



ORDO AUGUSTINIANORUM RECOLLECTORUM

GENERALATUS

*“The Church has gone forward on pilgrimage amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God.” (The City of God, 18, 51, 2)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Augustinian Recollect family,

It is with deep joy, in the midst of this happy Easter time, that I can share with you a wonderful piece of news for the whole Church, and especially for the Augustinian Recollect, religious and lay, and for the whole Church that walks as pilgrims in Panama.

I have received from the Vatican, from the Congregation for Bishops, a document in which it is announced that the Holy Father Benedict XVI has appointed the Augustinian Recollect, Fr. ANÍBAL SALDAÑA SANTAMARÍA, to be Bishop of Bocas de Toro in Panama.

The communication adds that the news will be published in “L’Osservatore Romano” at midday on Thursday. The Nunciature in Panama has asked that I make this news known at five o’clock here which, due to the time difference, coincides with ten o’clock in Panama. At that time Mons. Agustín Ganuza will announce it in that country.

We are very happy for this show of confidence on the part of the Holy Father towards a religious of the Order. He will be included in the long list of Augustinian Recollects, successors of the apostles, sent to evangelize the good people of that beautiful land Bocas de Toro, where three previous Recollect bishops have served alongside Augustinian Recollect friars, with that same charism and surrender inherited from Augustine.

At the same time we congratulate from the heart our brother Fr. ANÍBAL on receiving this great honour of singular service to the Church, and we ask the Good Shepherd, through the intercession of Our Mother of Consolation, St. Augustine, St. Ezequiel Moreno, and all the saints of the Order to abundantly bless him and his ministry as a bishop.

Grateful, also, to the many who rejoice at this happy news, which according to Augustine’s well appointed expression at the head of this letter, is an authentic “comfort from God”.

At the same time I would like you to keep in your prayers Mons. José Luis Azcona, Bishop of Marajó, Brasil, and three more bishops who have received very serious threats as they speak out prophetically in defense of the poor and exploited of Amazonas. The same happened to Jesus of Nazareth. They live with the consequences of their call as has been reported in the principal media. May God be their strength.

I greet you with affection.

Fr. Javier Guerra Ayala, prior general.