

Our Lady of the Butterflies



An image of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child is made out of African butterfly wings. (CR Staff/George P. Matysek Jr.)

One of the great joys of my recent pilgrimage to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland was meeting Father Anastasio Roggero.

The Carmelite priest, who shepherds the Church of Our Lady Victorious in Prague, is a bundle of energy – constantly greeting people, spreading the Gospel and sharing the story of the famous Infant of Prague statue that’s so gloriously displayed inside his church. (Read about that [here](#)).



Carmelite Father Anastasio Roggero discusses the Infant of Prague with pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Baltimore. (CR/George P. Matysek Jr.)

It seems that Father Roggero’s enthusiasm for the Infant of Prague is matched by his passion for his religious community’s missionary work. Carmelites have ministered in the Central African Republic for 40 years, he said, and they currently work at several medical centers and schools.

Father Roggero showed me photographs of his brother priests helping impoverished and hungry people in Africa. Then, to my surprise, he gave me a one of the coolest images of the Blessed Virgin Mary I’ve ever seen.

An African artist crafted the unique portrait from butterfly wings!

(Don’t worry, there are millions of colorful butterflies that migrate over Central Africa. When they die, the wings are collected by people in villages to be used in their artwork. The Carmelites give the images to donors who support their mission work).

I don’t know if there is a “Lady of the Butterflies,” but maybe there should be.