

**The Missionaries of St. Charles - Scalabrinians**  
**St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Province - Australia & Asia**  
Scalabrini Vocation Office - Philippines



# EXODUS

## Magazine - 2023



**Journey with**  
**ST. SCALABRINI**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Exodus Magazine is a vocation-oriented magazine directed to young people and, like a trusted friend wants to help young men in their discernment process through practical articles that will guide them to understand the meaning of the Religious Vocation, its implication and skills

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# **EDITORIAL**

**T**he canonization of St. Scalabrini on October 9, 2022 marked an important milestone in the journey of Scalabrinian missionaries around the world. This event did not only serve a great inspiration to us Scalabrinians, but it also strengthened our desire to make known his legacy of loving and serving God through the migrants. In spreading the charism throughout the world, more care and love could be extended to our brothers and sisters who are working in foreign lands, especially those who experience the ordeal of migration. And, for all Christians to emulate St. Scalabrini as a model of holiness.

On October 9-14, 2023, the Symposium on the Scalabrinian Spirituality was convened in Rome. It was indeed a precious gathering for the whole Scalabrinian family. There, more of St. Scalabrini Spirituality were discovered and learned - a perfect way to deepen our Scalabrinian way of living, attuned accordingly to the spiritual legacy of our founder.

In this regard, the theme of this year's edition highlights the "Journey with St. Scalabrini". This is intended to invite all to journey with St. Scalabrini in order to discover and learn from his spiritual legacy, a way to holiness and service for the migrants. Also, this is to inspire young people to look more closely at the Scalabrinian vocation and mission for the migrants.

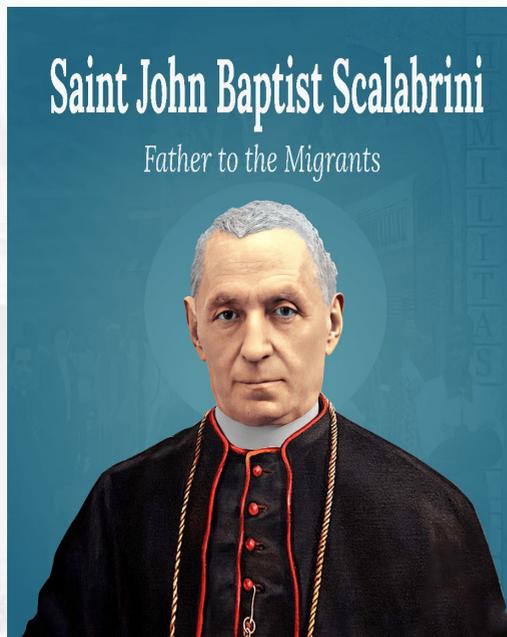
This edition features sharing and reflections on the Scalabrinian Spirituality, vocation, and also a glimpse into the reality of migration in the Philippines today. What is inside this issue? A summary of the spiritual legacy of St. Scalabrini from the Symposium. Fr. Coros Edwin's reflection on the symposium, Fr. Roger Manalo's sharing on what is real about Filipino migrants today, a lay Scalabrinian Mr. John Calabrese's experience on his journey to Rome for the symposium. Finally, Fr. Nguyen Hoang Khanh Huy's vocation story.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and be inspired to know more about our Scalabrinian Spirituality. May the respective sharing and reflection encourage you to journey with us to holiness. Let us all share the mission the Church entrusts to us through our Founder, John Baptist Scalabrini: *"to become migrants with the migrants; to help people discover Christ in their migrant brothers and sisters and consider migration a sign of mankind's eternal calling"*.

**Fr. Joseph Tran Quoc Bao, CS**  
**Editor**

# WHO IS ST. SCALABRINI?

## “FATHER TO THE MIGRANTS”



**S**aint John Baptist Scalabrini was born and baptized on July 8, 1839 in Fino Morasco, Como, north of Italy. He was born to a humble and religious family of Luigi Scalabrini and Colomba Trombetta, and the third of the eight children. His education was spent in Como where he attended the public high school, and later joined the minor and the mayor seminary.

On May 30, 1863, at the age of 24 he was ordained a priest after finishing Philosophy and Theology programs in the seminary of the Diocese of Como. After his ordination, he felt an irresistible desire to become a mis-

sionary, so he went to enlist at the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions. However, his bishop told him: “your Indies are in Italy.” Consequently, he was assigned as a professor in the Minor seminary in Como and later became the rector.

In 1870, he was appointed parish priest of Saint Bartholomew where he became interested and involved in various social issues. Sensing the need and importance of religious education for young people, he wrote the “Little Catechism for Children”. in 1875.

On December 13, 1875, he was named Bishop of Piacenza by Pope Pius IX at the age of 36. In his episcopate, he dedicated himself to promoting the formation of priests and young seminarians. He also re-



formed the curriculum in the three seminaries of his diocese. He was popularly known for his dedication to the catechetical formation for the laity and children. In 1877, he published the

Catholic Catechism and organized the First National Catechetical Congress in Piacenza in 1899. He was called “The Apostle of Catechism” by Pope Pius IX.

His shepherding zeal was attested in his pastoral visits to his people. He visited 365 parishes in his diocese five times and organized three diocesan synods.

In the mid 1800s, following the Italian unification, Italy witnessed the most dramatic social and economic phenomenon of the century. In a span of 110 years, 25 million Italians had moved to United States, Brazil, and Argentina. The family of Bishop Scalabrini was not spared by this un-



usual occurrence of emigration among Italians. At that time, it was the only choice. A true tragedy.

One time, at the train Station in Milan, he saw on the faces of people, mixed emotions as they wait to leave for America. Touched by this dramatic scene of emigration, he asked himself, “What can be done for them?”

With the approval of the Vatican, he founded the congregation of missionaries of St. Charles – Scalabrinians on November 28, 1887. Then, in 1895, he founded the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo.

In 1901, he began his pastoral journey. He arrived in the United States for his first visitation, as a papal delegate, to the Italian emigrants. Three years later, he went on a second visit in Brazil and Argentina. After returning from his pastoral trip, he felt ill and died on June 1, 1905, during the solemnity of the Ascension.

On November 9, 1997, he was beatified by Pope John Paul II, now Saint Pope John Paul II.

And, on October 9, 2022, he was canonized by Pope Francis and called him the “Father to the Migrants”

Nowadays, Scalabrinian missionaries follow his legacy to love and serve God through the migrants with the invitation of Jesus: “I was a stranger and you welcome me.” (Mt 25:35)



# ST. SCALABRINI'S Spiritual Legacy

“**St. Scalabrini is a spiritual man. He lived a holy life inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit.**”

**S**calabrini left us almost 120 years ago, but in the heart of every Scalabrinian missionary, he is alive. His canonization last year brought his image as bishop and founder more fully into focus. The proclamation of his holiness obliged us not only to think of him as a role model of Christian life, but it also inspired us to reflect on his spirituality even more. Yet, “What is Scalabrini’s spiritual legacy that we the Scalabrinians are invited to live? The answer can be found in these five crucial elements.



## 1. Conforming to Christ: Christocentric Spirituality.

Scalabrini pursued his desire for holiness in the ordinariness of life, in the fulfillment of his office as a bishop. “In all actions a bishop must be moved by the Holy Spirit. A bishop must do violence to himself in order to become holy.”<sup>1</sup> And this holiness consists in being conformed to Christ, and the centrality that Christ occupied in Scalabrini’s life and teaching is well known. His pastoral letter for Lent 1878: “Jesus Christ, the Invisible Head of the Church,” passionately expressed his love for Christ. He recommends union with Christ to the faithful: “It is necessary for Jesus Christ to live in us; it is necessary for Jesus Christ to work in us continually. Love

<sup>1</sup> “Propositi”, 24.8. 1894 (AGS 3027/1). Si tratta di proponimenti che lo Scalabrini scriveva alla fine del ritiro mensile o degli Esercizi spi-rituali annuali.

Jesus. Keep united with Jesus because a Christian's whole perfection lies precisely in his union with Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup>

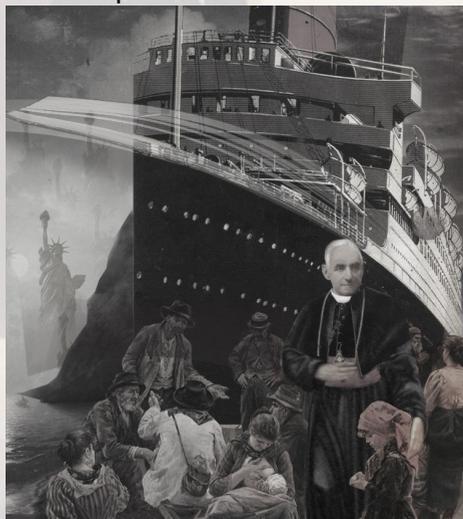
From the insistence on the centrality of Christ and the duty to conform ourselves to him, we can take up Francesconi's insight and grasp the implications of the mystery of the incarnation for the path of holiness, the process of divinization. Through the incarnation, humanity has been made divine by Christ. Through faith, in Christ we see God, who comes to humanity so that humanity can go to God (Jacob's ladder in his episcopal coat of arms). Christ continues his incarnation through us, who become instruments of his love. "A coin must have the image of the sovereign... what Christians do must bear the image of Christ."<sup>3</sup> History is aimed at fulfilling Jesus' words, "That all may be one." Migrations also contribute to this goal, the unity of humanity in Christ. We now see society agonizing to produce a new order of things. This poor society does not realize that it is somehow working to perfect itself for the kingdom of the God-Man."<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Loving the Church: Ecclesial Spirituality

Scalabrini was a man of the Church and for the Church. The Church is first and foremost considered by him as "the living incarnation of Christ on earth, the continuation of his mortal life, Jesus Christ poured out and bestowed in all his fullness."<sup>5</sup> The Church is a Pentecost prolonged through the centuries: "Does the Church teach? It is Jesus who teaches. Does the Church baptize? It is Jesus who baptizes...."<sup>6</sup>

Scalabrini perceives the Church as mother. "Let us look at our Mother's countenance and be ashamed we have done so little for her till now."<sup>7</sup> For the Church he expresses all his devotion: "Let my right hand be withered, let my tongue stick to my jaws, if I do not have memory of you, if I do not have you at the top of my every thought, if you are not until the last breath of my life the object of my cares, of my labors."<sup>8</sup>

Precisely in the consideration of mission, the image of the Church becomes more concrete. The more the passion for migrants matures in Scalabrini, the more he develops the image of the Church close to



2 Ibidem.

3 Lett. Past. (...) per la Santa Quaresima del 1878, Piacenza 1878.

4 Lett. Past. (...) per la Santa Quaresima del 1877.

5 Omelia di Pasqua, 1880.

6 Omelia di Pentecoste, 1889.

7 Lett. Past. (...) 3 Novembre 1881.

8 Omelia per l'Epifania, 1895.

the people. "The Church of Jesus Christ ... has not forgotten and will never neglect the mission God entrusted to her, namely, to preach the Gospel to the children of poverty and labor."<sup>9</sup> Triumphantist characters are lost and the Church stands alongside people, especially those who suffer. "Where people are working and suffering, there is the Church because the Church is the mother, friend, and defender of the people."<sup>10</sup>

Concretely for Scalabrini this translated into the constant search for closeness with the people: the "most beautiful consolation that a bishop can experience: to know all his beloved children closely and to be known by them."<sup>11</sup> This can be seen in his five pastoral visits to 365 parishes in his diocese.

A concrete expression of his spirituality imbued with love for the Church was also his unconditional obedience to the pope, despite some differences of view, and thus his recommendation to his missionaries of obedience and union with the pope and the bishop: "Your union with the Pope... will become stronger and more intimate through your union with the Bishop."<sup>12</sup> "This is also one of the main points of the Rule."<sup>13</sup>

### 3. Practicing Charity: Spirituality of Self-giving

Charity was the principle of his virtues (Benedict XV). Charity that was first and foremost love of God because God is love. But charity drove the bishop to love everyone and everything. "God is love. Now, the more



9 L'emigrazione italiana in America, Piacenza 1887.

10 Ibidem.

11 Ibidem.

12 Ai Missionari per gl'Italiani nelle Americhe, Piacenza 1892, pp. 7-8. La "lettera aperta" porta la data del 15.3.1892.

13 Lett. a Mons. M. A. Corrigan, 9.9.1893.

people are united with God, the more they are full of love. That is why a bishop loves not only God or just his brothers and sisters but also loves everything else that is worthy of love. Everything, I say, everything without exception. He loves everything true, everything beautiful, everything great, everything good, everything holy: matter and spirit, reason and faith, nature and grace, culture and religion, Church and State, family and country. He loves the harmonies of human nature. He loves them because he could not do otherwise. He loves them because the fullness of love resides in a heart that is united through the fullness of the Holy Spirit to God.”<sup>14</sup>

Scalabrini concretized his love of God into love of neighbor through countless examples. Aside from charity in great events, famines, earthquakes, plagues, Scalabrini loved the everyday poor. “The poor is the apple of God’s eye, and what we do to the poor we do to God himself.”<sup>15</sup> He was able to do much because he had a great, but not naive, trust in Providence. “He was always animated by the firmest hope in Divine Providence: however, he never neglected all the means that prudence and wisdom suggested.”<sup>16</sup>

Above all, Scalabrini gave himself, making himself all things to all people. He saw in the attitude of self-giving a characteristic of the priest, reiterated in his 1892 letter on the Catholic priest, in which he applied to the priest the same attitude of self-giving for the salvation of the world that he had applied to the bishop. And to priests he recommends, “Make allowances for the weaknesses of everyone, love everyone, do good to everyone without exception.”<sup>17</sup>

#### 4. Seeking Union: Spirituality of Communion

Consistent with a life aimed at conforming to Christ, who “is the bond of union, the kiss of peace between heaven and earth, between God and man,”<sup>18</sup> Scalabrini always worked for unity and for the communion of all in God. He found himself involved in many conflicting situations, in his own diocese and in the national context, especially the conflict between transigents and intransigents. But in all situations, he worked for conciliation. Never, however, was conciliation at the expense of truth, because, as Bonomelli said of him, “He loved nothing but the truth, without fear for anyone.”<sup>19</sup>

The most difficult reconciliation of his time, that between Church and State, Scalabrini sees it most effectively in the collaboration between the two institutions necessary for the good of migrants. “In everything

14 Discorso per il giubileo episcopale di Mons. G. Bonomelli, Cremona 1896.

15 Discorso a un’associazione caritativa, s.d.

16 Processo diocesano, Teste L. Mondini.

17 Lettera pastorale, Il prete cattolico, 1892.

18 Lettera pastorale per la Quaresima del 1878.

19 Bonomelli, Geremia, “L’Emigrato Italiano in America”, giugno 1906.

that concerns emigration, religious, civil and national interests, public and private, cannot be separated without harm.”<sup>20</sup>

Underlying the search for unity was a theological reason, the conviction that “ Jesus is creation’s point of convergence, the precious link that unites the work of the Almighty to the divine Creator”.<sup>21</sup>

For his missionaries, he recommends first to be united with Christ: “Therefore, beloved brothers and sons, first and foremost you must be united with Jesus Christ. You will realize this union by nourishing your faith with the steady exercise of piety and by persevering in the state of grace.”<sup>22</sup> Second, he emphasizes union among brethren because without this union little can be done. “No group of people, however great their abilities as individuals, will ever be able to achieve great things if they do not submit to the great law of unity... You must be united in thought, affections, and desires, just as you are united for the same end.”<sup>23</sup> Then, he points out the spirit of unity with other missionaries: “Let there be peace not only among yourselves, dearly beloved, but also with your brother priests in the ministry. Because of your mission you will often come into contact with priests and missionaries of different nationalities. You must benefit from their experiences. Have the greatest regard for them. Love them cordially and always respect them. Let there be peace inside as well as outside the home. Let there be peace with everyone.”<sup>24</sup>

## 5. Being Missionaries: Missionary Spirituality

We know how much Scalabrini longed to go to mission, how he complained because that opportunity was not given to him. We have already mentioned Scalabrini’s emphasis on the missionary characteristic of the Church, founded “so that, having ascended to Heaven, He might continue to fulfill His mission on this earth.”<sup>25</sup>

Consistently, Scalabrini interpreted his actions as a bishop in a missionary sense, where mission means an inclusive approach in his ministry. Already in his first pastoral letter, announcing what would be his apostolate, he said, “I will not recuse myself from labors, V. F. and F. D. to make myself father to the unfortunate, tutor to the ignorant, rector to the priests, pastor to all, so that, having thus made everything to everyone I may gain everyone to Christ.”<sup>26</sup>

However, he also knew how to live mission in its dimension of proclamation outside the boundaries of his own diocese. It was the very

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20 Scalabrini, Giovanni Battista, *L'Italia all'estero*, 1898.

21 *Ibidem*.

22 *Ai Missionari per gli Italiani nelle Americhe*, Piacenza 1892.

23 *Ibidem*.

24 *Ibidem*.

25 *Lettera pastorale*, *La Chiesa cattolica*, Piacenza 1888.

26 *Prima Lettera Pastorale*, Como 1876.

mission of the Church that led him to do so, because “The Church has not forgotten and will never neglect the mission God entrusted to her, namely, to preach the Gospel to the children of poverty and labor.”<sup>27</sup> The children of misery and labor of his time, whom few were concerned of, were the migrants. For them Scalabrini founded two missionary institutes and a lay association and went himself as a missionary to the United States and Brazil. Towards the migrants he felt emotion, capacity for action, passion for the transmission of the faith and prophetic vision in view of the Kingdom.

To his missionaries he explains what a privilege the vocation they received is. “It is to you in particular that he repeats even today those words of comfort: “I have chosen you and have appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.” Notice that he does not say: “You have been called,” but “I myself have called you I, the Son of the living God, I, the immortal King of the ages, I, who have founded the Church and guide it to victory in the midst of the battles and storms of the world. I have chosen you and have appointed you. What predilection!”<sup>28</sup>

And he reminds them that mission with migrants is true mission, indeed, a most beautiful form of apostolate. “And today, beloved sons, you can be proud of belonging to this number as you join this humblest of Congregations. A few days ago, the great Archbishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, saluted our Congregation as the most beautiful, useful, and fruitful form of Catholic apostolate of our day.”<sup>29</sup>

No doubt that the five important foundations of his spiritual legacy presented above are what we Scalabrinians inherited, and we should reflect upon to make his spirituality our own. Yet, there is no spirituality that can sustain itself without a reference, without nourishment. So, the question is: From where did St. Scalabrini get sustenance of his spirituality or what is the source of his spiritual life?

## Sources of his spirituality

*The first to be mentioned is “Christ crucified” or the cross.* The cross is the way through which Christ saved us. So, the cross is not to be avoided but embraced in order to participate in the salvation Christ has given us. That is why he often repeats the expression taken from the Stabat Mater: “Fac me cruce inebriari.” Let me be intoxicated by your Cross.<sup>30</sup> *Second, it is “Christ Eucharist.”* For Scalabrini, “The Eucharist is the masterpiece of God’s mind and heart, the center of our religion, the point of contact where the infinite and the finite, nature and grace, come

27 Ai Missionari per gli Italiani nelle Americhe, Piacenza 1892, pp. 3-4.

28 Discorso ai missionari parenti, 12.7.1888.

29 Scalabrini, Giovanni Battista, L'emigrazione italiana in America, Piacenza 1887.

30 Parole dette ai Missionari che partivano da S. Calocero in Milano il 10 Giugno 1884

together in the ineffable embrace of truth and love itself.”<sup>31</sup> *Third, we cannot forget to mention is his devotion to Mother Mary.* He turned to Mary with the prayer of the Holy Rosary and orient the people to faith in Jesus: “The Rosary, especially with the contemplation of the mysteries, is a Christocentric prayer, in which Mary always presents herself to us at Jesus’ side (...). It is already not just any prayer, but it is the whole of the Christian religion, it is the most attractive picture of what Jesus Christ has done for our souls.” *The last but not the least to be named is Meditation.* In him, everyday life took the form of prayer: “Sacrifice is prayer, worship is prayer, praise is prayer, gratitude is prayer.”<sup>32</sup> Yet, he gave special importance to meditation, to which he always obligated himself in his resolutions and which he constantly recommended to his priests and missionaries. He recommended to his missionaries: “Every day meditation and spiritual reading will be done by all, in common, and the Holy Rosary will be recited.”<sup>33</sup> And the early missionaries had absorbed this, since Fr. Pierini recalls what Fr. Consoni said, “Meditation is the mighty lever to the impetus toward God. Woe to leave it! A bird without wings does not fly, a fish out of water dies, a Scalabrinian Missionary without meditation is a corpse.”<sup>34</sup>

St. Scalabrini is a spiritual man. He lived a holy life inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the driving force that helps Scalabrini to conform himself to Christ; to commit himself completely to the Church, the continuation of Christ; to love God and neighbor with an inexhaustible love; to make himself an instrument of conciliation and unity; and to be a missionary, particularly in his mission with migrants. Nowadays, St. Scalabrini is not only our founder but also a model of life for all. Therefore, his spiritual legacy is not our exclusive prerogative. Others will be struck by the way how the Spirit guided his life; how was docile he was to the Spirit, and how he made himself all things to all people. For us as Scalabrinians who have chosen to follow Christ on the path traced by Scalabrini, it is imperative to know and make our own spiritual legacy so that we may continue to live in spirit, and make it an everlasting part of our spirituality guided by the Spirit to encounter and be encountered by migrants.

**St. Scalabrini – pray for us.**

**Fr. Joseph Tran Quoc Bao, CS**

(A summary of SCALABRINI’S SPIRITUAL LEGACY from Symposium on Scalabrinian Spirituality, Rome, October 9-14, 2023)

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31 Lettera pastorale, La devozione al SS. Sacramento, Piacenza 1902.

32 Lettera pastorale, La preghiera, 1905.

33 Lettera a P. Novati, 2.4.1905.

34 Porrini, Carlo, Biografia di P. Faustino Consoni, missionario di San Carlo, Archivio Storico Scalabriniano, p. 125.



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**The Scalabrinian missionaries must be the first ones to learn Scalabrini's charismatic and spiritual legacy.**

### **Invocation of the Holy Spirit**

**T**he symposium on the spirituality of the Scalabrinians held last October 9 – 14, 2023 at the Monastery of St. Lawrence of Brindisi in Rome, Italy began with the invocation of the Holy Spirit. In a circular position at the grounds of the monastery, no less than the superior general of the Scalabrinian Missionaries, Fr. Leonir Chiarello led the Scalabrinian confreres in prayer using the four official languages of the congregation. Also present among the delegates were representatives of the Scalabrinian Sisters, Secular Scalabrinians and lay Scalabrinians from different regions of the world. United in prayer in front of the image of St. John Baptist Scalabrini, the four families praised God and sang hymns in Italian, Portuguese, English and Spanish that everyone truly appreciated. Such was a very moving experience for the seven delegates from St. Frances Cabrini Province who just like other participants expect to

# **Spirituality of SCALABRINI**



By Fr. Edwin D. Corros, CS

# RINIANS

discover, share and learn more from every participant pertinent reasons of the convention. After the opening liturgy that was beautifully prepared by the general administration, the delegates immediately proceeded to the refectory to partake dinner and exchanged pleasantries and stories of life experiences in their respective mission. Before the night ended, everyone was introduced to the assembly as to which province or region the delegate belonged.

## Discovering spirituality and that of the Scalabrinians

On the second day of the convention all participants were allowed to level off in understanding the significance of spirituality and what it is not, for there are just many ways of defining it. Resource speakers discussed the topic that solicited several reactions from the participants.

**“At the private audience, Pope Francis expressed gratitude to the Scalabrinians for what they have been doing in the Church specifically to the migrants, refugees, seafarers and the people on the move.”**

There was just so much wealth in the presentations of the speakers, aside from the depth that they contained. Everyone acknowledged that we could not truly exhaust everything about spirituality because the source itself is God. The sharing of experiences of missionaries and lay people about their own understanding of the

Scalabrinian spirituality, and St. Scalabrini himself elicited more appreciation of the Scalabrinian as a congregation, its work and its mission. With such acknowledgement everyone was united that the spirituality of the Scalabrinians, the charism of the founder, St. John Baptist Scalabrini is necessary to be first understood.



Following the canonization of St. John Baptist Scalabrini last year, the Scalabrinians are now made to understand that the charism of the founder is no longer an exclusive possession of the Scalabrinians. In fact, it belongs to the Church. Scalabrini's charism and spiritual legacy now extends to the whole Church. Everyone is encouraged to embrace Scalabrini's spiritual legacy after his canonization. The Scalabrinian missionaries must be the first ones to learn Scalabrini's charismatic and spiritual legacy. The devotional expressions he had manifested for the Church, Christ in the Eucharist, the Crucified Christ, and the Blessed Virgin Mary are concrete examples of how someone could learn the depth and wealth that are present in the saint's spirituality. Knowing the founder's spirituality, is not to merely look at these religious devotions in order to imitate his kind of spirituality. One needs first to revisit the life of the founder and learn the

depth found not only in his spiritual and religious journeys but in his very actions as manifested in the very life he lived each day in order to follow the will of God. The incarnation of his spirituality does not merely appear in his religious devotions, but more in his very life as bishop of his time.

## Pope Francis thanked the Scalabrinians

Just before the symposium on the Spirituality of the Scalabrinians concluded, the delegates had the special privilege to see the Holy Father, Pope Francis at Clementine Hall inside the Vatican last October 14. At the private audience, Pope Francis expressed gratitude to the Scalabrinians for what they have been doing in the Church specifically to the migrants, refugees, seafarers and the people on the move. He said that he has personally witnessed the work and mission of the Scalabrinians. After he delivered his message, every delegate had that providential occasion to greet the Holy Father. Despite his very busy schedule Pope Francis, had warmly welcome every Scalabrinian delegate. That time, the XVI Synod of Bishops was still ongoing at the Vatican. Every delegate did not only feel honored to meet Pope Francis, they also felt so blessed in that trip to Rome for the 2023 Symposium on the Scalabrinian Spirituality. They were so grateful to the General Superior and his councilors.

Following the conclusion of the symposium in Rome, delegates were encouraged to work for the charismatic and spiritual legacy of the St. John Baptist Scalabrini to be promoted, protected, valued and shared to everyone not only within the Church but beyond.



# THE SYMPOSIUM OF SCALABRINIAN SPIRITUALITY IN ROME

(My Personal Experience)

**“For me, it was such an eye-opening event where I heard stories about what other Scalabrinian lay groups are doing to support our priests, migrants and refugee groups.”**



**O**n Monday the 9th of October, the anniversary of Saint John Baptist Scalabrini’s canonization, we started with a prayer service around a large cross and an image of St. Giovanni Battista Scalabrini and his relics. The liturgy was held in four languages.

I was overawed being one of the few lay people among 60 priests and nuns. I could feel the spirituality in the group. I felt their warm welcome. After dinner, we all went into the hall where each province and its participants were introduced in a funny way. Some even did it with music. All in all, it was a good and enjoyable way of getting to know everyone.

Our province was responsible for the opening mass where I was one of the readers. After mass, we went into the meeting room. We were greeted by the superior general, secretary general and the guest speaker - Christina Simonelli who spoke about spirituality. Another participant, Sister Anna Damas compared St. Giovanni Battista Scalabrini with the founder



of her order, St. Arnold Jensen. Both Saints were concerned with the welfare of migrants and to make the whole world everyone's homeland. We learned that multiculturalism is not just a matter of putting many nationalities under one roof, but it is also interacting with each other. In other words, working and walking together, communicating with each other.

For me, it was such an eye-opening event where I heard stories about what other Scalabrinian lay groups are doing to support our priests, migrants and refugee groups. I was especially impressed by Mathew, a lay person from north America, who got involved with helping refugees. He was so concerned with their situation that he studied to become a lawyer. Now, he is helping refugees along the US border.

Another person who impressed me with his story was Emanuele who represented Europe and Africa. Because his parents were involved with the Scalabrinian movement, he grew up with Scalabrinian priests around him. Eventually, he moved away from the movement and got married. One day, during a business trip in Bolivia, he was involved in a car accident where one of his friends lost her life and he was badly injured. He woke up in hospital with a nun, sent by a Scalabrinian priest, next to him giving him spiritual help. From that day on, together with Scalabrinian priests, he became more involved with helping others especially the migrant communities. He broke into tears when he spoke and said that he had never shared this story with anyone else.

There were many other delegates who shared their experiences with us and I admired them for their contributions. These stories impressed me and now, I feel more motivated to keep doing my work with the Italian Catholic Federation, my church, and the Scalabrinian movement.



Until I came to this symposium, I did not know or realise that there are many other lay people around the world who work with the Scalabrinian priests and migrants. This is certainly an eye-opener for me.

A lot of the participants came up to me during the break and said that they were impressed with what the Italian Catholic Federation and I are doing in Australia. I feel the same way about them in their work with

migrants and refugees all around the world. I realize the need to keep helping our Scalabrinian priests and thank them for their leadership and support for migrants.

On the last day we had the pleasure of having 2 bishops who came to share and reflect on spirituality and the gospel. I feel that my spirituality has been enhanced.



My most precious moment was when I met Pope Francis and ask for his blessings. A moment that I will treasure for the rest of my life. Pope Francis thanked the Scalabrinian Congregation and lay people for their work among the migrants and refugees and encouraged them to keep going with their mission.

I wish to thank Father Nacho and all Scalabrinians for giving me the honour to represent the lay groups of Australasia.

**Cristo regni**  
**Mr. John Calabrese**

# PHILIPPINE Migration in a nutshell

**F**ilipino overseas migration can be traced back in the early 1900 when Filipinos went to Hawaii to work in pineapple plantations. It then expanded to agricultural work in California and later on to fish canning factories in Washington and Alaska.

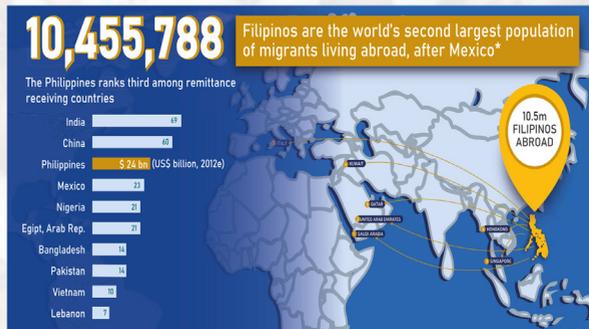
In the 1960s, Filipino profession all workers started migrating to the United States, Canada and other European countries to work as nurses, doctors, medical technicians, etc.

The phenomenon of overseas contract workers (OCWs now called OFWs) began in early 1970 as workers were needed in rich and industrializing countries as construction workers, nannies, domestic workers, nurses and entertainers. Filipino men filled in labor shortages in the construction industry of the Middle East, while

Number of Filipinos living and working abroad in 2022: between 10 -12 Millions

Regions with significant Filipino populations	
1. United States	10. Singapore
2. Canada	11. France
3. Saudia Arabia	12. Spain
4. United Arab Emirates	13. United Kingdom
5. Japan	14. Hong Kong
6. Australia	15. Italy
7. Kuwait	16. Israel
8. Malaysia	17. Brazil
9. Qatar	

Source : Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) 2021



## The top 10 countries Filipinos want to go for work

1. Canada	6. Singapore
2. Australia	7. South Korea
3. New Zealand	8. U.A.E
4. Japan	9. Switzerland
5. U.S.A.	10. Germany

Source : Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) 2021

## OFWs in 2022

Sea-based deployment	400,000
Land-based deployment	1.83 Million

Source : Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) 2021

## Countries with significant OFWs

1. Saudi Arabia	4. Taiwan
2. United Arab Emirates	5. Kuwait
3. Hong Kong	6. Qatar

Source : Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) 2021

## Provinces where biggest OFWs population come from

1. NCR
2. Calabarzon
3. Eastern Visayas
4. Bicol
5. Davao

Source : Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) 2021

women mainly held caregiving jobs and domestic work in booming economies in the Middle East (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Kuwait) and the Asia-Pacific (Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia) It was during the administration of Marcos Sr that the labor export program (LEP) was established as a stop-gap measure to deal with domestic unemployment due to the inability of the local economy to provide local jobs for the Filipinos.

REMITTANCES			
Year	Total	Land-based	Sea-based
2022	\$32,539,430	\$25,823,550	\$6,715,880
2021	\$31,417,614	\$24, 872,612	\$6,545,002
2020	\$29,903,256	\$23,549,734	\$6,353,522
2019	\$33.5		
2018	\$28.94		
2017	\$28.06		

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas 2020

The biggest remittances to the country came from	
1. United States	6. United Arab Emirates
2. Singapore	7. Canada
3. Saudi Arabia	8. Taiwan
4. Japan	9. Qatar
5. United Kingdom	10. South Korea

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas 2020

Philippine International Debt	
1972	\$2,671,171,407
1986	\$28,204,156,851
1992	\$33,219,038,810
1998	\$53,593,376,356
2001	\$58,391,331,922
2010	\$65,349,886,588
2016	\$74,750,940,393
2022	248.73 billion U.S. dollars

Source: <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/PHL/philippines/external-debt-stock>

The following countries comprised of the top travelers to the Philippines in 2022	
1. United States of America	4. Canada
2. South Korea	5. Japan
3. Australia	

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas 2020

Poverty is one of the push factors for the Filipinos odyssey abroad. Two of the reasons why there are so many poor Filipinos: (1) The rich monopolize so much of the wealth and income; (2) The Philippines has a huge International Debt. How then does the debt affect the poor? First, because of the huge amount that government has to allocate for debt servicing, very little is left to provide for the needs of the poor. Out of desperation, many Filipinos, see work overseas, where they can earn dollar many times the maximum they could get were they to remain at home. With their remittance, they are, in a very real sense, the ones paying for the country's debt.

Filipino overseas remittances are closing the gap between the poor and the wealthy by contributing to a growing middle class. With improved living conditions and more disposable income, the consumption of goods and services increases, which drives the economy forward. The inflow of remittances has a significant impact on the country's economy.

OFW remittances have significantly contributed to a positive force on the country's earnings of foreign exchange. By substantially adding to the country's earnings in foreign exchange, these remittances have con-

tributed to the strengthening of the nation's balance of payments position, sustaining the surpluses on current accounts.

**Number of families affected by migration:** 1 out of 10 Filipino families. Roughly 10% of the country's population works abroad.

**Non-Filipinos living in the Phils in 2021:** 163,879 ASEAN, East Asia, South Asia, Middle East, North America, South America, Western Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean Europe, Australasia/Pacific, Africa

### **Projection**

After lifting up the pandemic restrictions around the world and not finding job locally, it is projected that more Filipinos will turn to overseas employment. With the creation of the Department of Migrant Workers, the processing time of applying job abroad was considerably shortened. DMW reported that there are emerging markets and pending bilateral labor talks with Romania, Hungary, and Portugal. Portugal is interested in offering jobs to Filipinos for their tourism sector, while Singapore has also raised interest in hiring more Filipino health workers. The developed economies the world will still be the top destinations for OFWs: USA, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, United Kingdom, Italy, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.

It is estimated that 1 in 10 Filipino families have a family member working or living abroad, 17% or two out of 10 Filipinos are hoping to live abroad and 54% of Filipinos would like to work abroad. These broad estimates tell us of the unsurmountable challenges that we are facing in our pastoral work with migrants and their families.

**Challenges to OFWs:** Social Human cost, Climate change, wars, feminized migration, illegal recruitment and human trafficking.

**Fr. Roger Manalo, CS**

# My Vocation Story

Fr. Nguyen Hoang Khanh Huy, cs

“ I am really thankful to the Lord for calling me and the Scalabrinians for welcoming me as a member of this family.



**M**y name is father Nguyen Hoang Khanh Huy, C.S. I was born in Bien Hoa, Vietnam. Becoming a priest had always been my dream since childhood. In my parish in those days, children attended mass daily. In the afternoon, when we came back from school, our parents would remind us to go to church for the mass. It was a joy

to go together with friends in the neighborhood. We usually went to the church very early to play in the compound before the mass began. Where there are children, there is joy. And our laughter is a proof.

I remember I was very much attracted by the liturgy celebrated in the church. The singing and the praying of the people were really impressive and touching. I said to myself then, I want to become a priest to celebrate the holy mass. I

grew up with this dream, nourished by the religious environment in my parish and my family. I liked to take part in different ministries like altar servers, choir, and catechists. I enjoyed the tasks I did all along. As an altar boy, I had the opportunity to be at the altar, and to help in the liturgy, to observe the priests how they celebrated the mass, and this gave me great joy.

One day, I came to know the Missionaries of St. Charles (Scalabrinians), and at the age of 19 I decided to join their seminary in Saigon, Vietnam. I remember we were quite a big group in the first year. In the seminary, there were many things we had to learn starting from cooking, washing our clothes, and cleaning the house. Challenges were there, but the dream of becoming a religious missionary priest gave me strength.

The Missionaries of St. Charles is a congregation founded by St. John Baptist Scalabrini in 1887. He was then the bishop of Piacenza, northern Italy. Witnessing the problem of migration in his times, bishop Scalabrini was moved with compassion and he realized that there was a need of missionaries to care for the migrants. The more I live in the congregation the more I am convinced that this charism is a gift of the Divine Providence.

I love the words of the Vatican II Council in *Gaudium et Spes*: “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.” (GS 1). For me, as a Scalabrinian missionary, caring for the migrants is a way to be connected to the human family by responding to their cries through the Gospel.

I spent all my years of formation in Vietnam and the Philippines. After finishing theology, I was ordained in Manila in 2018. After 5 years in the priesthood, I am full of gratitude to the Lord for calling me to this vocation, and to the Scalabrinians for welcoming me to this family. In these 5 years, I was given the opportunity to experience different ministries and to take on further studies in Rome. Our God is faithful. If he calls us, he will give us also the grace to respond to that invitation.

**Our** Giovanni F  
**ACTIVITIES**



**St. CHARLES BORROMEO**  
**NOVEMBER 4**

November 4, 2023

# *Feast Day of St. Charles* *and Perpetual Profession*



**O**n this special day, with great joy and gratitude from the Lord, we also witnessed the perpetual profession of the brothers: Hugo Facio, CS; Marius Rewa, CS and Jonas Fernandez, CS as they dedicate themselves totally to God.





# INSTALLATION TO THE MINOR MINISTRIES LECTORS AND ACOLYTES

November 7, 2023





# 136<sup>th</sup>

November 28, 2023

## Foundation Day & Diaconate Ordination of Rev. Dexter Ignacio, CS



December 8, 2023

# SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

## DEVOTIONAL RENEWAL OF RELIGIOUS VOWS





**SAINT**

**J. B. SCALABRINI**

Father to the migrants

**THE MISSIONARIES OF ST. CHARLES  
SCALABRINIANS**

*"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"*  
*Mt 25:35*



**WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME  
A SCALABRINIAN?**

Contact Us

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Cebu: SAN CARLOS HEIGHTS, QUIOT, CEBU CITY 6000**

**PASTORAL CARE FOR:**



**MIGRANTS, OFWs**

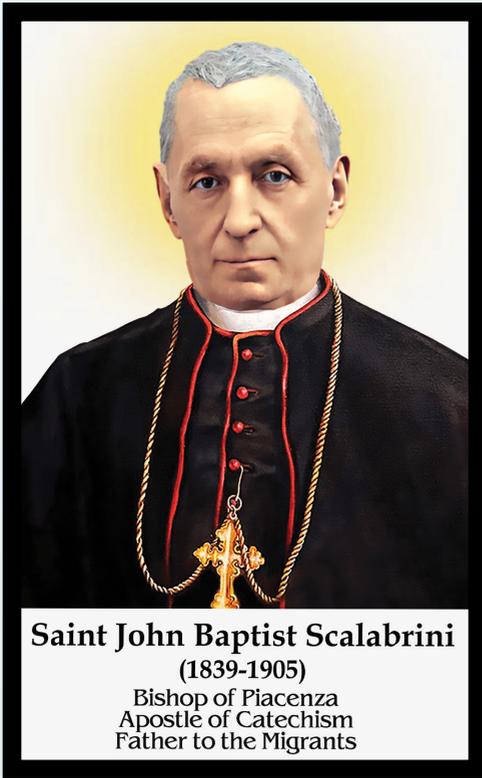


**REFUGEES**



**SEAFARERS**





### PRAYER IN HONOR OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST SCALABRINI

O Saint John Baptist Scalabrini, with the heart of a bishop and the zeal of an apostle you gave yourself completely to all.

You listened to the cries of migrants, spoke in their name, defended their rights. You found sustenance in the Eucharist solace in the cross of Jesus comfort in Mary, Mother of the Church.

Through your intercession may God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit grant peace to all humanity, protect those who cross seas and borders sustained by hope, bless us and our loved ones and grant us the grace that we entrust to your fatherly love.  
Amen

## SAINT JOHN BAPTIST SCALABRINI

Founder of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Charles - Scalabrinians  
and the Missionary Sister of St. Charles Borromeo - Scalabrinians  
Inspirer of the Scalabrinian Secular Missionaries

If you would like to become a Scalabrinian, contact us:

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