

# XIX General Chapter

# Memories of an Apostle



**O**n June 16, 2024, the SVD General Superior Fr. Budi Kleden, opened the 19th General Chapter at Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi, Italy. The theme for this chapter is ***"Your light must shine before others", Faithful and creative disciples in a wounded world.*** 120 Confreres representing 60 Provinces, Regions and Missions (PRMs) are taking part. Also participating in the chapter are 15 others drawn from different groups including the General Administration, SSPS Sisters, Lay Partners from four SVD zones and facilitators.

In total there are 135 capitulars from 31 nationalities. Each of the capitular comes with a backpack full of the wounds of the people from his or her missions, but also with a heart full of hope and expectations for creative responses to take back home from the chapter. About 80% of the capitulars are participating in a chapter for the first time. During the Chapter which will last for four weeks, the capitulars will visit the Holy Father to listen to his concerns and appeal to the SVD society participation in the Church's efforts to heal the wounds of the world.

Centro Ad Gentes is an historical place because it takes its name from the Vatican II document Ad Gentes which was drafted here, with Pope Benedict XVI being one of the member of the drafting committee.



**O**n June 11, 2024, we marked the 10th Death Anniversary of Fr. Augustine Rodrigues. His family members who had travelled from India, accompanied by some confreres and parishioners from Soweto and Kayole parishes celebrated memorial mass at the SVD Cemetery in Katani. Before beginning the Mass, everyone present shared their personal experience with Fr. Augustine. All described him as a true missionary who manifested authentic characteristics of an Apostle of the love of God in his mission.



On the following Saturday 15th, more parishioners joined the family and confreres celebrated another Memorial Mass in Soweto parish which was founded by Fr. Augustine. He himself worked there for many years helping especially the poor children get education and welcomed the refugees from Rwanda helping them to settle and become part of the community. In his life, he inspired many people with his love, care and most of all his humility.

Fr. Augustine was also the Vocation Director of many Kenya SVD confreres working in different places in the world. May God his loving soul continue to rest in eternal peace.