

THE SALESIANS IN THE PHILIPPINES (1951-1963): “DOVE LA NOSTRA OPERA VI ERA NATA ... GIÀ ADULTA”

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ASC = Archivio Salesiano Centrale - Roma
SAS = Scheda Anagrafica - Segreteria Generale (ASC)
SAFIN = Salesian Archives Filippine Nord
SAFIN = Salesian Archives Filippine - Cebu
SAFIN = Salesian Archives Filippine - Mandaluyong
SAFIN = Salesian Archives Filippine -Victorias
SAHK = Salesian Archives Hong Kong

Introduction

The actual beginnings of the Salesians in the Philippines have never been studied. This study is an effort to write the history of the beginnings of the Salesian works in the Philippines. An effort was made to write a pre-history of the Salesians in the Philippines, on the first requests to the Salesians to come to the Philippines¹. But this has been to present documents related with the requests and to let these document speak for themselves.

On the other hand, this study has been provoked by the remark of Fr. Albino Fedrigotti (1902-1975), former Prefect General of the Salesian Society². Some time in March 1975, he wrote a trite comment in his memoirs regarding the Salesian Philippines Province: that it was a Province “where our work was born already adult”³.

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¹ Gregorio BICOMONG Jr., *The Arrival of Don Bosco in the Philippines. Requests Made to the Salesians (1891-1951)*. Makati City 2001.

² Fr. Albino Fedrigotti (1902-1975) was born in Trent, Italy (21 October 1902) and died in Turin (25 August 1986) at 84 years of age, 67 years a Salesian and 58 years a priest. He was member of the General Council as Councillor (1948-1952) and as Vicar General (1952-1971). Cf SAS 19B013.

³ ASC B620 *Fedrigotti: Ricordi personali* (Colle Don Bosco, Marzo 1975) 42. “Dove la nostra opera vi era nata già adulta” has been translated as “where our work was born already adult”.

It is not easy to surmise why Fr. Fedrigotti came up with such comment. However, he surely knew what he was writing, in as much as he had been closely connected with the beginnings and the development of the Salesian work in the Philippines. As Prefect General, he was in close coordination and correspondence with those who were called to work and to lead the work in the Philippines in its first years of its existence.

When Fr. Fedrigotti referred in his memoirs to the Salesian Province in the Philippines as already born adult, the Salesians there were about to celebrate the twenty-fifth year of their presence. At the same time, Fr. Luigi Ferrari (1908-1990)⁴, first provincial delegate and later provincial in the Philippines (1969-1975), was ending his term in April of the same year 1975. The in-coming provincial, Fr. Jose Carbonell (1927-)⁵, did not belong to the Philippines and had never been in his new place of assignment. The first Filipino Salesians who were never sent outside of the Philippines for their initial formation were ordained the previous year⁶. The sixteenth batch of twenty-two novices, who began their novitiate in April 1975, was the second most numerous in the history of the novitiate at that moment⁷. Besides, the Province had just constructed its residence for the Salesian students of Theology in Parañaque located at the periphery of Manila, in view of starting its own center of studies. To think that there had been plans since 1960, to put in Manila a center which would cater to the theological formation of the young Salesians of East Asia⁸.

⁴ Fr. Luigi Ferrari (1908-1990) was born in Verona, Italy (27 August 1908) and died in Rome (23 November 1990) at 82 years of age, 64 years a Salesian and 56 years a priest. Fr. Ferrari was expelled from China in 1952. He became delegate of the provincial of the China Province for the Philippines (1952-1955), and later provincial of the Philippines (1969-1975). Cf 26B069.

⁵ Fr. José Carbonell Llopis was born in Alcoy, Spain (27 March 1927). He was provincial of Valencia (1964-1971) and the Philippines (1975-1981). He is currently provincial ecomer of the Indonesia-Timor Province. Cf SAS 46B083.

⁶ Fr. Celestino Lingad Jr. and Fr. Aguedo Paolomo were ordained in 31 January 1974 in the school chapel of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, which was then the residence of the Salesian students of Theology. Instead, Fr. Genaro Gegantoni was ordained in Cebu, in the Salesian Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in 8 December 1973. Fathers Lingad and Gegantoni belonged to the 6th batch of novices (1962-1963). The former is presently rector of Don Bosco Center of Studies in Manila; the latter is assigned in Dekemhare, Eritrea. Fr. Palomo belonged to the 7th batch of novices (1963-1964) which did its novitiate in the newly established house in Canlubang; he is currently rector of the Salesian aspirantate of Don Bosco Venilale, in East Timor.

⁷ The novitiate batch no. 16 (1975-1976) consisted of 22 novices; that of batch no. 9 (1966-1967) consisted of 31. Cf. *Salesian Novices in the Philippines: 1956-1997*, Sacred Heart Novitiate, Lawa-an, Talisay, Cebu, 4, 8.

⁸ Fr. Braga insisted with Fr. Ziggotti that Manila was the place to put a center of Theology for the Salesian clerics in East Asia. Cf ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962) 3. He further boasted to Fr. Pianazzi that Manila was the "Rome of the Far East"; for this, the studentate ought to be put in the Philippine capital: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 9 settembre 1962) 1.

1. Fedrigotti's Visit

The Salesians in the Philippines, within the early years since its foundation in 1951, had the visits of two of the Salesian Society's major superiors. The fifth successor of St. John Bosco, Fr. Renato Ziggotti (1892-1983)⁹, came to Manila in 5 April 1955 for a nine-day visit of the Philippine Delegation. While his Vicar, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti, made an extraordinary visitation of the Philippine Vice-Province (Visitatoria) from 11 January to 12 February 1959¹⁰. The latter surely had the opportunity to see and observe more closely the Salesians and their work in the Archipelago. Fr. Fedrigotti's visit drew the first official observations regarding the Salesians and their work in the Philippines¹¹. It was the first extraordinary visitation of a Vice-Province erected only the previous year in 1958.

In the first half and in the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, the Salesian Society had undergone a prodigious growth in East Asia¹². In the Philippines, it was perhaps even more prodigious. For in his month long visit, Fr. Fedrigotti saw the Salesians and their work which had become immense and disproportionate to their numbers in the mere span of eight years.

After the negotiations conducted by Fr. Carlo Braga (1889-1971)¹³ who

⁹ Fr. Renato Ziggotti was General Councillor (1937-1950), Prefect General (1950-1952) and Rector Major (1952-1965). He arrived in the Philippines from Tokyo, Japan in 5 April 1955 and left Manila for Sydney, Australia in 13 April 1955. In this visit, he saw the Salesian presences of Mandaluyong and Makati in Manila, those of Cebu and Victorias in the Visayas Islands, and that of Tarlac north of Luzon Island. He also conferred with both ecclesiastical (Archbishops Rufino Santos of Manila, Julio Rosales of Cebu and Egidio Vagnozzi) and social (the McMickings of Manila, the Ossorios of Victorias, and the Aboitiz of Cebu) personalities connected with the Salesian work. This visit was part of his "tour" of the Salesian presences in East Asia. Cf ASC B116 *Chronicle of the visit of the Rector Major to the Philippines (5-13 April 1955)*; SAS 09B144.

¹⁰ ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959), 11 pp., see also ASC B619 *Fondo Fedrigotti: Agenda 1959* (11 gennaio a 12 febbraio 1959). Fr. Fedrigotti had already visited Thailand and Vietnam when he came to the Philippines. After Manila, he proceeded to Japan for the same purpose.

¹¹ ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 1.

¹² The establishment of the Salesians in Macao (1906) was followed by their coming to China (1910), Japan (1926), Thailand, Hong Kong and Timor (1927), Myanmar (1938), Laos and Vietnam (1941). After they went to the Philippines (1951), they soon established themselves in Taiwan (1952) and South Korea (1955). With such a rapid expansion in Asia and earnest hope for growth, there was every reason for a more accurate visit by Turin of these new Salesian presences. Cf Morand WIRTH, *Da Don Bosco ai nostri giorni*. Roma, LAS 2000, 374-378.

¹³ Fr. Carlo Braga was born in Sondrio, Italy (23 May 1889) and died in San Fernando, Pampanga (3 January 1971) at 82 years of age, 65 years a Salesian, and 57 years a priest. Fr.

was still provincial of China, two Salesians took over a school of Tarlac in July 1951 through the insistence of the Apostolic Nuncio. In the same year, two other Salesians arrived in Victorias to supervise the construction of the school promised to them by committed Catholics. In 1953, the new provincial of the Sino-Filipino Province, Fr. Mario Acquistapace (1906-2002)¹⁴, had accepted the offer of the Manila Archbishop of the Seminario Conciliar de Manila, in order to establish a school projected to be technical and vocational¹⁵. The year after, he had approved the takeover of Cebu Boys' Town, a center meant to house and to care for street children. He had also initiated the acceptance of the land donation in Makati for a vocational school and a parish close to the site of the proposed donation. In 1956, the novitiate was erected in a villa in Muntinlupa, south of Manila, since there were now vocations to the Salesian life. The post-novitiate was put at the same place the year after. Lastly, through the initiative of Fr. Godfrey Roozen, the school in San Fernando in the province of Pampanga north of Manila began. So that when Fr. Fedrigotti came, he found himself visiting eight presences, in six provinces, situated in three different islands¹⁶.

In his visit, the Prefect General saw certain realities in the Salesian work in the Islands. In the schools which he visited, he realized that the tendency was to have more lay teachers rather than Salesians. As a consequence of this, there was a constant deficit in the finances of the houses. At the same time, it also revealed to him the obvious deficiency in number of Salesians who were at work. In the school of Victorias alone, there were already 17 Salesians at work¹⁷. But these did not even suffice to man the shops existing in the com-

Braga was provincial of China from 1930 to 1952. From 1956 to 1958, he was delegate of Fr. Acquistapace to the Philippines, and from 1958 to 1963, he was Visitatore. Thus, he was 22 years superior in China and 7 years superior in the Philippines, for a total of 30 years: SAS 06B023, see also Vasco TASSINARI, *Don Braga, l'uomo che ebbe tre patrie*, Bologna, GESO 1990; *id.*, *Il romanzo di un missionario valtellinese*. Bologna, GESP 1994.

¹⁴ Fr. Mario Acquistapace was born Milan, Italy (16 July 1906) and died in Hong Kong (25 September 2002) at 96 years of age, 80 years a Salesians and 71 years a priest. He was provincial of China (1952-1958), which had extended its jurisdiction not only to the Philippines but also to Vietnam (1953). Cf SAS 22B030.

¹⁵ The school of Mandaluyong was located in the former archdiocesan seminary of Manila. Cf Hernandez POLICARPIO F. O.S.A., *The Augustinians in the Philippines*, Makati City, 1998, 11-17.

¹⁶ The Philippines is an archipelago of about 7,100 islands. The main groups of islands were three: Luzon (north), Visayas (central) and Mindanao (south). The Salesians were in the first two groups of islands.

¹⁷ The Salesian school of Victorias was the initiative of catholic laymen who wanted to put the social teachings of the sovereign pontiff into practice. Cf SAFIN-Victorias *Correspondence* (Frederic Ossorio to Braga, Victorias, 5 December 1950). Don Miguel Ossorio and his son Frederic have asked the Salesians to start a school which would take care of the children of

plex school which hosted more than a thousand students. To add, there were also boarders who required constant assistance and attention. Furthermore, confreres of this house were transferred to other houses when they were supposed to be assigned permanently at Victorias. They were being made to augment the personnel in the growing schools of Mandaluyong and Makati, at the expense of Victorias Milling Company.¹⁸ For this, a rift was growing little by little between the Salesians and the benefactors of the school.

The Salesian work in Cebu City¹⁹ started as a "Boys' Town" for Cebu's "poor and abandoned boys", who were mostly street children²⁰. There were supposed to be six confreres at work in Cebu. Of these, three including the superior, however, were occupied by a parish which practically made "Boys' Town" a mere appendix of the real work. Of the remaining three confreres, one of the two priests was more of a driver; another was "a cook by necessity" and had put up a poultry and rabbit farm, which made him practically "an animal breeder"²¹. Thus, the remaining confrere, a coadjutor, was left with the boys, who, because of their being from the streets and because the brother did not know their language, did not give an easy time to each other²².

The Salesian work Cebu did not have a house council; meditation and the monthly exercise for a happy death were not regular. Moreover, Fr. Fedrigotti observed a clear and serious difficulty of the Salesians: it was not easy for

the employees and workers of their vast sugar hacienda and refinery. Because of its distinct technical-academic program of education, the school, which officially began in July 1952, at a certain point became even more famous than its benefactors' business company.

¹⁸ In reality too, the Superior of the Vice Province took advantage of the travel privilege given to the Salesians by VICMICO (= Victorias Milling Company) who owned the school. Salesians coming from abroad assigned to the school were financed by VICMICO in their travel; but these were easily transferred to the other Salesian houses as the Superior decided, without observing the agreement that those assigned in Victorias should work there for at least six years. However, everyone knew how close the Superior Fr. Braga and Miguel Ossorio were.

¹⁹ The work in Cebu officially began in 15 March 1954. Because it catered to street children, it was called by various names: "Boys' Town", "Boys' Center", "The Town". Its residents were initially termed as "inmates". This work was known in the beginning as the concrete expression of the "charity of the Cebuanos". Cf SAFIN-Cebu *Chronicle of the House* (6 March 1954).

²⁰ The work in Cebu City was endorsed and encouraged by Archbishop Julio Rosales and was realized through the generosity of the Cebuano Aboitiz family, especially Doña Maria Aboitiz, who had insisted that the Salesians take charge of this initiative.

²¹ One of these priests was sickly and was really in need of a change of air and life. The other never learned English or the language of the place, even if he had been already provided with a teacher: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960) 3.

²² On this situation of the boys, Fr. Fedrigotti commented: "La loro permanenza è precaria e sono praticamente in mano di un coadiutore, che fa tutto quello che può anche se non è abbastanza per creare un ambiente piacevole": ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 10.

them to learn another language²³. He was optimistic however the work in Cebu was for the poor. The future school would help in alleviating the misery of the young; even the parish attached, a fait'accompli of the Salesians, was in the midst of poor people. Still, much was being done by the confreres for the emarginated young. This obviously did not deviate the mind of their founder.

After almost seven years of existence, the school of Mandaluyong has become well respected and esteemed²⁴. It had even been visited by the Philippine President. Its number one promoter was the Archbishop of Manila, its patron no less than the Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines. Its technical-academic program was unique in the Philippine capital. In five years time, its enrolment had grown to 1,100 students ca., with 420 elementary and 680 high school students, not counting those of the vocational sector of the complex school.

But the school was in debt: Pesos 150,000 to the tune of 6% interest, incurred by the local superior, who had hoped that the Archbishop of Manila would bail him out of this predicament²⁵. Furthermore, the rendiconti to the superior by his conferences were neglected. Nonetheless, Fr. Fedrigotti admired the family spirit of the Mandaluyong community²⁶. This would be a characteristic of this Salesian work which Fr. Acquistapace wanted to be the "casa madre" of the Salesians of the Philippines²⁷.

The work in San Fernando, instead, had hardly began²⁸. There were only two confreres who were administering a growing school; and as if they lacked work, they were also chaplains of the nearby girls' school. According to Fr. Fedrigotti, the reason why this school in Pampanga was accepted was on account of the possibility of obtaining many vocations. Later, the aspirantate would be transferred there, to the joy of the actual bishop²⁹. The school

²³ Cf *ibid*: "I confratelli sono venuti in gran parte dalla Cina, già stanchi di imparare lingue; ma stanno tentando di imparare ancor una." Note that there are about a dozen of languages and another fifty or so dialects in the Philippines.

²⁴ The Salesian work of Mandaluyong began as a youth center: ASC F482 *Mandaluyong: Corrispondenza* (Ferrari a Ziggotti, Manila 30 novembre 1953). It later became a complex school with an elementary, a high school, a center for out-of-school youth and a daily oratory; it even had the aspirantate and a boarding house at one point of its history.

²⁵ ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 3.

²⁶ *Ibid*.

²⁷ SAFIN-Mandaluyong *Quaderno delle Osservazioni* (Acquistapace, 1 gennaio 1954) 3.

²⁸ Bishop Cesar Guerriero of the diocese of San Fernando, Pampanga had offered the Salesians an already existing school near the Cathedral in San Fernando, Pampanga. But Fr. Godfrey Roozen, sent to negotiate with the Bishop, found the offer difficult to handle. For this, he opted to find another place where he could start a new school. Later in 1962, he offered to house the aspirants too, when these were in search for a home in the vicinity of Manila.

²⁹ ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 5; cf also ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 settembre 1961) 1.

was started by Fr. Godfrey Roozen (1912-1997)³⁰, who, after he left Hong Kong and declined the invitation to work in Vietnam, found himself in the Philippines.

The Salesian work in Tarlac was quite different³¹. Fr. Fedrigotti observed that the confreres at work there lived in real poverty³². The school enrolment was only 280 and was even still diminishing, since it did not enjoy enough prestige so as to have an increased enrolment. The rector was also principal; but he seemed not to be in the position to better the situation. There was already a proposal to give back the school to its former owners. This, however, was opposed by Fr. Fedrigotti, in as much as he believed that the place was one which was most in need of Don Bosco³³.

In Muntinlupa, province of Rizal, the third batch of novices, together with their master of novices and his socius, welcomed Fr. Fedrigotti. The novitiate had been there since 1956 when Fr. Acquistapace, through the encouragement of the Apostolic Nuncio, accepted the offer of a villa³⁴. The Salesians had put up the post-novitiate in 1957 beside the novitiate; but this experiment lasted only a year. It was then decided to send the newly professed to Hong Kong for their studies. Fr. Fedrigotti saw the need of a scholastic preparation of the novices; for this, he suggested that after the novitiate be given an additional year before they began to study Philosophy³⁵.

The school in Makati was still in a crude stage when Fr. Fedrigotti came: a mere fabrication with two small lateral buildings at its extremes³⁶. It was

³⁰ Fr. Godfrey Roozen. Born in Oud-Castel, Holland (29 May 1912); died in Manila, Philippines (8 December 1997) at 85 years of age, 66 years a Salesian and 57 years a priest. Cf SAS 31B090.

³¹ St. John Bosco Academy in Tarlac was a school which the Salesians adopted upon the offer of Fr. James Wilson, a U.S. military chaplain. The latter had started a school in July 1947, with the permission of Archbishop Michael O'Doherty of Manila and the approval of his Ordinary, Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York. Two Salesians, Fr. Anthony di Falco and Fr. John Rutkowski, both from the U.S.A., took over the school in July 1951. Cf ASC F570 *Filippine: Tarlac. A Brief History of St. John Bosco Academy, Tarlac, Tarlac.*

³² The following were assigned in Don Bosco Tarlac: Fr. Emilio Baggio, Fr. George Schwarz and the cleric Felix Glowicki. Cf *Elenco Generale 1959*, 441.

³³ Fr. Fedrigotti described the confreres in their living quarters as "appolaiati sotto il tetto del teatro, in camerette, che dopo qualche rammodernamento, sono meno forni che stanze": ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 5.

³⁴ The novitiate was a villa of a benefactor recommended by Fr. Quaranta. It was located near the maximum security prison of Manila, see also SAHK *Corrispondenza* (Acquistapace a Benato, Manila, 8 dicembre 1954); *ibid.* (Acquistapace a Benato, Victorias, 4 febbraio 1955).

³⁵ ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 5.

³⁶ ASC F477 *Filippine: Manila-Makati*. Decreto dell'erezione (Fedrigotti, Torino, 7 luglio 1956). This particular work was already accepted by Fr. Acquistapace even before Turin gave its consent. Cf ASC F157 *Cina: Corrispondenza* (Acquistapace a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 24 dicembre 1953).

projected to be a trade school to answer the need for workers of the adjacent industrial area, and to give the possibility of technical education to the poor young in the same place. The Salesians were committed to construct more permanent structures as agreed with the benefactors of the land. About five hundred meters from the school was the Parish of San Ildefonso³⁷, whose parish priest showed himself hardworking³⁸. Located in a vicious district, the Salesians of the Parish were working very much to change its environment.

The Salesian community of Makati, though, was the most “criticized” by Fr. Fedrigotti. He saw it as “sui generis”: members seemingly not blending in their work; some not well “in their nerves”; the religious observance in the community was fragmentary. And to think that the rector of the community was the superior himself of the Vice-Province³⁹!

In his month long stay in the Philippines, Fr. Fedrigotti preached in the masses he celebrated, gave conferences to the confreres and to lay people, heard the confessions of the boys, received the rendiconti of the confreres, preached the exercises of a happy death of the communities, and even baptized two. He met the benefactors and friends of the Salesians. He noticed how vocations have begun to spring forth. Although he believed that these still needed some time before they matured well. He criticized the school system in the Philippines, his paradigm obviously being Italian. But he also insinuated that the Salesians themselves ought exert effort to upgrade themselves to be more effective educators in their own schools⁴⁰. The fact was that some of them were occupying offices but who were not prepared nor qualified to teach and administer the schools.

Before he finally left the Philippines for Japan in 13 February 1959, Fr. Fedrigotti ended his visit with a celebration of the mass at the main altar of the new Cathedral of Manila. More than 2,000 students of the various Salesian schools participated in the celebration in a sort of pilgrimage for the closing of the year of the Immaculate Conception⁴¹. With such a massive par-

³⁷ The Salesians have committed themselves to the Archbishop of Manila some time in 1954 that they would accept a parish when Makati was offered to them. Cf ASC F477 *Makati: Osservazioni* (Torino, 26 ottobre 1955).

³⁸ Fr. Fedrigotti described Fr. Rizzato as one who “aggiusta matrimoni, fa catechismo alle ragazze (i ragazzi vanno all’oratorio [della scuola salesiana]) e fa del suo meglio”: ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 6. He never changed house since his assignment in San Ildefonso Parish:

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Fr. Fedrigotti remarked: “Le scuole nelle Filippine sono generalmente scadenti.” It was obviously a conclusion of one who did not exactly know the Philippines. Cf ASC F164 *Filippine: Visita Straordinaria* (Fedrigotti 1959) 6.

⁴¹ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ziggioiti, Makati, 19 febbraio 1959) 2.

icipation of young people to whom Salesians generously gave their time and energy, one wondered how the Prefect General could say that the work in the Philippines was born already adult.

2. Salesian “Founders”

There is a document which contains a list of the so-called “founders” of the Philippine Vice-Province when it was erected in 1958⁴². These names were suppose to be the pioneers of the Salesian work in the Philippines; the document stated that these confreres once belonged to the Province of China.

Looking more closely at the list, one sees not only the names of those who actually came, but also of those who did not remain in the Philippines and who eventually went back to their respective countries of origin. The list showed how “adult” the Salesians were in the beginning of the Salesian work in the Philippines, if “adult” referred to age, which definitely influenced one’s way of thinking and of doing.

In this list of founders, we find this sum: thirty-five priests, seventeen coadjutors (sixteen perpetually professed and one temporarily professed), seventeen clerics (three perpetually professed and fourteen temporarily professed), and nine novices (eight clerics and one coadjutor), for a total of seventy-eight. At the bottom of the document, there are four other names of clerics who were officially destined to work in the Philippines⁴³.

Of the priests, thirty formerly belonged to the Salesian China Province⁴⁴, five did not⁴⁵. Of the coadjutors, almost all were of “Chinese origin”⁴⁶; only

⁴² ASC F164 *Confratelli dell’Ispettorìa della Cina che passano alla Visitatoria delle Filippine* (coi loro documenti).

⁴³ Three were named: Alberto Duran (Spanish), Raul Hernandez (Mexican) and Angel Izquierdo (Spanish). The fourth was anonymous; but this must have been a certain Francisco Castillo (Mexican). If we were to add them to the first count, then we have eighty-two “founders” Salesians who made up the personnel of the Philippine Vice-Province when it started in 1958.

⁴⁴ These were Emilio Baggio, Pablo Bahillo, Antonio Battistello, Pericle Bianchini, Attilio Boscariol, Carlo Braga, Johan Buchta, Maurilio Candusso, Johan Clifford, Mario Cuomo, Guido D’Amore, Saverio Fels, Albino Fernandez, Luigi Ferrari, Pietro Garbero, Anthony Gircour, Mathias Kreutzer, Giovanni Monchiero, Pierangelo Quaranta, Johannes Rauh, Lino Repetto, Igino Ricaldone, Vincenzo Ricaldone, Giovanni Righetti, Giovanni Rizzato, Godfrey Roozen, Ferdinando Rossotto, Patrick Ryan, Georg Schwarz and Ercole Solaroli.

⁴⁵ These were Jose Bosch, Igino Ricaldone, Adolfo Faroni, Luis Iriarte and Agustin Lopez. The latter three were recently ordained. Bosch, Iriarte and Lopez were Spaniards; Ricaldone was Italian; Faroni was Argentinian, but was of Italian origin.

⁴⁶ The coadjutors of “Chinese origin” were Andrea Bragion, Giovanni De Reggi, the brothers Edvigi and Valentino Floris, Romildo Gamba, Michele Garombo, Barnaba Marcos,

three did not⁴⁷. Of the clerics, three were perpetually professed⁴⁸ and the rest were temporarily professed⁴⁹.

The majority of the foreigners were Italians; the rest were of various other nationalities⁵⁰. Almost of all of them were “formed in China” and came directly from there. There were a few who came from other provinces⁵¹. The remaining ones were Filipinos, obviously all young for they were all still in the first phase of their Salesian formation.

The average age of the confreres of the Vice-Province was about forty, adult indeed if one looked at the chronological age. A good number of these were already at the second phase of their lives⁵². Fr. Braga, superior of the Vice-Province, was definitely at the latter part of his career; at sixty-nine, he was still superior. He had behind him years of experience as provincial and missionary in China. He was very much respected for his warmth and sweet kindness which had been compared to that of Pope John XXIII⁵³, and above all for his being simply a Salesian with all, anywhere and at all times.

But Fr. Braga was not spared from the effects of having been in office for a long time. This was according to a confrere with whom Fr. Braga had had conflict and with whom he had never managed to correct a relationship which had turned from bad to worse. In 1963, when the Philippines was about to be made a Province and Fr. Braga was about to be finally changed, the said

Rafael Mrzel, Tommaso Orsolin, Pawel Prokopowicz, Mario Rossi, Nicolino Tambascia, Joseph Tchio and Mario Testa.

⁴⁷ Of the coadjutors, 16 were perpetually professed and one temporarily professed. Mario Viel and Luciano Gorla made their perpetual profession in the Philippines. The coadjutor Lorenzo Nardin (still living and actually assigned in Don Bosco Tabor House, Calamba City, Laguna) came directly to the Philippines from Italy.

⁴⁸ These were Patrick Corcoran, Antonio Pezzotta and Sileno Pivetta. These clerics were later ordained priests; however, only Corcoran died as member of the Salesian Society.

⁴⁹ Felix Glowicki, Jaime Claret, Felicissimo Juan and Silverio Justo were non-Filipinos; the first was Polish and the remaining three Spaniards. Rodolfo Agana, Remo Bati, Leo Drona, Cornelio Esplico, Juan Gatmaitan, Alfredo Manalili, Agustin Miranda, Hilario Muyco, Jose Navarro and Ronaldo Peroy were Filipinos. They belonged to the first and second groups of novices of the Philippines. Of these, only Bati and Drona (first Filipino Salesian Bishop, former bishop of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, Philippines and currently bishop of San Pablo, Laguna), who belonged to the second group of novices, have remained Salesians.

⁵⁰ Of the other nationalities, there were ten Spaniards, four Germans, three Dutch, two Irish, two Polish, one Slovenian, one Chinese and two Mexicans.

⁵¹ The idea that those who came to the Philippines were expelled from China could be re-dimensioned with a more accurate study of these so-called “founders”. Some of these were already “safely working” in Hong Kong and Macao even before the communist take-over of the Salesian works in the Mainland.

⁵² Two were in their 60’s, ten in their 50’s, eighteen in their 40’s, twelve in their 30’s. The rest who were below 30 were in the period of their formation.

⁵³ ASC F163 *Filippine:Corrispondenza* (Clifford a Ziggioiti, Cebu, 4 gennaio 1962) 1.

confreres had no second thoughts in contrasting him in front of the confreres and had accused him to the Prefect General of having taken in the certain defects that some times afflicted the adult and the old⁵⁴.

Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone (1897-1975)⁵⁵ was surely elderly when he came to the Philippines. He indeed had a rich experience in China and Hong Kong, especially in the field of formation. However, at age sixty-one, he had found it very difficult to change some of his ideas, even in the formation of the candidates to the Salesian life. And then, he did not know the English and the main language of the Philippines⁵⁶. Nonetheless, Fr. Braga had put him in charge of the novices; besides, he was roaming confessor for the various houses of Manila.

When Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro (1911-1992)⁵⁷ assumed the provincialship in October 1963, he found himself with the same situation of an adult Salesian personnel. This could readily be seen in the Provincial Directory of 1964-1965⁵⁸. Of those who were in the list of the “founders” during the Vice-Province, there remained fifty-six; and these were those now who had either reached their 50’s or even reached their 60’s. To augment the number of Salesians, there were only eleven priests and eleven coadjutors who were new arrivals. However, there were now forty-nine clerics, of which twenty-eight were Filipinos and twenty-one foreigners⁵⁹. This increased number of young

⁵⁴ Fr. Igino Ricaldone, Fr. Braga’s “antagonist”, was frank in his remark to Fr. Fedrigotti regarding Fr. Braga: “Gli manca ormai l’energia ed il coraggio per intraprendere, intervenire, troncare, correggere e guidare”; “irritabile, indeciso, impressionabile e quanto mai influenzabile”: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Igino Ricaldone a Fedrigotti, Makati, 1 dicembre 1962) 1-2. These comments were obviously by one who perhaps had something against the good Fr. Braga, and who was known to be a nephew of the late Fr. Pietro Ricaldone.

⁵⁵ Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone was born in Mirabello, Alessandria, Italy (27 February 1897) and died in Turin, Italy (14 November 1975) at 78 years of age, 57 years a Salesian and 52 years a priest. He was the elder brother of Fr. Igino Ricaldone and hence was also nephew of Fr. Pietro Ricaldone, Rector Major. He was 59 years of age when he was made novice master in Manila. Cf SAS 18B080.

⁵⁶ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960) 2.

⁵⁷ Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro was born in Genoa, Italy (16 May 1911) and died in Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna, Philippines (11 September 1992) at 81 years of age, 59 years a Salesian and 49 years a priest. He was missionary in North East India (1932-1950), where he was master of novices (Kotagiri, 1948-1950). He was appointed provincial of San Francisco Province in the U.S.A. (1950-1962). Then he was chosen to be the first provincial for the Philippines (1963-1969); after his term, he was named master of novices (1973-1982). Cf SAS 33B235.

⁵⁸ SAFIN *Provincial Directory* (1964-1965). In this directory, there were 38 priests, 29 coadjutors and 47 clerics listed. Of the clerics, 11 were perpetually professed while 36 were temporarily professed. The total number of confreres who made up the Philippine Province in its first year was 113.

⁵⁹ The young foreign clerics who now belonged to the new Salesian Philippine Province were: Juan Andreu, Valeriano Barbero, Francisco Castillo, Jaime Claret, Felice Furlan, Jesus

Filipino Salesians and the injection of a group of equally young foreign confreres was definitely a step to rejuvenate the Salesians in the Philippines.

Early, in the beginning of the Philippine Delegation, there had been a first attempt to procure personnel for the Philippines to assure its growth. When Fr. Ferrari was appointed delegate of the provincial in September 1953, he wrote Turin and presented a request for personnel for the two works which were currently operating in the Philippines. He was not yet in the Philippines then⁶⁰. At that time, there were only four Salesians in the Archipelago, two in Don Bosco Tarlac⁶¹ and another two in Don Bosco Victorias⁶². In his request to Turin, Fr. Ferrari wrote the names of those he thought could come to the Philippines to run the two schools. But what was surprising was that he also asked for those who he thought should come to manage three new presences which he was already planning to accept⁶³!

The confreres whom Fr. Ferrari indicated were all from the China Province. Some of these were actually in Italy after having been expelled from China; others were in Hong Kong. They were veterans; but most of them were past their 40's or almost in their 50's. Of the twenty he named, ten actually came to work in the Philippines. That was not bad, as a first attempt to get confreres. But that foreboded the preoccupation of those who would come after him: they would be clamouring for more personnel.

Gomez, Juan Martinez, Jose Reinoso, Ruggero Pioreschi, Jose Bernacer, Antonio Campo, Eliseo Gallina, Joseph Limmer, Lawrence Mickartz, Benjamin Morando, Lorenzo Pelizzato, Angel Rota, Pietro Uras, Giuliano Venturini, Ovidio Zaccheddu and Giuseppe Zucchelli. Some of these were students of Theology in the different studentates (Salamanca, Castellamare, Sherfield, Bolenggo, Rome) of the Salesian Society; others came as novices and finished their novitiate in the Philippines.

⁶⁰ Fr. Ferrari had gone to England to study English, instead of going straight to the Philippines in order to supervise the coming of the Salesians. For this, Fr. D'Amore, who was supervising the construction of the school in Victorias, felt himself at a loss on what to do as there was not yet personnel, with the school to begin in two months time: ASC F622 *Filippine - Bacolod-Victorias*: Correspondence (D'Amore a Ziggotti, Victorias, 7 marzo 1952) 2.

⁶¹ Fr. Anthony Di Falco (1914-2003) and Fr. John Rutkowski (1907-1973) came to take over the school of Tarlac. Both were U.S. citizens. The former, who was from the San Francisco Province, was recalled back to his province by his provincial Fr. Cogliandro in 1955. The latter, who was from the New Rochelle Province, went to join the Salesians in Australia in 1953 to work among the Polish immigrants there.

⁶² Fr. Guido D'Amore, who later left the Congregation, was supervising the construction of the school being built by the Ossorios for the Salesians; Fr. Giovanni Monchiero (1915-1976) was animating an oratory which he started as soon as he arrived late the previous year (November 1952).

⁶³ Cf ASC F482 *Filippine: Mandaluyong* – I Programma masimo. Fr. Ferrari was already negotiating for the offers of Cebu, Lipa and Mandaluyong.

3. Lack of Personnel

In spite of being seemingly in the best physical age of their lives, if that meant being "adult", the "Filipino Salesians" could not just cope up with the work in the presences they had assumed. From the period of the Delegation to the Vice-Province to the creation of the Province, one of their persistent and consistent needs was personnel.

Strange though that in the beginning, Fr. Acquistapace, who had taken the place of Fr. Carlo Braga as provincial of China in 1952, did not see this difficulty. It was probably for a simple reason: he was provincial. He could easily dispose of the men he thought were needed for the Philippines. He was not really directly calling the shots in the Archipelago, in as much as his delegates, beyond the delegated authority they received, were the ones who ventured in receiving and accepting the various offers. However, he as superior, decided whom to send to Manila; and he had probably considered that those whom he had sent to be sufficient for the moment.

But how did this issue on problem of the lack of personnel come about? One reason was because the Salesians in the Philippines "have extended too much". When Fr. Braga first came to the Philippines in 1950 to discuss the offers to the Salesians, he received seven contemporaneous offers, in six different provinces, in four different islands⁶⁴. He was warned by Fr. Renato Ziggiotti who was Prefect General then, not to entertain offers which would demand too many confreres since there were limited numbers available⁶⁵.

But it was not so. In less than seven years since the arrival of the Salesians in the Philippines, there were too many works accepted and opened too soon, without considering the personnel available: four schools, three parishes⁶⁶, and two houses of formation. And this did not include the youth centers, both daily and festive, attached to some of the houses.

Except for Cebu, which began as a work for street-children but which later ended up to become a school, the majority of the Salesian works in the Philippines commenced as schools. These educational institutions demanded specific personnel, in as much as they were academic and technical, plus vocational. The technical sector was in want of coadjutors, in fact; the heads of the shops⁶⁷ in the schools were understood to be coadjutors⁶⁸. Besides, the ad-

⁶⁴ ASC F164 *Filippine* (Report of Fr. Braga to the General Council).

⁶⁵ ASC F157 *Cina: Corrispondenza* (Ziggiotti a Braga, Torino, 11 gennaio 1951).

⁶⁶ These were Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Cebu, San Ildefonso Parish in Makati and the Chaplaincy of St. Joseph the Worker in Victorias.

⁶⁷ The shops were: carpentry, tailoring, mechanics, electro-mechanics and shoemaking. These demanded prepared Salesians in order that they may be effective from the beginning.

dition of boarders in Victorias, Mandaluyong and Cebu, further burdened the work of the Salesians.

Another reason for the personnel problem was perhaps the motive why the work in the Philippines began. Fr. Braga would frankly put it: the Philippines was a timely “outlet” for the Salesians who had to get out of China⁶⁹. Because of the worsening condition in China and because the future of the work there being not sure, it was necessary that the Salesians prepare an alternative venue where they could release and continue their apostolic energy. Or in the words of Fr. Ferrari, the Philippines was a “providential refuge” for those Salesians expelled from China and for those who might still be expelled from Hong Kong just in case the Communists decided to invade the Crown Colony⁷⁰.

Indeed, the majority of those who came to the Philippines were from the China Province. Although, it is also true that not necessarily all of them were “victims” of the communist takeover of the Mainland⁷¹. Several of those who came to the Philippines repatriated for various reasons⁷²: the health, the realization that the missions were not for them, the desire to go home, the need to look for another mission place. Others, though, generously remained and faithfully continued to perform their ministry in the Philippines.

Another reason was that the Superior in the Philippines seemed to have pretended to have the personnel he needed. Fr. Braga thought that Turin would be easily persuaded to send Salesians, if only to meet the early enthusiasm began in the Philippines, specially if there was the seeming possibility to have vocations in a country that was Catholic and which had produced local vocations. He had witnessed this personally in the Religious Orders al-

These were also directed to help those young who could not go to college anymore.

⁶⁸ When Fr. Ferrari gave his proposal to the Superior of Turin on whom to send to the Philippines, he made sure that there was enough coadjutors. Just for the school of Victorias, he asked for at least five brothers, in order to head the five shops that the school had (mechanics, electrical, carpentry, tailoring and shoe-making): ASC F482 *Filippine: Mandaluyong* – I Programma Massimo, 2.

⁶⁹ ASC F158 *Cina: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1951): “È necessario avere subito uno sfogo”.

⁷⁰ ASC F482 *Filippine: Mandaluyong* – I Programma massimo, 1.

⁷¹ Roozen and Clifford, for example were already long assigned in Hong Kong before the Communist took over the Salesian works in the Mainland. The former was superior of Aberdeen School; the latter was superior of St. Louis School. It was the same with Quaranta too. Instead, Kreutzer, Ferrari, Schwarz, Garbero, Rizzato, Candusso and others were assigned at the Mainland when the Communists began to confiscate the schools administered by the Salesians.

⁷² Here were some of those who repatriated: the Salesians Luigi Ferrari, Giovanni Righetti, Attilio Boscariol, Mattias Kreutzer, Johannes Rauh, Lino Repetto, Carlo Nardin, Salvatore Massi, Barnaba Marcos.

ready at work there. Indeed, another reason why he believed the Salesians should come to the Philippines was because there was the possibility of recruiting vocations from the Filipinos⁷³. But these vocations needed some time before they came about and before they matured.

The fact was that in the beginning, there were not enough Salesians to do the work. And there were not enough young people to take or reinforce the work, to give new energy to the actual work being done, to assure those who were at work that what they were actually doing would not be futile. The current recruitment of local vocations was not yet stable so as to ensure the logical reinforcement and substitution of those who were already "tiring" and "ageing". The pastoral work for vocations did not yet meet the demand for "substitutes". This was something accepted. Indeed, there were already aspirants as early as 1953. In 1956, there were already novices to the Salesian life⁷⁴. But only in the last part of the second half of the 1960's were the first Filipino Salesian vocations ordained or perpetually professed⁷⁵.

4. Overworked Salesians

Since the Philippines as a newly constituted Vice-Province had become independent from China, Fr. Braga logically occupied himself with the needs of the confreres and the need for confreres. He sounded indeed very alarmed with the situation which he described to the Prefect General who had recently visited the Philippines. He was sincere in his report.

The situation was very clear for the moment in the school of Mandaluyong. With 1,600 students, there were eleven Salesians at work. But they were insufficient, in as much as two of the personnel were sick and were not able to meet the demands of the work in full force. Unfortunately, they began to think seriously that the Superiors were neglecting them since that there was no help coming in order to comfort their situation⁷⁶.

⁷³ ASC F158 *Cina: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1951).

⁷⁴ Of the first batch of novices, no one of the Filipinos persevered. There were seven novitiate groups from 1956 to 1964, with a total of 61 novices. Of these, sixteen are still registered as members of the Salesian Society. Cf *Salesian Novices in the Philippines: 1956-1997*, Sacred Heart Novitiate, Don Bosco Missionary Seminary, Lawa-an, Talisay, Cebu, 1997, 1-3.

⁷⁵ The first Filipino Salesian priests were Rodolfo Agana, Remo Bati and Leo Drona; they studied their Philosophy in Hong Kong and their Theology in Italy. The first two were ordained in 6 April 1968 (Turin). The latter was instead ordained in 22 July 1967 (Rome).

⁷⁶ On these overworked Salesians, Fr. Braga remarked: "... non sono angeli, e strapazzati ... sono vicini al collasso": ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1959) 1.

The Salesians in the Philippines tried to be faithful to the Rule. They did not spare themselves of the work; instead, they generously did all that was possible for the work. But they were too few. And as a result of this, they were easily losing their calm. Overburdened with work, they easily lost their nerves and their tempers. And this was seen in the classrooms, as they did not have the chance to have a breather⁷⁷.

For Fr. Braga, the logical place to ask for help was the Philippines's mother province. He had thought that the new provincial of Hong Kong, who had been appointed to substitute Fr. Acquistapace in Hong Kong in 1958, would have been generous and would have immediately agreed to his request for help. But the contrary, the China Superior was reluctant and seemed indifferent to Fr. Braga's plea. The provincial in Hong Kong was occupied in building up the Salesian personnel for Vietnam of which the China Province was for the moment in-charge. And he probably needed every Salesian he had to reinforce the work which was also beginning there; besides, he was short of vocations too. Fr. Braga had to ask Fr. Fedrigotti to intercede of his behalf with the China Superior, hoping that the latter would also "put his hand on his bag"; but this would be in vain⁷⁸.

Fr. Braga, however, insisted that China should help the Philippines at this point in time. He became very personal in his appeal to the Provincial in China: for what he endured and suffered when he was still in China; for the prosperity which China was actually enjoying, fruit of the sweat and blood and tribulations of others, including those who were now actually sweating it out in the Philippines; for the economic prosperity it now enjoyed but which was founded in extreme poverty of several years earlier; for the fact that with the overabundance of personnel, there sometimes followed a fall in the spirit of sacrifice of the confreres⁷⁹.

Fr. Braga showed himself a practical man, if only to obtain reinforcements. He was ready to take in Chinese confreres as long as they could obtain English or Portuguese passports, as well as American or European confreres who wanted "to change environment and to adapt to a new climate and to a different ambient"⁸⁰. Even those confreres from India who might have been

⁷⁷ Fr. Braga reflected on this situation of being undermanned. "Non posso magnarmi dell'osservanza e dello spirito, ma il troppo lavoro guasta parecchie cose e ci toglie, alle volte, la serenità necessaria al nostro quotidiano dovere. In tutta la giornata non si ha un momento per respirare, per sollevarsi, per ritemperarsi, per calmare i nervi assai tesi, per la particolare natura di certi allievi piovuti a chissà quale asteroide... con tanto di atomismo ed irrequietezza da non lasciar respiro": ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1959) 1.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: "mutare loco ed adattarsi al nuovo clima ed al differente ambiente".

affected by the threat of a communist takeover of the Salesian missions located near the Indian-Chinese borders, or who could no longer re-enter their former country of apostolate, were welcome. These Salesians would be of great advantage for the Philippine, since they were already knowledgeable of the English language⁸¹.

Fr. Alfred Cogliandro would express the same predicament when he assumed office as provincial of the Salesians in the Philippines in October 1963. He realized that the scarcity of personnel was worse in the Philippines than in his former province of San Francisco in the United States⁸². Now, it was his turn to express the situation of the Salesian personnel in the new province and to beg for confreres from the superiors in Turin⁸³.

The reality of the new Province which Fr. Cogliandro had been asked by Turin to administer was troubling. There were only twenty-nine priests to distribute in the Province. And worse, he described one third of these as "half-men who could not be relied upon because they were sick, neurasthenic, exhausted, ignorant of the language and of very difficult character"⁸⁴!

Besides, the new Provincial had to accommodate the Archbishop of Manila, Cardinal Rufino Santos, who wanted someone to administer the Catholic Center that he had recently established⁸⁵. Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta (1916-1992)⁸⁶, one of those "adult" Salesians who first worked for the Society in the Philippines and who was close to the Cardinal, had somehow compromised the Salesians to assuming the management of this project of the Archbishop. This he did without consulting the Superior and in disregard of the obvious lack of personnel for the already existing houses⁸⁷.

⁸¹ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960) 1.

⁸² ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963) 2.

⁸³ To remember, however, that Fr. Braga once appealed to Fr. Cogliandro for some English speaking confreres for Tarlac. Fr. Cogliandro had "loaned" Fr. Anthony Di Falco to Fr. Braga in 1951; he had asked Fr. Di Falco back in 1955, not knowing that when he would be provincial to the Philippines, he would be in need of personnel.

⁸⁴ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963) 2: "soli mezzi uomini su cui non si può fare affidamento per mancanza di salute, nevrasstenia, esaurimenti, ignoranza della lingua, caratteri difficilissimi". Cf also ASC F163 *Filippine: (Braga) Relazione Annuale 1962-1963*, 4.

⁸⁵ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963) 2.

⁸⁶ Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta was born in Turin, Italy (9 November 1916) and died in Manila, Philippines (12 April 1992) at 76 years of age, 59 years a Salesian and 49 years a priest.

⁸⁷ Earlier, Fr. Quaranta had committed Fr. Braga to accepting Pope Pius XII Catholic Center. But it was Fr. Cogliandro who had to think of whom to put in this Center; he expressed perplexity why this was ever accepted by Fr. Braga: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati 21 dicembre 1963) 1.

Fr. Cogliandro also resolved to change the personnel of the houses for the coming year, to change certain superiors of the houses⁸⁸, who had been long overdue in their positions. Besides, some were showing their defects, probably on account of their adulthood. These did not have that sense of family, in as much as these tended to rival and compete with each other. Some of them easily absented themselves from their communities, even if for necessity, but which was not necessarily concerned with the apostolate. They were accustomed to do things by themselves, without consulting neither their local council nor the Superior⁸⁹.

The house councils practically did not exist in some of the Salesian houses. The irony of it was that even if the number of the members of some houses was already so small, it still was not easy for the confreres to meet and discuss their problems. Thus, when Fr. Cogliandro made his first visitation of the houses, he did not find the minutes of house council meetings. Worse, he found out that the observations during the visitations were recorded but were never given due importance so as to be complied with⁹⁰.

Thus, Fr. Cogliandro realized that his initiative to change the rectors was futile for a very simple reason: “there was no one to distribute”⁹¹! He insisted, thus, to Turin that there was absolute need for reinforcements and younger confreres. Otherwise, the few who remained and generously gave all of themselves to the work risked stretching themselves to the point that they could not go on further. He was not complaining really, even if the Superiors were

⁸⁸ Fr. Quaranta was, in fact, one of those whom Fr. Cogliandro wanted to change as rector of Mandaluyong who was tied down with debts on account of his initiatives which were sometimes not sanctioned by the previous superior. But because of the influence he had built with people of authority, he had also been mediator between the Salesians and the Cardinal of Manila: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 ottobre 1963) 2.

⁸⁹ Fr. Cogliandro remarked in his first Annual Report (1963-1964) to the Rector Major: “I Direttori si sono abituati a fare tutto loro, senza consultare mai nessuno, alle volte, neppure l’ispettore, il cambio negli orari, nelle tradizioni della casa, nel costruire e demolire edifici, nell’arrangiarsi finanziariamente senza dare un resoconto chiaro a che sia... Non sono ancora venuti nell’idea esatta che tutta l’ispettoria è una famiglia e che siamo uno per l’altro, e non uno contro l’altro armati, una cosa contro l’altra... I direttori sono troppo interessati, per necessità di cose nella vita fuori della scuola”: ASC F163 *Filippine: Relazione Annuale* (1963-1964), 19-20.

⁹⁰ ASC F163 *Filippine: Relazione Annuale* (1963-1964), 20.

⁹¹ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963) 2: “non c’è nulla da distribuire”. In the provincial council, the councillors were the following: Clifford, Baggio, Quaranta, Roozen, and Buchta. These practically have been councillors since the establishment of the Visitatoria in 1958; they have never been substituted! At the arrival of Fr. Cogliandro in October 1963, the rectors of the houses were the following: Baggio (Victorias); Schwarz (Tarlac); Quaranta (Mandaluyong); Braga (Makati); Roozen (San Fernando); Clifford (Cebu).

to think that he was. "This was not to complain; it was to tempt Divine Providence"⁹². He was ready to provide the Superiors in Turin "a situationaire" of the province which had been entrusted to him⁹³.

In the Technical School of Victorias, in Negros Occidental, the rector was sick. The catechist of the school had been transferred to Rizal Institute of Canlubang to replace the director who was also incapacitated, having been run over by a jeepney. The parish priest of the Church in Victorias entrusted to the Salesians was still recovering, after having contracted tuberculosis.

There were only two confreres in-charge of the agro-technical school which Fr. Braga had accepted in Canlubang. Fr. Cogliandro had no one to augment the number. And there were 500 students enrolled therein.

In Cebu, there were also 500 students in the school which was formerly intended to house the street children. But the school catechist had to be transferred to the adjacent Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, which was involving more Salesians rather than the school. The confessor of the school had left for vacation for Italy, but with no intention of coming back.

Don Bosco Makati in Manila had 2,500 students. But it had neither a prefect nor a catechist. The former had left for the States to make propaganda for the Salesian work in the Philippines; and he probably would not be coming back because he was out of place in the Philippines. The latter was very sick, after he had a nervous breakdown; he had frequent attacks of convulsions, in fact.

Don Bosco Mandaluyong, considered as "mother house" of the Salesians in the Philippines and which had about 3,000 students, likewise did not have a prefect, a catechist and a confessor. The actual catechist was also down because of too much work; the confessor had gone back to Germany for vacation. The cleric, who was general assistant of the complex school, was sick with tuberculosis and was physically consumed. And to think that this school had 168 employees "as teachers, shop heads and instructors and employees in the administration office"⁹⁴.

Further north of the Philippines, in San Fernando, Pampanga where there was a school with about 518 students now, there was no prefect nor principal. The actual prefect had to be transferred to Don Bosco Tarlac. There had never been a principal for the school, which had also the aspirants now. Moreover, it was losing its actual confessor in a little while; it would be diffi-

⁹² ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963) 2: "Ma questo non è un lamento: è un tentare la Divina Provvidenza".

⁹³ ASC F163 *Filippine: Relazione Annuale* (1963-1964), 20.

⁹⁴ SAFIN-Mandaluyong *Quaderno delle Osservazioni* (Acquistapace, 1 gennaio 1954) 5.

cult to find someone to substitute him when he leaves for the General Chapter of which he was eager to participate after the one elected had ceded to give way to him⁹⁵.

In Don Bosco Tarlac, a school with a growing enrollment of about 422 students, there was no rector, since he had gone back to Italy for family reasons. The school never had a prefect nor a catechist. Its principal was also down and sick; he walked with a stick and was still recovering⁹⁶. The same confrere, who was now practically the only priest in the school of Tarlac, would again be sick in August 1964, this time with meningitis. Fr. Cogliandro had to find someone to substitute him, since the confrere was hospitalized. But how? He had to ask the principal and director of the Rizal Institute in Canlubang to come to Tarlac. The result however, this time, was that the school of Tarlac acquired a priest; but in Rizal Institute Canlubang, there was neither a principal nor a director⁹⁷!

In December of 1963, there were seven houses with only 29 priests. And of these, a tenth was unable to work “either for exhaustion or for age or for nervous breakdown or for the ignorance of the language”⁹⁸. It was no different by October of the next year. There were thirty-five priests of which only eighteen were in actual work. All the rest were either back in their country or sick, in the hospital or in the infirmary⁹⁹. The confreres worked, in spite of the health difficulties. However, “someone had to rest either for ailment or nervous breakdown every week“. Fr. Modesto Bellido (1902-1993), Superior in-charge of the missions, ought to know about this. Fr. Archimede Pianazzi (1906-2000), in-charge of Salesian formation, would see this if only

⁹⁵ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 19 dicembre 1963) 1. A juniorate for aspirants to the Salesian life was added in 1963 to the school in San Fernando. Fr. Braga was assigned to San Fernando as confessor after his term as Visitatoria. He was asked to be delegate of the Philippine Province for the General Chapter of 1965. This was after Fr. Carreño declined his election, in order to yield his place to Fr Braga whom he knew wanted to go to the General Chapter. While in Italy, Fr. Braga planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 dicembre 1964) 1.

⁹⁶ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 19 dicembre 1963) 2.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, (Makati, 26 agosto 1964) 1.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, (Makati, 19 dicembre 1963) 1: “o per esaurimento, o per età, o per nervosismo, o per ignoranza della lingua”.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, (Makati, 14 ottobre 1964) 2. Indeed, confreres “have gone home”, and some have decided not to come back, in spite of the invitation to them to please come back. Because these felt healthier in Italy rather than in the Philippines. This was not surprising, for it was true that confreres were overworked so that their health could no longer hold. Besides, some of them found it difficult to be in the warm and humid climate in the Archipelago: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 febbraio 1964) 1.

he would go and pay a visit to the Philippines from India. Fr. Cogliandro declared that he was not exaggerating in what he was saying¹⁰⁰. It was enough for the Superiors to look at the second volume of the *Elenco Generale* of that year and see which confreres were in the Philippines, or even if listed in the *Elenco*, were not really able to work for some reason or another¹⁰¹!

When Fr. Cogliandro asked the Rector Major for personnel, he was very precise with the Salesians that he needed most. Moreover, he demonstrated the actual positioning of the confreres and their movements. His being precise and detailed was for his “peace of mind”, of his duty to present the gravity of the situation of the lack of personnel in the Philippines. If anything happened, he at least could no longer be held responsible before God¹⁰².

Furthermore, the Philippine Provincial added that if there had been misunderstanding and troubles in the past, it was caused precisely “by this scarcity, by too much work, by the tiredness, by the impossibility to carry on so many things according to one’s responsibility”¹⁰³. Indeed, the Superiors of Turin had reprimanded him for his seeming pretension of wanting to have everything at once, as he started his work as provincial. But he could not be also so sincere and frank in exposing the situation. For in that scarcity of personnel, the result was to have “willing confreres but worn out; workers but tired; generous but with nerves on the edge; good but discouraged; zealous but sick!”¹⁰⁴.

Here, indeed, was the Philippine Province said to be “born already adult” and now risked to remain “adult” in the absence of young recruits and blood! Worse, it was not just a Province “già nata adulta” but also “ammalata” because confreres were very sick; and “impoverita” because confreres were leaving and were not coming back.

Some of the confreres in the Philippines, even the exemplary ones, were bitter regarding this situation. In their mind, Turin was indifferent and was not concerned with their plight. Worse, they believed that the Superiors of Turin

¹⁰⁰ Fr. Cogliandro was however grateful for the clerics who had arrived. Their coming was an encouragement for the confreres: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 14 ottobre 1964) 2.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 1. Cf also *Elenco Generale*, 1963, 473-476; *ibid.*, 1964, 478-481.

¹⁰² ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 14 ottobre 1964) 2.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963) 2: “da questa scarsezza, dal molto lavoro, dalla stanchezza, dall’impossibilità di poter tenere dietro a tutto secondo le nostre responsabilità”.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963) 2: “confratelli volenterosi, ma sfiniti; lavoratori, ma stanchi; generosi, ma nervosamente tesi; buoni, ma scoraggiati; zelanti, ma malati!”.

had never been really been interested in the Salesian cause in the Philippines. Sometimes, they asked why. They already harboured this sentiment of the seeming neglect of the Superiors in the past; and seemingly, it was being confirmed now. However, what they asked now was some sign of “paternal interest” from Turin¹⁰⁵. If ever the Salesian province in the Philippines was born “adulta” in the mind of Fr. Cogliandro, it was also due to Turin’s seeming “in-differenza”¹⁰⁶!

The Philippine Provincial had in fact previously sent to Turin a list of confreres of various provinces who were ready to go to the Philippines¹⁰⁷. These confreres were mostly young students of Theology who were willing to go to the Philippines after ordination. Others were of good age but who volunteered to come to be confessors in the houses¹⁰⁸. He hoped that the respective provincials of these confreres would permit them to leave for the Philippines. Turin had the chance to prove that it wanted to help him if it would intervene of his behalf with the provincials of the confreres who wanted to go to the Philippines.

In a later date, Fr. Cogliandro once more wrote Turin with a longer list of volunteers to the Philippines: this time, fourteen young priests, plus a cleric who wanted to come for practical training in the Philippines¹⁰⁹. Again, he hoped that Turin would flex some muscles to convince the provincials of these confreres to allow them to go to the Philippines. At the end, though, a dismal three finally went to the Philippines out of the possible fifteen¹¹⁰! Fr. Cogliandro must have wondered if Turin was really interested and in earnest in helping the Philippines from remaining “adulta” as a Province.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*: “che i Superiori di Torino non siano mai stati molto interessati della causa salesiana nelle Filippine”. They even noticed that when the Vice-Province was changed into a Province, there was not even an official mention of it in the Acts of Superior Council! Cf *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963) 2. Fr. Cogliandro presented his reflection of the actual personnel. “Questi poveri confratelli venuti qui da altre ispettorie come rifugio, alcuni raccolti qua e là, hanno fatto meraviglie, ma ora hanno bisogno di sentire che tutta la Congregazione è indietro a loro a sostenerli, non solo a parole, ma coi fatti, in un paese dove ultimi arrivati abbiamo sì grande avvenire e dove le anime vengono a cercarci per chiederci i sacramenti”.

¹⁰⁷ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 26 agosto 1963) 1.

¹⁰⁸ These were the Salesian priests Vincenzo Scuderi, Luigi Cazzola, Oreste Brogli, Luigi Ferrari and Giovanni Righetti. The last two have worked in the Philippines; now they asked to return. Cf *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ There were seven priests and a cleric from the Spanish Provinces of Zamora, Madrid, Bilbao and Barcelona, three from the Italian Provinces of the Sub-Alpina and the Centrale, and one from the San Francisco Province, U.S.A. Cf ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro, Makati, undated) 1.

¹¹⁰ These were the Salesians Giuseppe Savina (1936-1999), Luigi Ferrari and Juan Martinez. The last later transferred to Thailand and from there left the Congregation in 1974.

5. Vocational Growth

It was understood that the Salesians should have generated their own personnel as soon as they had laid down the foundations of the Salesian work in the Philippines. This was to ensure the continuity of the work began; in order to make the work not “adulta” but to be continuously of the young and for the young. Fr. Braga, for one, had already observed how the existing Religious Orders in Manila had vocations¹¹¹. And he was only enthusiastic of the possibility that the Salesians would have their own soon. But it would not be he who would initiate the search for the local vocations.

In the Salesian house of Mandaluyong¹¹², a budding aspirantate was started by Fr. Ferrari when he accepted in 1953 the offer of the Archbishop of Manila that the Salesians take over the old “Seminario Conciliar de Manila”¹¹³. In the same house, there was a flourishing daily oratory and a technical-academic and vocational school. But soon, a sort of boarding house was added to the growing complex work. The aspirantate, however, became onerous to the limited personnel of the house¹¹⁴. Thus, it was transferred after a couple of years to the Salesian school of Victorias in Negros island, while the boarding house, proving to be impractical and more burden to the already overworked Salesians, was instead abolished.

The aspirantate in Victorias flourished for some years. Fr. Braga was indeed very enthusiastic about it, so much so that he foresaw that by 1961, there would be over a hundred aspirants¹¹⁵. But he decided to bring it back nearer to Manila, in the island of Luzon¹¹⁶. The parents of most of the aspirants who came from the Salesian schools located in the island of Luzon were hesitant to have their children far from them.

The Filipino family was a closely knit one, different from the European. Consequently, the aspirantate was once more transferred in 1962 to the Sale-

¹¹¹ ASC F158 *Cina: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1951).

¹¹² The Salesian House of Mandaluyong was the third foundation in the Philippines (15 September 1953), and the first to be established in Manila. The former seminary of the Archdiocese was first offered by Archbishop Gabriel Reyes to the Salesians so that they might take care of the orphans who were lodged there. But it was Archbishop Rufino Santos who would finally consign the place to the Salesians.

¹¹³ ASC F157 *Cina: Corrispondenza* (Notizie e programmi del Sig. Don Acquistapace, 3 marzo 1954) 1; *ibid.*, (Acquistapace a Bellido, Hong Kong, 1 aprile 1954) 1.

¹¹⁴ SAFIN-Mandaluyong *Quaderno delle Osservazioni* (Acquistapace, 1 gennaio 1954) 5.

¹¹⁵ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959) 3; *ibid.*, (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

sian school in San Fernando, Pampanga¹¹⁷. It would remain and grow significantly there until 1992 when both day school and juniorate were covered by lahar due to the eruption of the Pinatubo Vulcano located in the area.

Fr. Acquistapace would initiate the move to establish a novitiate in the Philippines. However, there was already an existing novitiate in Hong Kong itself. It was the typical case of a province which, because it included other nations, had two novitiates. Fr. Acquistapace had reasons why he wanted a separate novitiate for the Filipinos in the Philippines. The Filipino was different from the Chinese. The Philippines was a safer place to have the novices rather than Hong Kong. Besides, it was not that easy for the Filipino to enter Hong Kong¹¹⁸.

The novitiate in the Philippines was prematurely erected in the house of Mandaluyong in 1954; but it never opened there. Soon, it was canonically erected in 1955 in the school of Victorias¹¹⁹, where it neither started too. The next year, the first novices finally began their novitiate in a villa in Muntinlupa leased to the Salesians by a benefactor. It remained there until 1962; the place was adjacent to the maximum security of Manila¹²⁰. In the beginning of 1962, it was temporarily transferred to the school of San Fernando in Pampanga. The former novitiate house of Muntinlupa was returned to its owners. Meanwhile, a permanent home in Canlubang, Calamba, about 40 kilometers from Manila was being constructed. This was due to another providential donation effected to Fr. Braga. So that in June 1963, the seventh batch began their novitiate in their new residence¹²¹.

The novitiate had experienced two masters of novices in its first seven years: for five years, from 1956 to 1962, it was under Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone. The confrere was a trusted man of Fr. Braga. He was also a veteran formator of young Salesians, having been rector of the post-novitiate in the formation house of Shaukiwan in Hong Kong. But he was also an old and a tired man

¹¹⁷ The Prefect General, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti, had also recommended that the aspirantate or juniorate be transferred from Victorias. The Bishop of San Fernando, Bishop Emilio Cinense was happy to have the Salesian Minor Seminary within his diocese for it meant that with the Salesians, there would more priests to help him. Cf *ibid.*, (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 settembre 1961) 1.

¹¹⁸ ASC F548 *San Fernando-Fi* (Acquistapace a Puddu, Hong Kong, 15 novembre 1954).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, (Fedrigotti, Torino, 4 maggio 1955).

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, (Fedrigotti, Torino, 15 maggio 1956). Here, six groups of novices, from 1956 to 1963, underwent their first formation. The novitiate was interrupted for the first time in the years 1960-1961; its next interruption would be from 1968 to 1970. Cf (Manuscript) *Salesian Novices in the Philippines: 1956-1997...*, 2, 5.

¹²¹ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 4 ottobre 1963).

when he assumed the novitiate in 1956, one who never updated and who possibly was holed up in his outlook of the religious and Salesian life.

There were no novices for the year of 1960-1961¹²²; this became a motive to substitute the old Fr. Vincenzo. Fr. Braga outlined some reasons for having have to change him: Fr. Vincenzo did not speak good English, and he did not keep the novices cheerful and joyful. But a real motive for his retirement, in the mind of the one who had put him as novice master, was that he was “out of order” and totally “drained in nerves and in health”¹²³. So that Fr. Braga had decided to ask the Superiors of Turin to send him a substitute.

Indeed, Fr. Vincenzo was already at the brink of a mental breakdown. Consequently, Fr. Braga planned to send him back to Italy for a much needed rest and so that the confer could regain his health. At the same time, he wanted someone who would now takeover the novitiate so as not to interrupt for long and to give the needed “aggiornamento” for the new set of novices. This time, Turin’s answer was a welcome one to him and for a Vice-Province so much tested: the Superiors had decided to send Fr. Jose Luis Carreño.

6. Carreño’s College

Fr. Carreño (1905-1986)¹²⁴ was a known Salesian and was a very respected man¹²⁵. Although he was almost towards his 60’s when he was made novice master, he maintained his openness and his vision of the Salesian formation of the young. It was due to him that the Seminary College in Canlubang was established¹²⁶. His was a first serious attempt to really create

¹²² There was no novitiate group for the year 1960-1961, for lack of a sufficient number.

¹²³ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962) 3: “fuori uso... esaurito di nervi e di salute”. According to Fr. Braga, Fr. V. Ricaldone had his crisis: “di mania di persecuzione, di squilibrio psichico... gli pareva di dover morire ad ogni passo... era indeciso, aveva paura di assalti notturni ed assoldò di guardie armate che vigilassero il noviziato... passò mesi di insonnia e nonostante pillole sedative e tranquillizzanti non chiudevano l’occhio”: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 26 novembre 1963) 1.

¹²⁴ Fr. José Luis Carreño (1905-1986) was born in Bilbao, Spain (23 October 1905) and died in Pamplona, Spain (29 May 1986) at 81 years of age, 64 years a Salesian and 54 years a priest. He was master of novices in Tirupattur, India (1933-1943) and then provincial of Madras Province (1945-1951). He did not stay long in the Philippines, being novice master in the Philippines only from 1962 to 1965; for some reasons, he had to leave. Cf SAS 22B015.

¹²⁵ Fr. Clifford described Fr. Carreño to the Rector Major as “una persona amabilissima, di buona stampa salesiana”: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Clifford a Ziggotti, Cebu, 4 gennaio 1962) r.

¹²⁶ Fr. Braga had accepted the offer of 6 hectares of land, about 50 kms. From Manila, by Mr. Jose Yulo without the previous consent of Turin. He envisioned to put there the aspirantate and novitiate: ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

young Salesians who were really Filipinos, immersed in their actual place of work in which they too in a little while would be involved and would be committed.

Fr. Carreno had envisioned to start a college for the Filipino Salesians where they could study and be qualified to teach in the Salesians schools. In his mind, the current set-up of sending the newly professed to Hong Kong for Philosophy did not help in qualifying the newly professed Salesians to teach in the schools. The fact was that many of the confreres who were then at work in the schools were not qualified themselves. Some had trumped up their qualifications and falsified their diplomas, if only to manage the schools. Their being foreigner had minimally served their purpose of being qualified. Moreover, in the Philippines, the nationalization of the schools was very much on the move¹²⁷. Thus, the Salesian schools were practically being run by the lay, not only because the Salesians were not enough but also because the existing Salesians were not qualified to teach¹²⁸.

Fr. Carreño was optimistic. He claimed that there was now a “new house” in Canlubang, ready to accommodate and host “50 novices and professed members plus twelve professors”¹²⁹. He had only one condition to attain his vision: that the post-novices should no longer be sent to Hong Kong, and that those who were still in Hong Kong should be recalled back to Manila.

But to do so, Fr. Carreño had to battle with the ex-Visitatore Fr. Braga and the new provincial Fr. Cogliandro. Strangely though, he had the support of some of the elder Salesians who also believed that the post-novices should not be sent anymore to Hong Kong. Thus, he had recourse to the Rector Major and stated his argument to him, if only to win his point¹³⁰. And this he did, even if it was not easy. Fr. Cogliandro resisted his initiative in the early months of his coming; but he was quick to see the wisdom of such an initiative of a newcomer like himself to the Philippines. And it was timely one as well, indeed one step forward, and a giant one at that, in order to insure that the Congregation in the Philippines remain “giovane”¹³¹.

Fr. Carreño told Fr. Ziggotti that he was ready to go to Europe, as he did before, to look for personnel for the Seminary College of Canlubang. Further-

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 9 settembre 1962) 1.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963) 2.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963).

¹³¹ Sometime in the 1980's, the average age of the confreres in the Philippines was between 25 and 30. In the current 2000's, it has risen to about 30 and 35. While in Italy, it has indeed aged, with practically an average age of confreres between 65 and 70.

more, he wrote and gave another of his suggestions to the Rector Major for the new Philippine Province to solve its situation of lack personnel. He asked that Fr. Bellido should send from Europe about twenty novices as he once did for India¹³². In his mind, the injection of young foreign clerics would give fresh blood to the personnel. These would easily learn the local language, not just English. They could even become Filipinos if they opted, in five years time. And studying in the Seminary-College, they were already qualified to teach in any Philippine school. Finally such a mixture of the clerics, local and foreign, would be to the advantage of both for the Salesian Society in the Philippines¹³³.

Conclusion

Fr. Carreno's wish of having young confreres from Europe began to be realized in his time. His call was heeded almost at once, with the advent of young novices¹³⁴ and clerics from Italy to Canlubang for the study of Philosophy; although, such move of Turin did not last long on account of the events which were travailing Europe in the immediate post-Vatican II period¹³⁵.

Some time later, Fr. Cogliandro wrote Fr. Fedrigotti, informing him that Fr. Carreño was doing well as novice master and superior of Don Bosco Seminary College in Canlubang. In fact, they expected for that August of 1964, about 50 clerics between novices and students of Philosophy, young people who have not yet reached or who were just past their twenty¹³⁶. Finally, there were now young Salesians for the Philippines where the “work was born already adult”.

¹³² *Ibid.*, (Carreño a Ziggiotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963).

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 2. “Questi giovani imparerebbero il Tagalog e potrebbero prendere la cittadinanza di qui in 5 anni, insieme ai titoli di insegnamento; la mescola coi filippini sarebbe vantaggiosa per ambedue”.

¹³⁴ In 1964, young clerics (Pietro Uras, Giuseppe Zuchelli, Ovidio Zaccheddu) started to come to Canlubang to join the local novices and post-novices for the studies in Philosophy and in College. Earlier though, there have been clerics (Felice Furlan, Giuliano Venturini, Pierluigi Zuffetti, Giovanni Arienti) to provide practical trainees to the new province. However, practically all of them returned to Italy in order to study Theology.

¹³⁵ The increase in vocations was rather prodigious in the Philippines so that there was practically no need of outside help. Moreover, in the second half of the 1960's, the first impact of the reform promulgated by Vatican II began to be felt in a crisis of vocations. In Europe, the vocational growth began to decline.

¹³⁶ ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, San Fernando, 10 luglio 1964) 2.