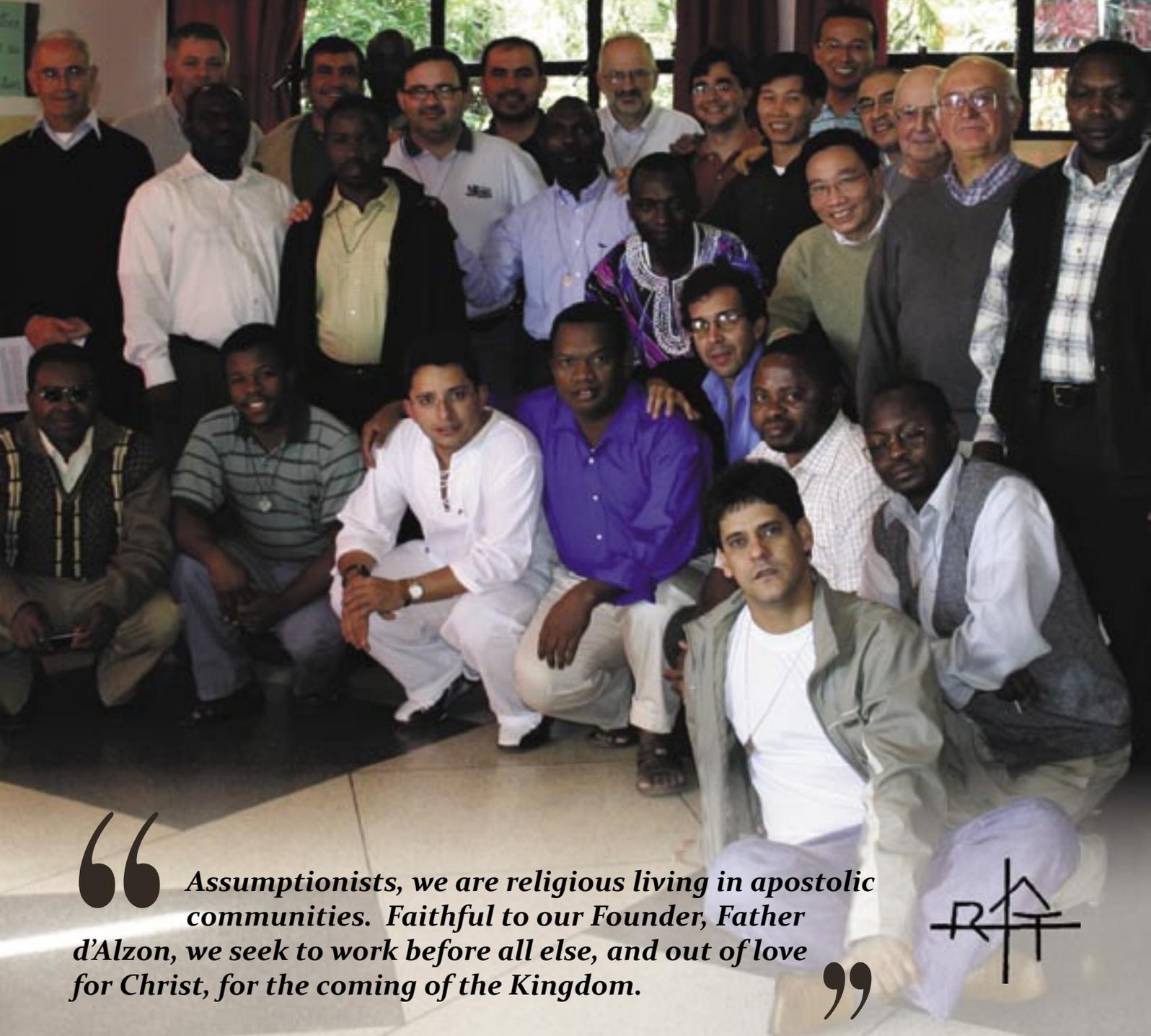


# *The* Assumptionists

*Passionate about God and Man*



“ Assumptionists, we are religious living in apostolic communities. Faithful to our Founder, Father d’Alzon, we seek to work before all else, and out of love for Christ, for the coming of the Kingdom. ”



# The Assumption

## HISTORY OF A PASSION

### *for God and for man.*

The Augustinians of the Assumption, known as the Assumptionists, are religious brothers and priests who live in an apostolic community. Faithful to their founder, Father Emmanuel d'Alzon, they want, before all else, and out of love for Christ, to work for the coming of the Kingdom in and around themselves.



The Assumptionists were founded in 1845 by Father Emmanuel d'Alzon (1810-1880) who at the time was Vicar General of the diocese of Nîmes (France) and director of the College of Nîmes, Assumption College. For that reason they are called Assumptionists.

During his century, the 19th, France underwent many political upheavals and several revolutions (1830, 1848, 1870) that were often characterized by bloody repressions of demonstrations by the working-class.



The Church was concerned. Heirs of the Revolution, those involved in the social movement wanted a society founded on the rights of man and not on those of God.

*"Today," said Father d'Alzon, "God is being driven out of the State, Society, Family, and Morality. Every day, this is becoming more and more evident."*  
(E. d'Alzon)

Father d'Alzon's main concern was to re-give God his rights. It was this passion for God that led him to found a Congregation. Since its beginnings, the *raison d'être* of the Assumptionists is to promote the love of God by extending his Kingdom (A.R.T., Thy Kingdom Come).



The first generation around Father d'Alzon (1879)

“  
*Our spiritual life, our religious nature, our raison d'être as Augustinians of the Assumption is found in our motto: Adveniat Regnum Tuum. The coming of the reign of God in our hearts ... the coming of the Reign of God in the world ..., what can be more matter-of-fact, I dare say, than this form of love of God?*”  
 (E. d'Alzon)

### One passion, three loves!

The Assumptionists live this love of God by loving Jesus Christ and what he loved the most in the world, the Church and the Virgin Mary:

*“If, to this principal love, you add the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Blessed Virgin his Mother, and of the Church his spouse, you will know in its simplest expression the spirit of Assumption.”* (E. d'Alzon)

### Ideas that have nourished it throughout its history

Heirs of the charism and of the spirit of their Founder, the sons of Father d'Alzon want to be men of prayer and witnesses of God in their time, sometimes by adopting the means used by their Founder, sometimes by creating others, according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Today they are present on 5 continents and in 30 countries.

1. England
2. Netherlands
3. Germany
4. Belgium
5. France
6. Spain
7. Italy
8. Greece
9. Bulgaria
10. Romania
11. Turkey
12. Russia
13. Israel
14. Togo
15. D.R Congo



16. Tanzania
17. Kenya
18. Madagascar
19. Colombia
20. Ecuador
21. Brazil
22. Argentina
23. Chile
24. Mexico
25. United States
26. Canada
27. Korea
28. Philippines
29. Vietnam
30. New Zealand

*A passion held by*

# MEN OF FAITH

*and nourished by prayer*

“

*Christ is the one who gathers us together. We live in community according to the spirit of St. Augustine: ‘Before all else, live in a household of perfect harmony, having but one heart and one mind intent on God.’”*  
(Rule of Life)



Community of Kwangju (Korea)



Community of Rome (Italy) at prayer

**Prayer is difficult for everyone!**

*Prayer is one of the motives that prompted me to enter religious life. As a matter of fact, I realized that, at home, I didn't have enough time to pray. I needed well-structured and specific times for prayer. I actually found that time in the Assumptionist religious life... When I pray, I meet my God and I dialogue with him; I speak to him, and he listens to me...*

Antoine Kasereka  
Muhindo (DRC)

**Together they search for God.**



The community of Florence (Italy) during the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

**And together they listen to him.**



The Adveniat House community (Philippines)



# “For me, Christ is my life”

*After having spent two years at the center in Juvisy (Paris region) [...], I wanted to deepen the direction of my life, so I requested to leave for one year as a volunteer. It was in Canada that I discovered community life and its demands. It was there that I discovered Saint Augustine, but also the face of a Church that is wounded, but to a lesser degree than it had been in France. What prompted me to become an Assumptionist was that you cannot discover God by yourself. What was lacking before was the presence of others who are also searching for God. For that reason, the Gospel of Saint John helped me a lot. When the Greeks were searching to meet Jesus, they approached Philip saying “we would like to see Jesus,” and with Andrew they approached Jesus. For me this passage was the sign of community life: to ask others to see Christ and to help others to see Christ.*

Philippe Berrached (France)



Lucian Dinca with Philippe Berrached (in Quebec)

## **Their vowed life is at the service of Christ and the Church**

*Perpetual profession in France*



*“In the presence of my brothers, in your hands, Father ... (representing the Superior General), for love of Christ and to extend his Reign, I, Brother... promise God to live in poverty, in chastity, and in religious obedience until death, according to the Rule of Saint Augustine and the Rule of Life of the Assumptionists.”*



*The vowed life is the basic reason for my choice of religious life. Following Christ more closely, announcing the Gospel, serving Jesus in the poor and the sick, and living a happy life were my reasons for entering religious life. I understood that achieving all of this would be possible only in the family of the Augustinians of the Assumption because I saw the way they were living.*  
Kakule Mutahya Augustin  
(D.R. Congo)

# *A passion lived in* **an apostolic community**

**“The coming of the Reign of Jesus Christ for us and our neighbor is already taking place in our common life” (Rule of Life)**

## **During community meetings**



*The Casa Manuel community (Mexico)*

In a spirit of openness and frankness, everyone is responsible for the smooth running of the community

## **During meals**

which for the Assumptionists are occasions to strengthen their ties in simplicity, according to Assumption's traditional family spirit.



*The Anakao community (Madagascar)*

## **By being open and listening to each other**



*A Malagasy, a Colombian and a Spaniard*



*Austin House community (Tanzania)*

## During times of relaxation



Novices during an outing (France)

At Assumption, priests and non-priests, young and old, black and white, all are brothers and follow the teaching of Christ according to the spirit of Saint Augustine, whatever their age, culture, race or origin. Together, they discern the means of responding to the challenges of the world. Yes, it is this passion for the Reign of God that transforms their cultural diversity into richness.



Julian (Romania) and Roger (Nairobi)



The Saigon community (Vietnam)

**“In a divided world, our common life bears witness that Christ is alive among us, and it unites us for the proclamation of the Gospel.” (Rule of Life)**



José Manuel Oyakawa Araoz, 25 years old, Peruvian by birth, but a professed religious of the Province of France.

*[What prompted me to become an Assumptionist was] before all else, the way in which all the members of the community are united in the same spirit. Different countries, different cultures, and different languages come together to walk in the footsteps of Christ. It's a richness to be able to share with others and especially to learn from others. Each Assumptionist I've met so far has brought something to my life. From the first moment one enters an Assumptionist community, one senses immediately the devotedness of all. Each one is ready to give what he has and what he is. In turn, I want to do the same thing in order to collaborate in the coming of the Reign of God.*



*I have just moved to the Cachan community, rue de la Marne (France). Before that, I lived for eleven months with the Morère community. It was one of the most international Assumptionist communities with brothers from Peru, Egypt, Vietnam, China, Korea, and also France. Though we hailed from different countries and different cultures, we lived harmoniously in this community. I was able to discover there a new dimension of the Assumptionists, that of an always stronger internationalization. Its members took interest in me who came from a small country, Korea. When they watched the news on television or the commercials regarding Korean businesses, they would share their opinions and their thoughts. I too became interested in what was happening in the society and the Church in Europe, in the Church in China, in the Church in Vietnam, etc. And so I became interested in international relations. I believe it is a great richness to be able to come in contact in his way with other cultures. These differences are a great treasure, though on occasion I had a few small problems, e.g., when to address people as “vous” and when to address them as “tu.”*

Testimony of William, a postulant, between Leo Brassard and Joseph Baik Hô.

**Their secret: simplicity, humility, frankness, transparency, openness of spirit, cordiality.**



Young Assumptionist priests (Bulengera, D.R. Congo)



Formation community in Chile:  
how beautiful is our diversity!



Novitiate of Juvisy (France)

**“No one can experience the joy of this life without committing himself to it totally.”**

# The Reign of God

## AROUND US

*A contagious passion!*



### By teaching in all its forms

Still today, education in all its forms is one of the ways in which the Assumptionists seek to evangelize and bear witness to Christ the Savior in today's world.

“

*I cannot love Jesus Christ without wanting all creatures to love him.*

*That is why my life must be apostolic.”*

(E. d'Alzon)



Emmanuel d'Alzon College (Colombia)



Emmanuel d'Alzon among his students at the College of Nîmes (France)

“

*Our motto, 'Thy Kingdom Come,' prompts us to work for the coming of the Reign of Christ in us and in the world. Just as the Father sent him, so Christ sends us, with the promise of his Spirit, to serve our brothers and sisters by proclaiming the Gospel.” (Rule of Life)*



*To accept to work as an academic of the Emmanuel d'Alzon Higher Institute of Butembo (known as the ISEAB) is first and foremost to recognize that I will be both "giving and receiving." I rediscover Christ on the faces of persons who are eager to be educated. There is an ardent fire of love burning deep within me that pushes me to work night and day to answer the demands of education. I sense the need to collaborate with my colleagues and to actively participate in the dialogue between teachers and students. I feel as if Father d'Alzon were encouraging me to be closer to the students. That is why I always organize a "d'Alzonian meeting" with the students. As an educator, I discover my human frailty and my shortcomings, and in so doing I learn how to become a responsible religious. I try to help the ISEAB to become an active member of the Reign in a world that is undergoing massive sociological changes and that is putting human dignity in peril. I am convinced that the ISEAB will meet the expectations of our founding Father.*



Jean-Vianney Thaliwatheka with students (ISEAB)

## Whether they are teachers, professors or Assumptionists work first of all for

The Assumptionists teach in or animate various educational institutions: two universities, Assumption College in the USA, and another in the D.R. Congo; a dozen or so colleges in seven countries; technical schools, primary schools, schools that teach adults how to read and write, etc. Others are student chaplains.



Students at the College in Lota (Chile)



ISEAB, Emmanuel d'Alzon Higher Institute of Butembo

## researchers, the Reign of God



Bishop Canonne College (Madagascar)

“

*To form Jesus Christ in souls, that is the only goal of education; that is what must constitute the apostolic character of my life.” (E. d’Alzon)*



Assumption College, Worcester (United States)

## By the media

In time and space, in the north as well as in the south, the media are for an Assumptionist a way of re-giving God his place in the hearts of men and women and in society.



Michel Kubler, Journalist for La Croix, France

Today, the Bayard Group, present in France and internationally, is a flagship of the Catholic press, with for example the daily newspaper *La Croix*, the weekly *Pèlerin*, the *Documentation Catholique*, the monthly *Living with Christ*, etc. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Assumptionists animate and administer a radio station known as Radio Moto.



Radio Moto (D.R. Congo)

## By youth ministry

Since their foundation, the Assumptionists have been bringing the message of the Gospel to young people. Still today they animate numerous activities: student centers (like *Adveniat*, the Catholic youth hostel in Paris or the youth center in Blaj, Romania), cultural centers for youth, sessions and retreats, volunteer programs in mission countries, etc.



*João Gomes et Célio Firmo with young people in Eugenópolis (Brazil)*



*Youth Hostel, Paris*

## By pilgrimages

Every year the Assumptionists animate the International Pilgrimage to Lourdes (France), as well as many others, like to the Holy Land



*Lourdes (France), during the national pilgrimage.*

“

*Our common prayer is that of the Church. Through it, the community celebrates its faith and opens itself to the Spirit in view of the mission.”*

*(Rule of Life)*

# Missionaries

## BEYOND OUR BORDERS

Father d'Alzon was a son of Nîmes, but a Catholic at heart. During almost all of his life, d'Alzon served his Church as Vicar General. In like manner, many Assumptionists are at the service of local churches.



Parish of Kijenge, Arusha (Tanzania)



Plovdiv (Bulgaria)

However, after having founded the Assumptionists, d'Alzon wanted his sons to become broad-minded. At a time when there were only about 15 religious in the Congregation, d'Alzon did not hesitate to answer the call of the Church of his time to send religious to foreign countries. Accordingly, he sent religious to Turkey and Bulgaria to work for the unity of the Church.

Still today, following the example of the Founder, the heart of an Assumptionist is restless as long as God remains on the fringes of society. Impassioned for the Reign of God, the Assumptionists are not afraid to reach out and to open new communities in distant countries despite their small numbers:  
In Vietnam, the Philippines, and Togo.



The Council of the Congregation visits Buddhist monks (South Korea)





*One of the things I admire about the Assumptionists is their ability to “think Church.” Father Emmanuel d’Alzon loved the Church so much that he encouraged his religious to have “a heart as big as this ocean which is the Church.” And this love for the Church gives Assumptionists great apostolic freedom: written press, teaching, education in all of its forms, a great preoccupation for Christian unity, the animation of pilgrimages, chaplaincies, etc. To see big, to see wide, to see far, to see deeply, that is what touches me humanly, spiritually and intellectually about d’Alzon and his heirs. For two years, I have been sharing community life with four other brothers: a Frenchman, a Malagasy, and two Congolese. It’s with them that I’m trying to discover the traces of God in the lives of men and women in the midst of events that are taking place in the country where we are living: Togo. It’s a community in the process of being founded. I marvel at seeing my vision of God and man becoming broader as I come in contact with brothers of other cultures with whom I am living. The apostolic work we are doing in the parish, with youth and the media, in the spirit and in line with the charism of Assumption, stimulates me to move ahead in this adventure in the footsteps of Fr. d’Alzon.*

Jean-Paul Sagadou, Assumptionist from Burkina Faso and missionary in Togo

## ***“I must love this world so that I can evangelize it” (E. d’Alzon)***



Jean-Paul Sagadou (Burkinabe) with young Togolese in Sokodé



Frans Desmet, Belgian, missionary in Kwangju (South Korea)



Gilles Blouin (on right), Canadian, missionary in the Philippines

“

*Just as the Father sent him, so Christ sends us, with the promise of his Spirit, to serve our brothers and sisters by proclaiming the Gospel.”*



Paul Van Dong with the postulants (Vietnam)



Michaël, Congolese Assumptionist and missionary in Spain



Marco Silva during his first Mass (Ecuador)

*...I had only a rather vague idea about the missions. I thought, as do many other young people, that the missions meant going to work among the black people of Africa, very far from home. What a surprise I had one day when, on the website of the Augustinians of the Assumption, I saw the work they are doing among the natives in the region of Veracruz and Oaxaca, to the east and south of Mexico. All this work gave me a broad understanding of the missions not in far-distant countries but in one's own country. That's what brought me to contact the community of Casa Manuel, particularly the director of vocations, in order to learn about the congregation and to begin the process of discernment. Today I am conducting my apostolate in that same region (once a month), accompanying groups that were created some time ago in these outlying districts by Assumptionist missionaries... I continue to discover the true meaning of missions in my life, which serves as the driving force that is pushing me toward the construction of the Reign in me and around me.*

Carlos Danilo A. Lemus (Salvadoran  
postulant in Mexico)

# Different apostolates but with the of TRUTH, UNITY



Jesús Tlecuile Mixteco (Mexico)

*What attracted me about the Augustinians of the Assumption, better known as the Assumptionists? Working in groups. With this same spirit, they work in inner-cities where precisely people need this type of work to accompany them and to be with them as they struggle to live each day. This spirit of work impressed and finally led me to want to be like them. That is why I contacted them in order to discover how they did this work and to work one day with them, especially in the marginalized milieus of what we often call natives. I belong myself to this group of natives. Though I underlined only one aspect of the Assumptionists, there are also many others, among them faith, simplicity, fraternity, hospitality, attention to the needs of the poor, work with young people (especially in education)... I believe that what motivates them to do such work are the words which I found in their Rule of Life: "Our communities wish to share the joys and hopes, the sorrows and anxieties, of the men and women of their time, especially of the poor and of all 'those who hunger and thirst for justice.'" The Assumptionists do all of this prompted by a doctrinal, social and ecumenical spirit. The most important here is the love of God among the men and women we meet on our way with Jesus.*

In the footsteps of Christ sent by the Father to gather men and women into a single family, the Assumptionists want to be:  
**Men of communion and unity.**



The beatification of the Bulgarian Assumptionist priests (Kamen, Pavel and Josaphat) May 26, 2002. They gave their life for the unity of Christians in the Near East.

Like Christ,  
the Assumptionists want to be  
**protagonists of a world that is more just and  
more supportive of the poorest.**

# same spirit and SOLIDARITY

For the love of God and to protect human rights, they are ready to sacrifice their own life.

“

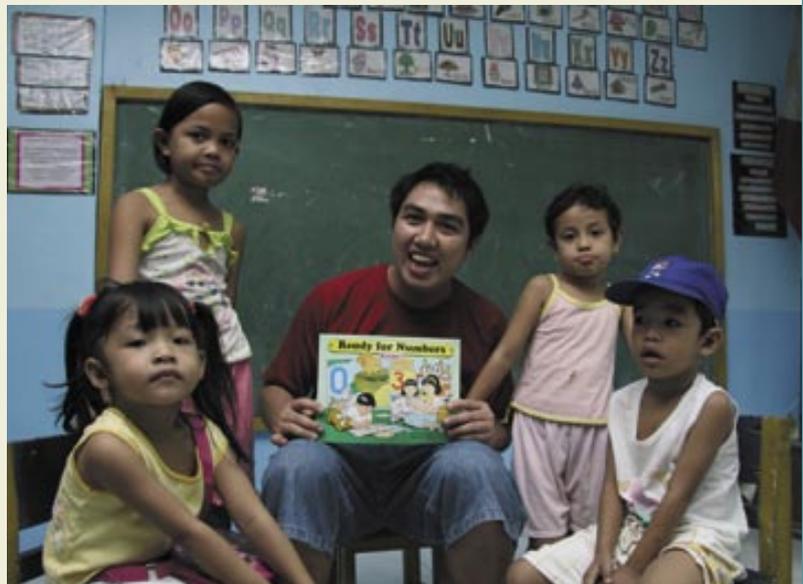
*The Assumptionist community exits for the coming of the Kingdom. The spirit of the Founder impels us to embrace the great causes of God and of man, and to go wherever God is threatened in man and man threatened as the image of God.” (Rule of Life)*



Each Saturday in Butembo (D.R. Congo), the novices visit the prisoners with whom they share the Word of God before sharing a meal.



On board the Péniche (Barge), a hospitality center for migrants (France)



A young Philippine man with children (Manila)



Duong, Vietnamese postulant  
*What attracts me to Assumption is a sentence like: “to go wherever God is threatened in man and man threatened as the image of God” (Rule of Life). In living with Assumptionist brothers, I am discovering that Assumption wants to be close to the poor and to accompany youth. The fraternal life in community is also very important for me.*



Guy Leroy of the Maranatha community in Brussels

***I live my vocation in peace and confidence thanks to the support of the religious and the laity.***

*I first lived with a happy-go-lucky attitude, loved by my parents and surrounded by my brothers and sisters. After my higher education and my involvement in business world as an accountant responsible for data processing, I asked myself the question about the meaning of my life. Living moments of solitude and emptiness, I met Christians who were happy, just simply happy. I then decided not to leave them, at the detriment of my other relations. It was there that God came to get me. With thirty years of hindsight, I dare to say that it was the fervent Christian community that led me to real faith and helped me to discover the concrete calls of the Lord.... The decisive call came from an Assumptionist who invited me to work with him, and nothing more. At that very moment, I, who usually need time to think things over, understood that in addition to the administrative work involved, it was all my life offered to God that was at play. I said yes and still today I am happy to have made this decision. Surrounded by brotherly love in a community of religious and devoted laypeople who are prayerful and stimulating, I have lived in peace and confidence the various steps of my religious vocation. Even when I accepted responsibilities within my congregation, laypeople and religious were there to support me.*

## Alliance

### WITH THE LAITY

This passion to put God back in our societies, in our families, and in our relations is not a private affair. It should be the passion of all Christians.

Together with Father d'Alzon and the Assumptionist religious, laypeople are searching to re-give to Jesus Christ and to what he loved most, the Church and the Virgin Mary, their place in society. At the college in Nîmes, the birthplace of Assumption, laypeople and religious had been moved by the same desire: the Kingdom of God.



Laity and religious of Buenos Aires (Argentina) during one of the canonical visitations.

Still today, wherever the Spirit wants Assumption to be present, laypeople and religious, hand in hand, are happy to support each other and drink from the same source.

**At Assumption, there is therefore place for everyone: young people, adults, religious, and laypeople!**



Members of the International Lay-Religious Commission



Romain, a young French volunteer, gives courses to the postulants and candidates (Saigon, Vietnam)



In Nîmes, religious and laypeople reflect on the Alliance

Guillaume and Adeline testify:  
*Since we've become Lay Assumptionists, our daily life has changed a lot. It is out of love for the Assumptionist triple love that we conduct our apostolate at the parish, in our neighborhood, in our group, and within our family where we devote ourselves to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Savior. We alleviate as best we can the misery of the children in need and of the street children. The simplicity advocated by the Assumptionists means that we regularly share our meals with the needy as well as with the servants. Prayer, through the intercession of the Very Reverend Father Emmanuel d'Alzon, doesn't cease to shower us with surprises that make us happy.*



The Couple Guillaume-Adeline, Lay Assumptionists, Goma, with street children surrounding them. (D.R. Congo)

# Assumption

## IS A BIG FAMILY!

Besides the Augustinians of the Assumption, this passion for the coming of the Reign of God is also shared by consecrated women:



### **The Religious of the Assumption**

founded in 1839 by Mother Marie-Eugénie Milleret, today Saint Marie-Eugénie. They are involved mainly in teaching institutions, spiritual centers, and in faith education in all its forms.  
([www.assumpta.fr](http://www.assumpta.fr))



### **The Oblates of the Assumption**

founded in 1865 by Father Emmanuel d'Alzon and Mother Marie Correnson. Their foundation is linked to the Near Eastern Mission. They work in schools, orphanages and hospitals.  
([www.oblates-assumption.org](http://www.oblates-assumption.org))



### **The Little Sisters of the Assumption**

founded in 1865 by Father Etienne Pernet, one of the first disciples of Father Emmanuel d'Alzon, and by Sister Antoinette Fage. They seek to "to procure the glory of God by the salvation of the poor and little ones."  
([www.assumption-psa.org](http://www.assumption-psa.org))



### **The Orants of the Assumption**

founded by Isabelle de Clermont Tonnerre and Father François Picard (Assumptionist) in 1896. This is the most contemplative branch of the Assumption Family. They carry out their apostolate especially in spiritual centers and small fraternities. ([lesorantes@wanadoo.fr](mailto:lesorantes@wanadoo.fr))

**As in a family, they all have the same passion: the coming of the Reign of God in and around themselves!**