

In Memory of Friar Massimiliano M. CHILIN

Friar Massimiliano was born the son of Luigi and Vittoria FAVERO, on March 14, 1923, in Vigorovea, part of the municipality of Sant'Angelo di Piove di Sacco, in the Province of Padua, Italy. He was baptized a few days later at the local parish church of San Giacomo under the name Antonio.

After attending elementary school, he entered, at age twelve, the Antonian Seminary in Camposampiero, Italy. Later, he finished his course work in Cres (now in Croatia). He joined the Order in 1940-1941, and carried out his novitiate year at the Friary of St. Anthony in Padua, where he took the name Friar Massimiliano Maria. He made his simple profession on September 8, 1941.

He attended his first year of high school at the friary in Brescia, Italy, and then, due to the war, he completed his other two years in Arsio, in the Italian Province of Trento. He made his solemn profession on October 4, 1944, in Camposampiero. He studied theology in Padua and completed his theology degree at the diocesan seminary in Tarbes, France. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 29, 1948, in Lourdes. The next day, he celebrated his first Mass at the altar in the Massabielle Grotto in Lourdes.

Friar Massimiliano spent the first months of his priesthood at the friary in Ozon, where the Order had begun its presence in France, after being definitively suppressed during the French Revolution. After six months, he was transferred to the new friary in Fontcouverte, in the Diocese of Carcassonne, France, where he served as the Pastor and Guardian.

In 1958, he returned to Italy and was assigned to the Friary of St. Anthony in Padua, where, among other things, he held the offices of Friary Librarian and Secretary of the Administration of the Pontifical Basilica of St. Anthony.

In 1964, he was appointed Guardian of the friary in Vicenza, Italy. Two years later, during the General Chapter, he was elected Minister Provincial of the Province of the Orient and the Holy Land, then headquartered in Lebanon.

The first see of our Conventual fraternity in Lebanon was the seminary of the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate of Charfet in Harissa. Two years later, the fraternity moved to the outskirts of Beirut, to Sin-el-Fil, Lebanon.

In 1970, the Latin Bishop of Beirut entrusted the new Parish of St. Anthony of Padua in Sin-el-Fil to our fraternity. Friar Massimiliano was appointed Pastor, an office which he held until February of 2000. During the same period he carried out the office of Notary of the Court of the Latin Apostolic Vicariate of Beirut. In 1977, he was appointed Chancellor of the same court and in 1986, was appointed its Vicar General.

On June 2, 1997, he was awarded the honor of "Officer of the Italian Republic" by the Italian government.

On May 15, 2006, he finished his service as Vicar General and Chancellor.

Despite his limitations by this time, he was still able to write some books. His first book was a collection of letters showing the good relations between the Most Reverend Angelo RONCALLI, Apostolic Delegate to Turkey (later, Pope St. John XXIII) with Friar Giorgio MONTICO, Minister Provincial of the then Province of the Orient and the Holy Land.

His second book "*On the Way to the Father*" was the first collection of the names of the religious missionaries who, from 1500 until the present day, had lived and worked in the friaries in Turkey.

His next book was "*Missionary Life*," a history of the Friars Minor Conventual in Syria and Lebanon.

He was also interested in the history of St. Anthony in Lebanon and wrote "*Saint Antoine de Padoue au Liban*": a work listing more than fifty-three Catholic churches where St. Anthony is especially revered.

In 2016, he composed a prayer booklet called "*Prions avec St. Antoine de Padoue*," which was originally written in French and later translated into Arabic.

His last work was a sixty-five page booklet entitled "*How I Would Like the Civil and Liturgical Calendar*."

During the last few years he also organized the friary library, which contained more than 3500 cataloged books.

After the Ordinary Chapter of the Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land (April 2018), which gathered all of the friars of Lebanon and Turkey, Friar Massimiliano suffered notable deterioration in his eyesight. Even with his physical limitations, he lived his daily life with serenity and confidence. Despite his ailments and his reliance upon the goodness of the friars, he was always grateful to the Lord and to Our Lady for all the good he had received.

He passed away on March 19, 2022, in Sin-el-Fil.

Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land