministries or mission experiences from the early years as priests.

Scalabrinian Fathers, based at the Mother House, such as Fr. Sandro Gazzola, Fr. Graziano Battistella, and Fr. Mario Toffari, shared insights and knowledge from their mission work and expertise in migration studies.

We also had the opportunity to visit historical places like the Church of San Antonino, where Bishop Scalabrini celebrated the sending of his first missionaries to the Americas, and the Cathedral of Piacenza, where the Founder's tomb is located.

We visited Fino Mornasco in Como, Scalabrini's birthplace and his early years, where he first served as a priest and professor at the seminary. His episcopal ministry was a trove of historical accounts, emphasizing his preferential option for helping poor Italians leaving Italy. Milan station drew our attention to how St. Scalabrini

started his foundation as a religious congregation.

After spending two weeks in Piacenza, we visited Bassano del Grappa, where we met the elderly priests who have retired from their ministry. We had a great opportunity to hear about their mission experiences around the world.



The remaining two weeks brought us to the General Government in Rome, where Fr. Giovanni Terragni shared the history of the first missionaries, Fr. Aldo Skoda gave a Workshop on the congregational missions, Fr. Marcio Toniazzo talked about the SIMN (Scalabrini International Migration Network), its engagements and priorities for the Scalabrinian missions in the world. Brother Gioacchino Campese provided a tour of the Scalabrini Mission in Rome, which accommodates migrants and refugees. We also met with some members of the General Administration. During our stay in Rome, we visited the four major Basilicas: St. Peter (San Pietro), St. Paul (San Paolo), St. Mary Major (Santa Maria Maggiore), and St. John Lateran (Laterano). On the occasion of the Episcopal Jubilee, a meeting took place with the Scalabrinian bishops in Castel Gandolfo. It was attended by Cardinals Silvano Tomasi and Fabio Baggio, who also facilitated a meeting at the Dicastery for Human Promotion of the Vatican and discussed the social work that the Church carries out worldwide. //



A special mass celebrated in Alligator Alcatraz

Over 100 people joined Father Frank O'Loughlin, founder of the Maya-Guatemalan Center in Lake Worth Beach, to celebrate his Diamond Jubilee on August 17 outside the detention center known as "Alcatraz of the Everglades" in Florida. At 83, Father O'Loughlin marked 60 years of ministry, much of it spent defending farmworkers and undocumented immigrants. A Mass was held, concelebrated with Scalabrinian Father Moacir Balen, who prayed peacefully and called for justice and dignity for detainees.

In his message, Father Frank compared the struggles of immigrants to the biblical liberation of Israel from slavery in Egypt, calling detained parents "heroes" for seeking a better future for their families.

Members of the Maya-Guatemalan community also shared stories of relatives inside the prison and the pain caused by family separations. The gathering combined prayer, protest, and celebration, giving prominence to O'Loughlin's long service and the ongoing struggle for immigrant rights in the United States. //



Interprovincial meeting of Young Scalabrinian Religious in Chicago

The Young Religious Missionaries of Saint Charles, Scalabrinians, convened their annual interprovincial meeting (St. Charles Borromeo and Saint John the Baptist provinces in North America) from July 14-18, 2025, in Chicago, IL. Forty-four young Scalabrinian priests, with 1-10 years of ordination, participated in this event.

This year's theme focused on the Jubilee Year, emphasizing their journey in charity as pilgrims of hope. It was described as a time of fraternal sharing through activities like prayer, fellowship, and discussing their life's challenges as missionaries. Their core insights centered on love and service, particularly in the context of spiritual accompaniment, ongoing formation and preparing for future challenges they face in their mission with migrants.

These elements help shape their consecrated lives. In addition, group dynamics encouraged them to engage in different groups and appreciate the diversity and richness of cultures among themselves.

As part of their takeaway from the meeting, they recommended holding regular meetings and creating a support network to strengthen their Scalabrinian identity within multicultural



communities. Father Horecio Carlos Anklan and Father Giovanni Bizzoto, the two provincial superiors, attended the event.

On the final day, however, Cardinal Silvano Maria Tomasi made a surprise visit to wish them well at their gathering. //

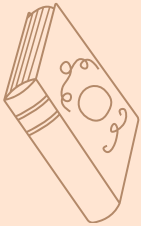


A global movement

Seen as a continuing temptation
for people who come from poor nations;
crossing the border or job application,
enables them to fulfill their ambition.



Like a quest for the Holy Grail,
there's an inner sanctuary deep within.
It's where one's encounter prevails,
to abide by truth and divine condition.



Different races and cultures
dream of an answer to their longing.
It's a difficult road to walk through,
filled with thorns and potholes in a symbolic picture.

It's a common phenomenon
the countries of receiving culture,
try their best to accommodate them all.
However, difficult as it may seem to occur
They might as well stick to their principle.

A global phenomenon, worldwide flavor!
It's keeping us all in touch with migrants' cultures.
Their journey continues, and their sufferings attune
to the whole spectrum of human migration.



Thorns and Thistles

Scalabrini Mobile

Find out everything about our Congregation in our app.

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- A bit of Apologetics.
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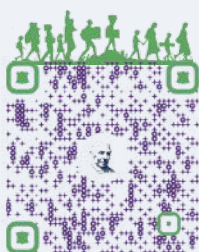
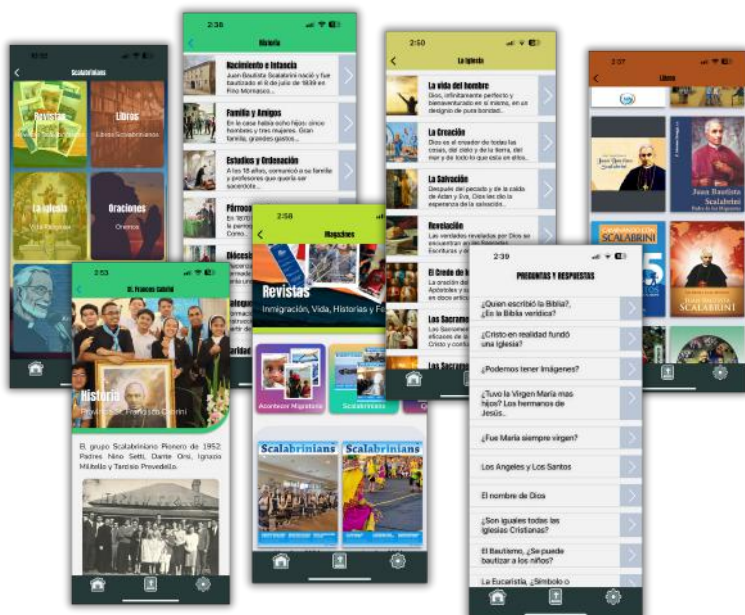
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Missionaries of Saint Charles Borromeo
PROVINCE

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Scalabrinians



Go, generous Apostles of Jesus Christ, to where He calls you.
Immense hardships await you, no small dangers, multiple
tribulations, struggles and continuous sacrifices, but do not
fear: the cross accompanies you.”

(St. Scalabrini at the departure of the Missionaries,
from S. Calógero, Milano, 06.10.1884)

