



# ACTS OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL

## OF THE SALESIAN SOCIETY

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## I. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

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Turin. March 1971.

*My dear confreres and sons,*

In the last issue of the *Acts* I gave you news of the beatification of Father Rua in 1971 and I said I would return to the subject later. That is the purpose of my present letter and I fulfil it not merely as a duty but through a sense of great joy at being to treat with you on this matter, since this event is rich in significance for our Family and indeed for each one of us.

Don Rua's Cause has been a slow and laborious one, during which every item and aspect of his life was thoroughly — I might even say severely — scrutinized. Now, at this moment in the life of the Church when our Congregation is engaged in the process of seeking genuine renewal, our Founder's first successor is to receive the ecclesial seal of sanctity. This seems to me to be a loving and bountiful gesture of Providence offering us this gift of great price; at the same time it is a warning and a reminder of those perennial and essential values that are at the root of all Christian life and especially religious life.

### **A recall to sanctity**

Let me state clearly that Don Rua's beatification is a recall to our fundamental vocation to sanctity. In saying this I anticipate an objection that could arise in certain quarters — but, I hope, not among you, my dear confreres. Isn't it out of place, even anachronistic, to speak about sanctity today?

Admittedly the word « sanctity », with all its implications, seems to have disappeared from so much so-called religious literature. Nevertheless it cannot be expunged from the life of the Church and still less from the life of consecrated religious. To do that would be to obliterate the word, with all its values and obligation, from the Gospel

itself and from the constant doctrine and life of the Church which inherits and fulfils the Gospel message.

But there is more to be said than that. In our very own times, more than two thousand Fathers of that same Vatican Council II that « flung open the windows of the Church » did not by any means delete sanctity in its documents. How could they without betraying their mandate? On the contrary, they re-studied and re-established the teaching of the Gospel, of the Apostles and of the unbroken line of the Fathers of the Church, recalling the entire People of God to its primary vocation to sanctity. That call, in fact, consists in living the Gospel, the whole Gospel — a life that in itself is a marvellous form of witnessing.

At the Council a certain bishop had this to say: « In the United States the only Gospel many atheists came into contact with was the Sisters they met in hospitals. The impact of this « Gospel » — neither read nor preached but seen in action — was attested by the curiosity aroused in them to get to know more about those women dressed in white. That first curiosity led on to wanting to hear about One who was still unknown to them and in whom these good women believed so much as to consecrate their lives to Him, giving up everything that life, beauty and ease could promise them so as to dedicate themselves to the service of others. What a marvellous way to start constructive dialogue with those who are far away! ».

Even a mere glance at the documents of Vatican II cannot hide the recurring summons to pursue holiness addressed to even the most diverse ranks of God's People. To bishops, workers, contemplatives, missionaries, married people, priests and religious — to all alike the Council documents recall the necessity of sanctity, indicating always the ways and means thereto. Let us refer to at least some of these conciliar statements.

*Lumen Gentium* affirmed clearly and solemnly: « All the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to that perfect holiness whereby the Father Himself is perfect » (L.G. 11). In another passage the same Constitution expresses even more forcefully this commitment of the simple but genuine Christian: « All of Christ's followers, therefore, are invited and bound to pursue holiness and the perfect fulfilment of their proper state » (L.G. 42).

## Professionals of holiness

What of us consecrated religious? The Church of the Council declares us professionals in that following of Christ, that conformity to Christ which consists substantially in holiness and which consequently renders us capable of witnessing to the sanctity of the Church by imitating the poor and obedient, virginal and praying Master. Here again *Lumen Gentium* says verbatim: « Religious should carefully consider that through them, to believers and non-believers alike, the Church truly wishes to give an increasingly clearer revelation of Christ » (L.G. 46).

If we desire to be bravely sincere then we must recognize that the fundamental problem, nay the very *raison d'être* of the religious life is the sanctity of its members. The primary and palpable purpose of those so-called structures and of the persons who exercise authority in religious life is precisely to make the path of holiness easier for those in their care. A spiritual writer gives this interesting definition of the exercise of authority in religious life: « To command means to help the religious do the will of God, in other words to become holy » (Padre Anastasio, *Ascolto di Dio*).

It is on these evangelical and conciliar lines that so many souls in the Church of God move and work even today. True, they don't seek notice, they find little space in newspapers, but their presence is none the less real, none the less effective their action. A careful and attentive look reveals them, however, and they provide faith and hope in the midst of so many signs that could lead one to think of a humanism which, according to one writer, one might identify rather with firsthand diabolism.

Providentially such souls are found in all ranks of God's People, among those who have the highest responsibilities in the Church's hierarchy, among humble religious and hidden apostles, among layfolk dedicating themselves through a sense of dutiful Christian commitment to the difficult tasks of social and political progress, among unassuming workers, among those who often endure acute daily suffering, and even among men immersed in business affairs who do not allow themselves to be imprisoned or contaminated by them — all these convey a sense of justice and evangelical charity.

## Two modern examples of holiness

Among the many names we could mention I would like to dwell on two: Pope John and Cardinal Bea. We can speak tranquilly about these not merely because they are known to all but also because we are no longer restricted by that sense of respectful reserve which is natural when talking of the living. These two great figures were our contemporaries; there was a big difference between them but both, we may say, thirsted after holiness. Convincing proof of this was not merely their exteriorly impressive lives but, more so, their interior spirit.

Whoever reads Pope John's *Journal of a Soul* and Cardinal Bea's *Diary* finds himself confronted by two giants of living holiness in our very own times. Indefatigably and with youthful ardour, even in old age, they multiplied their activities for the Kingdom of God; they systematically nourished themselves by simple, filial contact with God, ceaselessly polishing and purifying their human personality to conform it as much as possible with that of Him who represented the vivid and thrilling ideal of their lives, Christ Our Lord.

Following the life of Joseph Roncalli one sees on almost every page, we might say, of the *Journal of a Soul* his obvious and constant preoccupation concerning his personal sanctification. Take, for example, this extract during his retreat for his 80th birthday in 1961: « I am very far from attaining this holiness in fact, although my desire and will to succeed in this are whole-hearted and determined ». In order to bring his will to bear upon actual practice he then quotes and applies to himself some excerpts from a precious little booklet by the great Anthony Rosmini — great not only intellectually but perhaps even more so for the holiness of his life:

« Reflect on this thought, that sanctity consists in being willing to be opposed and humiliated, rightly or wrongly; in being willing to obey; in being willing to wait, with perfect serenity...; in acknowledging all the benefits you receive and your own unworthiness; in feeling a great gratitude to others; in respect for others and sincere charity; in tranquillity, resignation, gentleness; in the desire to do good to all and in unceasing work... » (Stresa, 1840. *La perfezione cristiana*).

With extreme simplicity and naturalness Pope John adds: « I find

it comforting to note that these are simply the applications of my own special motto, which I took from Baronius: *Oboedientia et Pax*. Jesus, You are always with me. I thank You for this doctrine, which seems to follow me wherever I go ».

I think it impossible to gauge Pope John accurately merely by those unforeseeable and courageous gestures of his that were so pregnant with goodness; one needs to know also the source of nourishment from which he constantly drew in his ever-firm determination to get close to Christ, his Model — in other words, his actual efforts after personal holiness.

I mentioned Cardinal Bea and it is interesting to read what he said to Fr. Schmidt, his private secretary who also edited his *Diary*.

When he was elected President of the Secretariate for Christian Unity the Cardinal had already turned eighty but that did not prevent him from making numerous journeys in Europe, four to the United States and one to Constantinople. In the first nine months of 1962 alone he gave twenty-five interviews to the press, radio and television. At the Council he read four official reports, besides speaking on nineteen occasions in his personal right as a Council Father. After his election as Cardinal he presented 260 different publications to the press, including eight books that have been translated into four or five other languages. Here certainly we face a man of extraordinary activity, all the more amazing on account of his age. After his death the discovery of his regularly kept *Spiritual Diary* brought to light and revealed the source of the marvellous energies of this man who was one of the central personalities of the Council.

The notes he made on his life and on his understandably arduous spiritual progress were written with sincerity, constant diligence and humility, revealing spiritual depth and richness, with an unwearying concern and daily effort to approach Christ his Model. He never tired of repeating to himself before God that in the midst of the vast work confronting him each day, the determining element was to be a profound care for his spiritual life — not merely for his own salvation but also for the success of his apostolic activity. Repeatedly he remarks that apostolic action is the more deep-rooted the more intimately it is linked with Christ, whose docile instrument he must be.

Other ideas arise constantly in his *Diary*, e.g. Christ must be the centre of his life, but for him the love of Jesus signified also the

constant effort to become Christlike and this above all in genuine love of neighbour, in humility and in serene acceptance of the Cross.

### **Don Bosco's message**

Dear confreres, here we are faced with a perennial reality which unfortunately all too often today is either ignored or, worse, twisted.

The most fervid activity is truly successful and a real apostolate only when it is the projection of our love for Christ. Jesus, for the apostle, is at once the source, guide and goal of his whole life: this substantially is sanctity. Thanks be to God, even today we have in the Church — and, even if in different forms and situations, in our own Congregation — not a few souls who are energetically living this divine urge which is in practice the fulfilment of the Council's exhortation to us religious: « As they seek God before all things and only Him, the members of each community should combine contemplation with apostolic love. By the former they adhere to God in mind and heart; by the latter they strive to associate themselves with the work of redemption and to spread the Kingdom of God » (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 5).

But for us as faithful sons it is natural to want to hear what our Father says about sanctity. Don Bosco has indeed something worthwhile saying.

At the dawn of the Congregation Don Bosco said to Don Rua, who was the first Novice Master at Valdocco: « The first aim of our Society is the sanctification of its members. Let each one impress this well on his mind and heart, starting with the Superior General and right down to the last confrere. No one is necessary in the Society. God alone must be the head, the absolutely necessary Master ».

As you see, on this point our Father speaks with a clarity and decision that leave no room for doubt. Nevertheless it is well to recall that Don Bosco was no mere die-hard, fearful of change, a severe ascetic of mediaeval monasticism. He was a man consumed by dynamic, untiring and enterprising zeal for the good of his neighbour, but precisely on this account he understood, and desired his sons to realize that the point of departure and arrival for everyone who enters, lives and works in the Congregation, is God. As he himself clearly repeated on numerous

occasions and confirmed by his own example, all this is identified with the sanctification of the members of the Society.

### **Don Rua's reply**

At this stage we may ask how Don Rua responded to this precise programme of sanctification given him by Don Bosco. The reply is given us by people who knew him well and who were at the same time experts regarding holiness.

Before quoting authoritative judgments passed after his death on Don Rua's sanctity I would like to recall the observation of Mama Margaret on young Michael Rua in the early heroic days of the Oratory. Speaking to Don Bosco she said: « John, all the boys here are good but Rua excels them all ». This judgment was to hold good throughout Don Rua's life.

The great Archbishop Andrew Ferrari of Milan, whose own Cause for beatification is in progress, often repeated that if the ancient custom of public proclamation of sainthood by the voice of the people still held, he himself would at once have taken the initiative regarding Don Rua.

Cardinal Cagliero (a man not so easily pleased), who lived alongside Don Rua for so many long years, could say of him at the Process: « In Don Rua there was no such thing as *I* or *my*, but only God ».

Finally, Fr. Rinaldi testified thus at the Process: « Pius X spoke with great veneration to me of Don Rua, whom he knew well, and concluded by saying that Don Rua was a wise man, emphasizing the word and adding, « He was a saint! ».

But what were the features of this sanctity now recognized by the Church, what aspects can interest us who live at a period so greatly different from the one in which Don Rua lived and worked? I shall select a few which seem particularly relevant.

### **« Ineffable goodness »**

The Milan daily *L'Osservatore Cattolico* of 6 June 1902 gave this portrait of Don Rua: « Going on for 64 years of age, he is tall and thin, with the face of an ascetic, radiating inexpressible gentleness and



kindness. His voice is slight and modest, recalling that of the Founder who in his simplicity knew how to seek the most delicate fibres of his heart and make them vibrate. He is a man of ineffable goodness and of extraordinary activity ».

When hardly twenty-eight years old, Don Rua was the Rector at Mirabello and Fr. Cerruti later declared: « I always remember his indefatigable industry, that fine and delicate prudence of his in governing, his zeal for the religious and moral, the intellectual and physical welfare of the confreres and boys. I still recall so vividly the, I shall not say fatherly but maternal charity with which he nursed me when I fell ill in 1865 ». Especially in that last sentence of that early portrait I feel there are aspects of Don Rua's sanctity which are much valued by modern spirituality, elements that obviously presuppose others that are perhaps less noticeable but even more essential.

That « ineffable goodness » inherited from the Father and mentioned by the newspaper was always preserved and became ever more obvious and impressive as Don Rua gradually took over the government of the Congregation. There were innumerable witnesses to this, people most worthy of trust who often gave their testimony under oath.

Professor Piero Gribaudo of the University of Turin, who enjoyed great familiarity with Don Rua, declared: « His greatest affection went out to the lowly, whom he treated exactly as he did persons of high rank. It even appeared that the more lowly a person was the more courteously he treated him » (Process, pp. 654-703).

Among so many facts about this « ineffable goodness » I would like to quote two that seem to me to be significant.

In our archives we have 115 letters written by Don Rua all in reply to other letters sent him over the course of some years by a poor confrere who was sick and depressed. What is most impressive about them is the fact that each reply was written with an exquisite charity that disregarded all his previous letters. Not much effort is needed surely to appreciate all the patience, understanding and goodness in him that could only arise from a charity that was deeply lived.

The other episode reveals an obvious and delicate understanding and a loving condescension that only an exceptional mother could have for a child who asks for something beyond the limits of all discretion. A certain cleric could not succeed in composing the words of a hymn he was supposed to sing on the feastday of his Rector, Fr. Guidazio.

He got the incredible idea of writing to Don Rua, the Superior General, asking him to compose urgently a hymn metrically adapted to the music already in hand! A few days before the feast the cleric received the hymn so boldly commissioned from the Rector Major. Each one can draw his own conclusions.

We can understand therefore how Don Rua could declare to the Salesians in the Argentine immediately after the death of Don Bosco: « The great charity which infused the heart of our beloved Don Bosco of holy memory animated his example and words and sparked off the love which God placed in mine so that I felt galvanized by his love. Hence if in succeeding him I have not inherited the great virtues of our holy Founder, I feel that Our Lord has granted me his love for his spiritual sons... I consecrate all my days and all the moments of each day to you... And so I pray for you, think of you, and act on your behalf as a mother does for her only child ».

### **Extraordinary activity**

The other aspect of Don Rua's sanctity which I wish particularly to bring out is that extraordinary activity mentioned in that Milanese newspaper.

It seems incredible that a man of his fragile frame and of such delicate health could stand up to such intense and vast daily activity, interesting himself in the widest range of Salesian apostolate, promoting and actuating enterprises which at that time appeared extraordinary and daring. His example is a valid intimation and spur to us also today not to tarry in static and sterile forms of activity which obviously do not respond to the needs of souls.

The mainspring of all Don Rua's activity is to be found above all in the teaching and example of Don Bosco which he absorbed over the long years spent at his side. Don Bosco repeated in word and work: « Not penance and discipline, but work, work, work ».

Needless to say this spirit of work propagated and exemplified by Don Bosco is an element of sanctity linked with prayer. The Acts of the XIX General Chapter speak very meaningfully in this regard, stating: « Prayer and work are the two joined hands which must never be separated, still less opposed. Jesus Himself has given us the example

in this ». Don Rua had assimilated the Salesian asceticism of work really well.

As a young Salesian he himself had come close to death on account of overwork and on that occasion the good Father said to him, « I don't want you to die: you still have much work to do ». Don Bosco was right, and who could measure from then onwards the bulk of Don Rua's incessant work and his innumerable achievements? Even beyond the government of a Congregation still in its infancy Don Rua found time for many other enterprises.

Whilst busying himself above all as spiritual guide of the confreres through his edifying circular letters and numerous meetings, he gave his attention also to the Oratories (for which he had inherited Don Bosco's love), the Missions, the Cooperators, the Past Pupils, and to all sectors of the Salesian apostolate.

Not content with all this activity he somehow managed to undertake numerous journeys in order to meet his sons in their actual field of work. He was called the « salesman of charity » and in the course of twenty years covered many thousands of kilometres. How much indeed those journeys cost him! He never got used to the sea travel (one long torment for him), the wearying nights endured as a third-class passenger of the poor trains of those times, the continual changes of bed, food, uses and customs which gave his fragile body unimaginable fatigue and suffering.

### **Sensitivity and openness to the problems of the times**

Allow me to mention some of the enterprises which demonstrate Don Rua's open-mindedness, sensitivity and dynamism.

He promoted and organized six congresses for the Salesian Cooperators, starting with the international gathering at Bologna. On that occasion the *Civiltà Cattolica* said: « The international Congress of Salesian Cooperators at Bologna has been a splendid example of religious industry and the Salesians deserve praise for knowing the times and how to work in them, having chosen the poor and the workers as their apostolate ». For the first time in the history of such congresses correspondents of sixty newspapers were present: 39 Italian, 4 Spanish, 7 Austrian, 4 French, 1 German, 3 Swiss, 2 English.

Perhaps few Salesians, particularly among the younger generations, know the great and practical interest Don Rua took in the workers and their problems. He was on very friendly terms with Léon Harmel, a great leader in the workers' movement in Europe at that time. At Valsalice in 1891 Don Rua welcomed 4,000 workers who, under Harmel's direction, stopped off at Turin to pay homage at Don Bosco's tomb before going on to Rome. In a speech at their lunch that day he brought out the conspicuous place that labour and the Christian worker held in the life of Don Bosco, expressing his own lively admiration for their social efforts. That these words of his were not mere facile compliments can be proved by one fact among many.

During the last years of the nineteenth century and the first of our own, Italy went through difficult and sometimes very grave times on account of the social and labour disturbances taking place in the newborn industrial society. At Turin in 1906 the labourers in the big Poma textile factories went on a strike that lasted several weeks and gravely harmed the workers themselves. The two sides could not reach an agreement and Don Rua, a personal friend of the director, set himself to the task of using his influence until finally, on Sunday 10 July, after a long meeting he was able to announce to all the workers that a reasonable and advantageous settlement had been arrived at by both sides and work could be resumed next day.

Regarding workers it is worth recalling the fine efforts Don Rua made to help and direct Cesarina Astesana, a great social worker in Turin. Avoiding any effort to make himself a substitute trade-unionist or mob-instigator he acted always as a priest, a wise counsellor and a Christian guide to the leaders of the workers' movement. On the social front Cesarina Astesana fought against three enemies: Sunday work, excessive hours of labour, grossly inadequate wages. Behind this great trade-unionist stood Don Rua, offering prudent advice and even economic aid.

### **The wellspring**

In the midst of his intense and extraordinary activity, and often surrounded by grave difficulties, Don Rua had to confront complex problems and situations that were frequently extremely painful. One

might ask, then, how ever he found time for all this enormous mass of work and enterprises without becoming exhausted, maintaining instead that serenity of his attested to by so very many witnesses. I think the reply can be found in this affirmation of Fr. Francesia: « Don Rua found his rest in prayer ». One could perhaps go further and say that in prayer and contact with God Don Rua found not only rest but also renewed strength to practise daily that motto of Don Bosco's, « I seek souls, and souls alone » — a programme adopted one hundred per cent by his most faithful disciple.

Actually, in spite of varying shades and characteristics, the dynamism of the saints always has one only source of energy: faith. They have a faith that sees the Invisible, the supernatural, and brings about continual communion with God. This communication is a colloquy, inflamed by charity until it explodes into that unquenchable thirst to give oneself to one's neighbour, in order to bring him along to Him whom one loves and to whom one has vowed one's life explicitly through love.

That was precisely Don Rua's case. Only when one sees how impregnated his life was by the supernatural can one explain all the dynamic force of his unwearying activity and its success. Within the compass of this letter it is not possible to exemplify and document all this fully, but whoever commendably reads the biography of Don Rua will see at once the truth of what I have said.

### « The Pope's Priest »

I think it would be a serious omission to say nothing about an aspect of Don Rua's sanctity that seems to me to be intimately bound up with his spirituality, with the very source of all his activity as a Salesian, priest and superior. If in fact it is true that, following his Father's example, Don Rua found in the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin the strength and assurance to be able to respond with serene and joyful generosity to the call that each day resounded in his heart, it is no less true that in his daily life he saw and found in the Pope the clear light and guide of all his action.

Don Rua always looked to the Pope with the eye of faith but ever, like Don Bosco, with the heart of a devoted and faithful son.

Providence reserved for Don Rua even more than for Don Bosco very hard and even heroic trials to prove this loyalty and docility. During his rectorship the Holy See issued various decrees that seemed to strike at the very roots of certain traditions in the Congregation that were considered important and characteristic of our spirit. Don Rua felt deeply the blow caused by these unexpected arrangements but in spite of his grief he at once became a champion of obedience to the dispositions of the Holy See, inviting the Salesians, as true sons of the Church and of Don Bosco, to accept them serenely and with faith.

In 1959 in front of the caskets of Don Bosco and St. Pius X in St. Peter's Square, Pope John defined Don Bosco as « the Pope's priest ». In an autographed letter to our dear Fr. Ziggotti the same Pontiff affirmed: « One cannot fully understand the spirit that always animated Saint John Bosco if one forgets his very special devotion to the Chair of Peter ». Even in this Don Rua reproduced the spirit and likeness of his Father, for he was another Don Bosco.

St. Pius X, who unwittingly put the faith and obedience of Don Rua to the test, was able later (24 July 1914) to say of him to Mgr. Salotti, defender of several causes of beatification: « Don't forget Don Rua. I find in him all the heroic virtues that make a saint. Why are the Salesians delaying in starting his Cause? In him we are confronted by a great Servant of God! ».

But to round off this papal re-affirmation of what Don Bosco himself thought of Don Rua, I would like to recall your attention precisely to the constant attitude of Don Bosco, Don Rua and all their successors concerning the Pope and the Holy See, their obedience based on faith and love translated into humble but heartfelt service. That attitude is the irreplaceable prerogative transmitted by Don Bosco to the Congregation and to all his sons.

In these times of easy but not always logical contestation and criticism in the Pope's regard, we who feel and boast of being heirs of our Father's spirit should feel ourselves committed to being filially docile and faithful to the teachings and directives of the Pope. Let us state clearly that any different or — worse — any critical attitude would be not only foreign but completely opposed to our spirit and definitely un-Salesian. Don Rua gave magnificent example of this, born of suffering, proving once more that when obedience is accepted in a spirit of faith it always ends in triumph.

## Don Rua's invitation

But now we must conclude.

At the beginning of this letter I said that the beatification of Don Rua comes to us at this juncture in our history as a gift and as a warning. Precisely in view of our impending Special General Chapter it is our duty and in our true interests to evaluate both the award and the message implicit in Don Rua's being raised to the altars.

Even though Don Rua lived in an environment and in an historical and cultural clime different from our own, that is no excuse for disregarding the message. As a modern writer, Carlo Snider, says, the spirituality of our times, even though differing from the past, does not reject sanctity (*Osservatore Romano*, 1-2 February 1971). The Christian of today knows that in the lives of the saints « God vividly manifests to men His presence and His face » (*Lumen Gentium*, 50). Snider continues: « The man of today looks to the saint not only for the stimulus of example but also for the support and evidence of a witness of life and action analogous to what he himself as a Christian must render each day of his earthly life to God, the Church and men ». That statement is true for every Christian and especially binding on religious and Salesians.

Precisely in view of our Special General Chapter I feel we should take note actively of the reality to which the image of Don Rua's Salesian sanctity recalls us. At the beginning of his rectorship, in outlining his objectives to the Salesians, he expressed the complete loving commitment he felt towards each of them and concluded: « One thing alone I ask of you: Become holy! ».

My dear confreres, we can be assured that both Don Bosco and Don Rua would say the same thing to us today. The first and ultimate aim of our Congregation is, and should be in fact, our sanctification in harmony with all the other objectives, means and modes of apostolate to which we are called. The vitality, nay the very life itself of the Congregation is subservient to and ultimately bound up with the presence of holiness in it. An echo of the sentiments of Don Rua and Don Bosco can be found in those of Paul VI: « The Church needs your sanctity ». Such appeals can be neither ignored nor underestimated.

Let each of us, in his own rôle of responsibility, pray and work towards ensuring that the Special General Chapter recall the message

of our Father and of his first successor — the message of the Church itself — and then give full and effectual response to it for these our own times and the future. This will be the reply of the very soul of the Congregation renewed. Without it, all the fine work done before and during the Special General Chapter risks nullification. May God assist and comfort us in order that this animating force may happily materialize in the Assembly of the Congregation.

I send you my affectionate greetings in the Lord.

Fr. L. Ricceri  
*Rector Major*

P.S. From various provinces I have received replies to the invitation to prayer in preparation for the Special General Chapter, and I thank God and those responsible for the many fine ideas adopted. Very many of our bishops, the Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and the President of the Don Bosco Volunteers have also replied with fervent generosity to the request for prayers. The whole of our great Family is mobilized spiritually! Whilst awaiting word from the other provinces, I would like to express sincere thanks to all, confident that these prayers will be intensified with the approach of the Chapter.



## II. SPECIAL GENERAL CHAPTER

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### **Letter of the Precapitular Commissions to the Confreres**

#### *Resumé of work*

On the eve of the momentous Special General Chapter we feel a compelling need to inform the Congregation of the ultimate preparatory stages. Possibly what we say in the brief space and time allowed may permit certain confreres to send final suggestions towards planning the lines of our renewal clearly and perceptively.

#### *I. Initial organization of the Commissions*

As arranged, on 10 December 1970 the thirty confreres of the five Precapitular Commissions arrived at the retreat house of the Roman Province, « Villa Tuscolana », near Frascati. Even those from a great distance arrived on time, the only absentee being our Polish confrere, Fr. William Nocon, who could not obtain a permit to come to Italy.

Work commenced on 11 December with concelebration, Fr Scrivo presiding. At 9 a.m. the first discussions centred on fixing the purpose of the work and defining general criteria concerning it. This at once brought to light the type of service needed. By working very intensely the Commissions would have to draw up by the end of February working instruments for the members of the General Chapter — instruments which, on the one hand, could help towards the direct reading of the whole mass of documents and, on the other, could provide a basis for the eventual deliberations at the Chapter itself. This was the objective kept in mind and on that same day means were studied for making it the coping stone of the previous work carried out by the Congregation for the Special General Chapter itself.

Judging by trends already previously discussed at Turin by the Moderator, Fr. Scrivo, with some members of the Pre-Capitular Commissions, it seemed that the most practical work would be the drawing up of a document destined at the Chapter itself to be submitted to questioning, discussion, specification or even fundamental objection. The idea, then, was to compose a « guinea-pig » text, bearing in mind all possible kinds of rearrangements to which it might be subjected.

Necessarily such a text would have to correspond to certain valid and practical criteria. Above all it would have to be the outcome of all the documentation elaborated by the Congregation. Moreover, it must respond to the fundamental appeal for « renewal ». Facing the fact of various conflicting opinions, at times there would have to be a choice corresponding to the deepest desires beyond possible contrasts dictated by various local needs. Reasons would have to be given for the preference made and hence it was agreed that in addition there would be a commentary pointing out the various alternatives contained in the previous documents and stating the motives for the choice made in the text.

In this way all the written matter drawn up by the single commissions would have a composite nature: *a)* A report summarising the opinions of the confreres and especially those of the Special Provincial Chapter; *b)* A blue-print (Scheme/text); *c)* A commentary supporting the choice made in the blueprint and indicating the alternatives not adopted.

The report and the commentary involved a special task. If the text prepared were to be rejected because of basic objections, the voice of the Congregation could still be found in the original documents indicated by the text. The commentary would give the arguments for and against any definite choice made. In this way the reasons given in the commentary could be discussed and elaborated by the Chapter members in order to give substance to an eventual new fundamental text.

## II. *The « thumbnail sketch » of the 2nd Special Provincial Chapters and previous Documents (12-31 December 1970).*

Each commission was provided with the following documents:

- a)* The original texts of the 1st Special Provincial Chapters;

b) The printed « thumbnail sketch » (*radiografia*) drawn up by the commission assembled at San Tarcisio, Rome, July-August 1969;

c) The booklet « Problems and Proposals » composed at San Tarcisio and revised at Caselette by a limited commission in September 1969;

d) The *modi* or individual proposals or points at issue in the order given in « Problems and Proposals »;

e) The cards with the *contributi di studio* drawn up by the 2nd Special Provincial Chapters or by individual confreres according to the suggestions contained in « Problems and Proposals ».

Also available to the various commissions were the Acts of the Special General Chapters of other orders and congregations, their *ad experimentum* Constitutions, commentaries on Vatican II, renewal studies on religious life, the Biographical Memoirs of Don Bosco, the *Acts of the Superior Council*, and other relevant matter concerning Salesian history and life.

Even in the first few days it began to be felt that it would have been very useful to have had the help of previous studies that concentrated on the urgent reasons for renewal. Hence during Christmastide, in addition to the Precapitular Commissions, certain confreres were temporarily co-opted for the purpose of drawing up studies on the three following subjects. a) Signs of the times, i.e. the outstanding characteristics of our era which, taken in the Gospel context, permit us a glimpse of the reality which should control them, viz. the advent of the Kingdom of God, the historic plan of salvation today; b) Vatican II's dynamic directives for renewal; c) Actual religious life in the Church today.

These special studies helped to give clear definition to the terminology which one could foresee being much used in the written matter of the Precapitular Commissions and then in the actual work of the Special General Chapter.

It was also felt that it would have been useful to have had a thumbnail sketch of the 2nd Special Provincial Chapters analogous to that of the First. Unfortunately this would entail a certain loss of time and energy and involve the risk of rushing the work already scheduled. However, considering the tasks of the Precapitular Com-

missions, it was considered worthwhile and work was commenced at once on drawing up such a report.

The weeks preceding Christmas flashed by, some confreres sacrificing their holiday time in order to make up on work to be done by the commissions.

### III. *The work of the single commissions, January-February 1971*

The commissions were composed according to the five basic Themes which formed the framework of the 2nd Special Provincial Chapters, viz. *a)* Nature, End and Works of the Congregation; *b)* Life consecrated to God in the Salesian Congregation; *c)* Salesian formation; *d)* The structures of the Congregation; *e)* The new Constitutions.

1) Around Epiphany the *5th Commission* completed its thumbnail sketch based on material concerning the Regulations and Constitutions — the first group to get abreast of its work. It thereupon joined forces with the 1st Commission which was finding itself submerged by an enormous mass of documents which seemed likely to hamper its keeping up with the programme of work.

2) Up to January 14 the *4th Commission* spent its time going through the material of the 1st Special Provincial Chapters, integrating the *radiografia* drawn up at San Tarcisio and mapping out that of the 2nd Special Provincial Chapters. Simultaneously it went ahead with the provisional condensed draft of the blueprint on « Structures » according to the scheme already advanced in « Problems and Proposals » and in the 1st Special Provincial Chapters: *a)* General criteria for the renewal of structures; *b)* Local structures (Houses, etc.); *c)* Provincial structures; *d)* Regional structures; *e)* Global structures; *f)* Coadjutors in the compass of structures. Typed copies of the Schemes were then discussed. After this it was possible to draw up and duplicate a first draft which was distributed to all the members of the 4th Commission on 7 February and submitted to the examination of the Superior Council, whose view could thus be added to those arising from different local situations.

Between 7 and 14 February the material was again discussed within the commission and two technical problems emerged; *a)* A choice had to be made from among the hundreds of different alternatives, and

yet the other available alternatives had also to be presented fully and clearly; *b*) It was noted that the problem concerning the coadjutor confrere could not be thoroughly dealt with in the theme on structures and hence it was agreed that it be taken up by the 1st Commission.

The underlying principles guiding the 4th Commission in drawing up its basic blueprint and its corresponding commentary were:

*a*) To draft structures that would be practicable in persons, communities and the specific Salesian mission;

*b*) To ensure that the organisation would correspond to the requirements of co-responsibility and collegiality.

Delicate problems of the spirit in connection with the projected renewal came to light: certain types of collegial structures would necessitate re-thinking on the idea of the Salesian Family, brotherliness and fatherliness in the family, and on obedience. These points were indicated to the commissions entrusted with the theme from the angles of mentality, relationship with the Founder and living tradition, viz. the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Commissions.

3) The *3rd Commission* succeeded during the Christmas season in finalizing its thumbnail sketch of the 2nd Special Provincial Chapters, at the same time taking note of the Acts of the 1st Special Provincial Chapters.

On 11 January a first rough copy of its material was ready and in the meantime it was able also to draft a first outline of its Scheme or blueprint and its commentary. By splitting up, one group was able to busy itself with the aims and general trends concerning formation, whilst the other studied practical suggestions. This work was completed on 7 February. As a result of the discussions held it was found necessary to eliminate from the document of the first group what was already contained in that of the second, so as the better to coordinate the two texts. The final edition of the combined text or blueprint appeared on 19 February and each member of the Precapitular Commissions received a copy.

The guiding-lines for the drawing up of this blueprint were almost entirely those suggested by the Special Provincial Chapters. In accordance with their desires the commission exerted itself to propose methods that would cause formation to be based on practical Salesian life. It sought moreover to blend elements that would lead to unity of

spirit with others that would leave provinces the possibility of training their men according to the necessary diversifications demanded by local apostolate.

4) The *2nd Commission* could only conclude its re-examination of the 1st Special Provincial Chapters and the *radiografia* of the 2nd by the end of January, considerable work being caused by the *contributi di studio* in regard to the « Praying and Apostolic Salesian community ».

In early February it determined its guidelines for the drawing up of its Schemes, choosing as its pivot not mere theory to be applied but the existential human problem itself, i.e. the needs of the Salesian today as a man and as a member of a community.

Discussions on this ended only towards mid-February and on the 21st duplicated copies of the proposed Schemes were distributed among all the Precapitular Commission members.

5) The *1st Commission* combined with the 5th Commission in early January. From among the multiplicity of themes dealt with by the Special Provincial Chapters it selected those which it considered to be of capital importance for the renewal of the Congregation: *a)* The charism of the Salesians of Don Bosco; *b)* Mission; *c)* Salesian spirit; *d)* The Salesian family as made up of persons committed to the implementation of Don Bosco's mission today; *e)* The proper « form » of the Salesian Congregation; *f)* The Oratory of Don Bosco as a criterion for renewal of Salesian activity; *g)* Salesian pastoral action; *h)* Schools; *i)* Parishes; *j)* Missionary activity; *k)* Forms and means of social communication.

The work involved was complex and fatiguing, with fear of not being able to finalize all the texts within the fixed time. In early February, therefore, it was decided to split into two groups: the one to discuss and polish up the general themes, the other to deal with Salesian activities. Working intensely, the members of the 1st and 5th Commissions succeeded in presenting, between 21-26 February, the blueprints drawn up and approved by the two sub-commissions.

#### IV. *Final stage*

The Precapitular Commissions now sought to utilize the remaining days in the best manner possible for the advantage of the General

Chapter by means of small group meetings, conversations, mutual checking of documents, observations, suggesting alternatives, additions, indicating useful facts for each of the commissions.

*V. Salesian family life among the commission members*

At Villa Tuscolana mutual good feeling came about at once with the greatest naturalness. If anyone found he had any spare time he would at once give it to someone else who needed help in research work, documentation, typing, etc. Prayer united all. The Goodnight was given in turn by the commission members, with information on the state of provinces in the various continents. Constantly present was the keen will to make an effective contribution towards renewal, the dominant desire being to reject whatever could result in a mere re-varnishing of the old, concentrating rather on the precious seeds to be found in living tradition and with an ear to the voice of the Congregation today, ever keeping in mind the contribution of the young.

On a very brief afternoon visit to Frascati the Rector Major found there a community that was Salesian, lively, hard-working, open, united, cheerful, intent on utilizing whatever could be serviceable for the profound renewal towards which, by the designs of Providence, we have been able to make our own joyful contribution.

And now the work at Villa Tuscolana must draw to an end so that the working instruments drawn up by it may reach the members of the General Chapter in good time. The members of the Precapitular Commissions are convinced that they have fulfilled the service requested of them by the Congregation in a spirit of total dedication. They return to their Houses bearing in mind the words of St. Paul, « some sow, others reap » and the hope that « God will give the increase ».

Signed:

*The Members of the Precapitular Commissions*

## IV. NOTIFICATIONS

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### 1. **Erection of the « Don Bosco Volunteers » into a Secular Institute**

By a rescript dated 5 December 1970 and addressed to the Archbishop of Turin, Cardinal Michael Pellegrino, the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes has conceded its « nulla osta » for the erection of the Association of « Don Bosco Volunteers » into a Secular Institute. The text of the rescript can be found in section VI, Documents.

### 2. **The Holy Father and the Rector Major's letter on Underdevelopment**

Cardinal Villot, Secretary of State to His Holiness Pope Paul VI, has notified the Rector Major of the Holy Father's satisfaction at the letter on underdevelopment sent by the Rector Major to the Salesian Congregation. The text of Cardinal Villot's letter can be found under section VI, Documents.

### 3. **New Salesian Bishop**

The Holy Father has promoted the Rev. Mario Picchi to the titular episcopal see of Orea, appointing him Auxiliary to Most Rev. Eugene Santiago Peyrou, Bishop of Comodoro Rivadavia, Argentina.

### 4. **New Provincial**

Fr. Thomas Panakazham has been appointed Provincial of Madras, India.



## 5. Fraternal Solidarity

We present here the fifth list, which comprises the offerings between November last and 10 February. As usual, the destinations are also named. Offerings from individual houses or persons have been included in their respective provinces. In all cases the wishes of the donors have been respected.

### *Offerings from provinces:*

#### *Italy*

Liguria	Lire	100,000
Rome		221,050
Subalpine		350,000
St. Mark, Venice		160,000

#### *America*

S. Paolo, Brazil		3,150,000
Buenos Aires		300,000
Central America		625,000
New Rochelle, U.S.A.		310,000
New Rochelle Mission Office		3,225,000

<i>TOTAL: November - 10 February</i>		8,441,050
<i>Previous residue</i>		3,849,677

<i>TOTAL available on 10 February</i>		<u>12,290,727</u>
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### *Destinations:*

#### *America*

Antilles - Haiti: To buy land for the « Maison populaire d'Education » at Cap-Haitien	Lire	1,000,000
Argentina: Construction of classrooms, parochial school, Ushuaia		500,000
Brazil - Campo Grande: enlargement of radio installation		3,150,000

Brazil: To Fr. Giaccaria for printing of Chavantes Encyclopaedia	1,750,000
Bolivia: Construction of aspirantate La Paz, Calacoto	1,000,000
Ecuador - Cuenca: Study burse for clerics in Europe	2,000,000
<i>Asia</i>	
Vietnam: Construction of philosophate, Tramhanh (Dalat)	1,000,000
Burma	500,000
India and Pakistan	300,000
<i>Africa</i>	
Congo: Agricultural Training Centre, Kansebula	600,000
<i>Europe</i>	
Countries in Eastern Europe	450,000
	<hr/>
<i>TOTAL of sums assigned</i>	12,250,000
<i>Residue</i>	40,727
	<hr/>
<b>GENERAL TOTAL</b>	<b>12,290,727</b>
	<hr/> <hr/>
FRATERNAL SOLIDARITY movement in general up to 10 February 1971:	
<i>Total of offerings</i>	108,637,047
<i>Total of sums assigned</i>	108,596,320
	<hr/>
<i>Residue</i>	40,727
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## V. ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL AND PROJECTS OF GENERAL INTEREST

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During the last three months of 1970 the Regional Counsellors made their last visit of provinces before the Special General Chapter.

Fr. Castillo visited the provinces of Rosario and La Plata in the Argentine; Fr. Garnero those of Recife and Campo Grande in Brazil; Fr. Giovannini the Central Province; Fr. Segarra visited various houses of Spain and Portugal; Fr. Ter Schure visited the Austrian Province and also had meetings with confreres of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Jugoslavia; Fr. Tohill made the visitation of the Visitatory of Bombay.

Besides this, the Regional Consultors held various meetings with Provincials and Provincial Conferences and presided at various gatherings of confreres to discuss special problems of the religious life and our apostolate.

The Rector Major spent most of the three months at Turin preparing for the General Chapter, but during December he took part in a meeting of the Union of Superiors General for the study of problems of religious life.

The Prefect General, who has charge of the Missions, held a meeting from 28 to 30 October for confreres in charge of Mission Offices in Germany, United States, France, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Switzerland, seeking for a more efficient running of their department and a greater means of help for our Missions.

Fr. Bellido and Fr. Pianazzi have visited various houses of formation, especially in Italy.

Fr. Pilla has been busy with the work on the new Generalate in the endeavour to have it fully ready for the coming Special General Chapter.

Fr. Scrivo has presided at the work of the pre-capitular commissions for the drawing up of the guide-lines for the General Chapter and for its actual organization.

Fr. Fiora presided over various meetings of Rectors and Delegates of Italy concerning the up-dating of the Cooperators' movement.

VI. DOCUMENTS

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**1. Rescript of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes for the erection of the Association of Don Bosco Volunteers into a Secular Institute**

SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO RELIGIOSIS  
ET INSTITUTIS SAECULARIBUS

Romae, die 5 Decembris 1970

Prot. N. I.S. 285

Em.me ac Rev.me Domine,

Sacra Congregatio pro Religiosis et Institutis saecularibus, mature perpensis omnibus expositis circa canonicam associationis vulgo dictae « Volontarie di Don Bosco » erectionem in Institutum saeculare iuris dioecesani, dum suscipit vota, ut novum perfectionis evangelicae virgultum magis in dies crescat et floreat, quae sequuntur rescribit:

1) Nihil obstat, quominus, iuxta Constitutionem Apostolicam « Provida Mater Ecclesia », ipse ad canonicam dictae associationis erectionem in Institutum saeculare iuris dioecesani procedere valeas.

2) Erectione rite peracta, omnes sodales consecrationem seu professionem in associatione emissam propere renovent ratione temporis praecedentis professionis ad omnes effectos canonicos habita.

3) Singuli Coetus ad associationem iam pertinentes per canonicam erectionem Instituti ipsius membra evadunt.

4) Bona temporalia, quae Institutum possidet forma iure civili valida quamprimum in tuto collocentur.

Edita a Te decreti erectionis ad hanc Sacram Congregationem exemplar una cum Constitutionum textu iuxta animadversiones emendato transmittere velis.

Quae dum Tecum communico, meam in Te observantiam profiteor ac libenter permaneo.

Eminentiae Tuae Reverendissimae  
addictissimus in Domino  
J. Card. Antoniutti  
*praef.*

E. Heston, c.s.c.  
*Secr.*

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Em.mo ac Rev.mo Domino  
Card. Michaeli Pellegrino  
Archiepiscopo Taurinensi  
Augustam Taurinorum

**2. Letter of Cardinal Villot expressing the pleasure of Paul VI at the Rector Major's letter on Underdevelopment**

SECRETARIATE OF STATE  
N. 171591

Vatican City.  
3 December 1970.

Very Rev. Father,

The Secretariate of State has received the *Acts of the Superior Council of the Salesian Society* (July 1970 - N. 261) which contains the full text of the letter sent by Your Reverence to all the members of your Congregation and which received due and ample comment in the Catholic press.

I am pleased to inform you that the Holy Father has given great attention to this document which treats the subject so serenely and realistically, clearly outlining the attitude of the Salesian Family concerning Underdevelopment in the light of Don Bosco's teaching which is so highly adaptable to the solution of modern problems and contains

that practical sense of charity which, more effectively than mere words, can do so much good especially among our poorest and most needy brethren.

In tracing out this programme of action for your sons You have divined also how to point out sincerely and candidly those defects that can arise in the multiple activity of your Institute, exhorting the members to a deeper commitment that is more coherent with the specific vocation indicated by your holy Founder.

In expressing his lively appreciation the Holy Father desires to encourage all the enterprises and efforts that your well-deserving Congregation wishes to take on in this new and important field of apostolate, at the same time sincerely invoking on you, as a pledge of heavenly aid, His Apostolic Blessing.

I take this occasion of adding my own personal respects.

Yours sincerely in Our Lord,  
J. Cardinal Villot

The Very Rev. Fr. Luigi Ricceri  
Rector Major of the Salesians  
Turin.

## VII. PONTIFICAL MAGISTERIUM

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### 1. **Apostolic Exhortation to all the Bishops on the fifth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council**

Beloved brothers,  
Health and our Apostolic Blessing.

It is now five full years since, after intense working sessions lived in prayer, study and fraternal exchange of thought and opinion, the bishops of the whole world returned to their dioceses, resolved to ensure « that nothing would block the great river whose streams of heavenly graces today “ refresh the city of God ” and that there would be no lessening of the vital spirit which the Church now possesses ».

Thanking God for the work accomplished, each bishop took back with him from the Council not only the experience he had of collegiality, but also the doctrinal and pastoral texts which had been painstakingly perfected. These texts were spiritual riches to be shared with our co-workers in the priesthood, with the religious and with all the members of the People of God. They were sure guides for proclaiming the word of God to our age and for internally renewing the Christian communities.

That fervour has known no slackening. The successors of the apostles have worked unreservedly to apply the teaching and directives of the Council to the Church's life, each of them where the Holy Spirit has placed him to feed the Church of God, and all of them together in many ways, but especially in the episcopal conferences and synods of bishops. In accordance with the hope expressed in our first encyclical « *Ecclesiam Suam* » the council deepened the Church's awareness of herself. It shed more light on the demands of her apostolic mission in the world of today. It helped her to engage in the dialogue of salvation with a genuinely ecumenical and missionary spirit.

#### I

But it is not our intention here to try to draw up a balance sheet of the researches, undertakings and reforms, which have been so numer-

ous since the Council ended. Devoting our attention to reading the signs of the times, we would like, in a fraternal spirit, to make together with you an examination of our fidelity to the commitment we bishops undertook in our message to humanity at the beginning of the Council: « We shall take pains so to present to the men of this age God's truth in its integrity and purity that they may understand it and gladly assent to it ».

This commitment was made unambiguously clear by the pastoral constitution « Gaudium et Spes », truly the Council's charter of the presence of the Church in the world: « The Church of Christ takes her stand in the midst of the anxieties of this age, and does not cease to hope with the utmost confidence. She intends to propose to our age over and over again, in season and out of season, the apostolic message ».

It is of course true that the shepherds of the Church have always had this duty of handing on the faith in its fulness and in a manner suited to men of their time. That means trying to use a language easily accessible to them, answering their questions, arousing their interest and helping them to discover, through poor human speech, the whole message of salvation brought to us by Jesus Christ. It is in fact the episcopal college which with Peter and under his authority, guarantees the authentic handing on of the deposit of faith, and for that purpose it has received, as Saint Irenaeus expressed it, « a sure charism of truth ». The faithfulness of its witness, rooted in Sacred Tradition and Holy Scripture and nourished by the ecclesial life of the whole People of God is what empowers the Church, through the unfailing assistance of the Holy Spirit, to teach without ceasing the word of God and to make it progressively unfold.

### *Increased effort needed*

Nevertheless, the present position of the faith demands of us an increased effort in order that this word may reach our contemporaries in its fulness and that the works performed by God may be presented to them without falsification and with all the intensity of the love of the truth which can save them. In fact, at the very moment when the reading of God's word in the liturgy is enjoying a wonderful renewal, thanks to the Council; when use of the Bible is spreading among the Christian people; when advances in catechesis, pursued in accordance



with the Council's guidelines, are making possible an evangelization in depth; when biblical, patristic and theological research often makes a precious contribution to a more meaningful expression of the data of revelation—at this very moment many of the faithful are troubled in their faith by an accumulation of ambiguities, uncertainties and doubts about its essentials. Such are the Trinitarian and Christological dogmas, the mystery of the Eucharist and the Real Presence, the Church as the institution of salvation, the priestly ministry in the midst of the People of God, the value of prayer and the sacraments, and the moral requirements concerning, for instance, the indissolubility of marriage or respect for life. Even the divine authority of Scripture is not left unquestioned by a radical demythologization.

### *Bishops are authentic teachers*

While silence gradually obscures certain fundamental mysteries of Christianity, we see manifestations of a tendency to reconstruct from psychological and sociological data a Christianity cut off from the unbroken Tradition which links it to the faith of the apostles, and a tendency to extol a Christian life deprived of religious elements.

All of us, therefore, who through the laying on of hands have received the responsibility of keeping pure and entire the faith entrusted to us and the mission of proclaiming the Gospel unceasingly, are called upon to witness to the obedience we all give the Lord. It is an inalienable and sacred right of the people in our charge to receive the word of God, the whole word of God, of which the Church has not ceased to acquire deeper comprehension. It is a grave and urgent duty for us to proclaim it untiringly, that the people may grow in faith and understanding of the Christian message and may bear witness throughout their lives to salvation in Jesus Christ.

The Council reminded us forcefully of this: « Among the principal duties of bishops, the preaching of the Gospel occupies an eminent place. For bishops are preachers of the faith who lead new disciples to Christ. They are authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice. By the light of the Holy Spirit, they make that faith clear, bringing forth from the treasury of revelation new things and old, making faith bear fruit and

vigilantly warding off any errors which threaten their flock. Bishops, teaching in communion with the Roman Pontiff, are to be respected by all as witnesses to divine and Catholic truth. In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent... ».

Certainly, faith is always an assent given because of the authority of God himself. But the teaching office of the bishops is for the believer the sign and channel which enable him to receive and recognize the word of God. Each bishop, in his diocese, is united by his office with the episcopal college, which, in succession to the apostolic college, has been entrusted with the charge of watching over the purity of faith and the unity of the Church.

## II

Let us unhesitatingly recognize that in the present circumstances the urgently needed fulfilment of this preeminent task encounters more difficulties than it has known in past centuries.

In fact, while the exercise of the episcopal teaching office was relatively easy when the Church lived in close association with contemporary society, inspiring its culture and sharing its modes of expression, nowadays a serious effort is required of us to ensure that the teaching of the faith should keep the fulness of its meaning and scope, while expressing itself in a form which allows it to reach the spirit and the heart of all men, to whom it is addressed. No one has better shown the duty laid upon us in this regard than our Predecessor Pope John XXIII in his discourse at the opening of the Council: « In response to the deep desire of all who are sincerely attached to what is Christian, Catholic and apostolic, this teaching must be more widely and more deeply known, and minds must be more fully permeated and shaped by it. While this sure and unchangeable teaching must command faithful respect, it should be studied and presented in a way demanded by our age. The deposit of faith itself—that is to say the truths contained in our venerable teaching—is one thing; the way in which these truths are presented is another, although they must keep the same sense and signification. The manner of presentation is to be regarded as of great importance and, if necessary, patient work must be devoted to perfecting it. In other words there must be introduced methods of presentation

more in keeping with a magisterium which is predominantly pastoral in character ».

### *Safeguard the truth*

In the present crisis of language and thought, each bishop in his diocese, each synod and each episcopal conference must be attentive lest this necessary effort should ever betray the truth and continuity of the teaching of the faith. We must beware, in particular, lest an arbitrary selection should reduce God's design to the limits of our human views and restrict the proclaiming of his word to what our ears like to hear, excluding on purely natural criteria what does not please contemporary taste. « If anyone ». Saint Paul warns us, « preaches a version of the Good News different from the one we have already preached to you, whether it be ourselves or an angel from heaven, he is to be condemned ».

In fact it is not we who are judges of the word of God. It is his word which judges us and exposes our habit of conforming to this world. « The weakness and insufficiency of Christians, even of those who have the function of preaching, will never be a reason for the Church to water down the absolute nature of the word. The edge of the sword can never be dulled thereby. The Church can never speak otherwise than as Christ did of holiness, virginity, poverty and obedience ».

In passing, let us remember this: if sociological surveys are useful for better discovering the thought patterns of the people of a particular place, the anxieties and needs of those to whom we proclaim the word of God, and also the opposition made to it by modern reasoning through the widespread notion that outside science there exists no legitimate form of knowledge, still the conclusions drawn from such surveys could not of themselves constitute a determining criterion of truth.

All the same, we must not be deaf to the questions which today face a believer rightly anxious to acquire a more profound understanding of his faith. We must lend an ear to these questions, not in order to cast suspicion on what is well-founded, nor to deny their postulates, but so that we may do justice to their legitimate demands within our own proper field which is that of faith. This holds true for modern man's great questions concerning his origins, the meaning of life, the happiness to which he aspires and the destiny of the human family. But

it is no less true of the questions posed today by scholars, historians, psychologists and sociologists; these questions are so many invitations to us to proclaim better, in its incarnate transcendence, the Good News of Christ the Saviour, a message which in no way contradicts the discoveries of the human mind but which rather raises that mind to the level of divine realities, to the point of allowing it to share, in a still inarticulate and incipient yet very real way, in that mystery of love which the Apostle tells us « is beyond all knowledge ».

*Encourage theologians, exegetes*

To those in the Church who undertake the responsible task of studying more deeply the unfathomable riches of this mystery, namely theologians and in particular exegetes, we shall manifest encouragement and support in order to help them to pursue their work in fidelity to the great stream of Christian Tradition. In the recent past it has quite rightly been said: « Theology, being the science of the faith, can only find its norm in the Church, the community of the believers. When theology rejects its postulates and understands its norm in a different way, it loses its basis and its object. The religious freedom affirmed by the Council and which rests upon freedom of conscience is valid for the personal decision in relation to faith, but it has nothing to do with determining the content and scope of divine revelation ». In like manner, the utilization of human scientific knowledge in research in hermeneutics is a way of investigating the revealed data, but these data cannot be reduced to the analyses thus provided, because they transcend them both in origin and content.

In this period which follows a Council which was prepared by the rich attainments of biblical and theological knowledge, a considerable amount of work remains to be done, particularly in the field of developing the theology of the Church and working out a Christian anthropology taking into account progress made in human sciences and the questions the latter pose to the mind of the believer. We all recognize, not only how important this work is, but also that it makes particular demands; we understand the inevitable waverings. But in face of the ravages being inflicted upon the Christian people by the diffusion of venture-some hypotheses and of opinions that disturb faith, we have the duty

to recall, with the Council, that true theology « rests upon the written word of God, together with sacred Tradition, as its perpetual foundation ».

Dearly beloved brothers, let us not be reduced to silence for fear of criticism, which is always possible and may at times be wellfounded. However necessary the function of theologians, it is not to the learned that God has confided the duty of authentically interpreting the faith of the Church: that faith is borne by the life of the people whose bishops are responsible for them before God. It is for the bishops to tell the people what God asks them to believe.

This demands much courage of each one of us; for, even though we are assisted by exercising this responsibility in community, within the framework of the synods of bishops and the episcopal conferences, it is none the less a question of a personal and absolutely inalienable responsibility for us to meet the immediate daily needs of the People of God. This is not the time to ask ourselves, as some would have us do, whether it is really useful, opportune and necessary to speak; rather it is the time for us to take the means to make ourselves heard. For it is to us bishops that Saint Paul's exhortation to Timothy is addressed: « Before God and before Christ Jesus who is to be judge of the living and the dead, I put this duty to you, in the name of his Appearing and of his kingdom: proclaim the message and, welcome or unwelcome, insist on it. Refute falsehood, correct error, call to obedience—but do all with patience and with the intention of teaching. The time is sure to come when, far from being content with sound teaching, people will be avid for the latest novelty and collect themselves a whole series of teachers according to their own tastes; and then, instead of listening to the truth, they will turn to myths. Be careful always to choose the right course; be brave under trials; make the preaching of the Good News your life's work, in thorough-going service ».

### III

Therefore, dearly beloved brothers, let each of us examine himself on the way in which he carries out this sacred duty: it demands from us assiduous study of the revealed word and constant attention to the life of men.

How in fact shall we be able to proclaim fruitfully the word of God, if it is not familiar to us through being the subject of our daily meditation and prayer? And how can it be received unless it is supported by a life of deep faith, active charity, total obedience, fervent prayer and humble penance? Having insisted, as is our duty, on teaching the doctrine of the faith, we must add that what is often most needed is not so much an abundance of words as speech in harmony with a more evangelical life. Yes, it is the witness of saints that the world needs, for, as the Council reminds us, God « speaks to us in them, and gives us a sign of his kingdom, to which we are powerfully drawn ».

### *Teach them Jesus Christ*

Let us be attentive to the questions that are expressed through the life of men, especially of the young: « What father among you », Jesus says to us, « would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? ». Let us listen willingly to the questionings that come to disturb our peace and quiet. Let us bear patiently the hesitations of those who are groping for the light. Let us know how to walk in brotherly friendship with all those who, lacking the light we ourselves enjoy, are nevertheless seeking through the mists of doubt to reach their Father's house. But, if we share in their distress, let it be in order to try to heal it. If we hold up to them Christ Jesus, let it be as the Son of God made man to save us and to make us sharers in his life and not as a merely human figure, however wonderful and attractive.

In being thus faithful to God and to the men to whom he sends us, we shall then be able, with prudence and tact, but also with clear vision and firmness, to make a correct assessment of opinions. This is, beyond any doubt, one of the most difficult tasks for the episcopate, but also one of the most necessary today. In fact, in the clash of conflicting ideas, the greatest generosity runs the risk of going hand-in-hand with the most questionable statements. « Even from your own ranks », as in the time of Saint Paul, « there will be men coming forward with a travesty of the truth on their lips to induce the disciples to follow them »; and those who speak in this way are often convinced of doing so in the name of God, deluding themselves about the spirit that animates them. In the matter of discerning the word of faith, do we

take sufficient note of the fruits that it brings? Could God be the source of a word that would make Christians lose the sense of evangelical self-denial or which would proclaim justice while forgetting to be the herald of meekness, mercy and purity? Could God be the source of a word which would set brothers against brothers? Jesus warns us of this: « You will be able to tell them by their fruits ».

Let us demand the same from those co-workers who share with us the task of proclaiming the word of God. Let their witness always be that of the Word who stirs up faith and, together with faith, love of our brothers, bringing all the disciples of Christ to imbue with his spirit the mentality, the manners and the life of the terrestrial city. It is in this way that, to quote the admirable expression of Saint Augustine, « God, not men, brought you this; thus even through the ministry of timid men God speaks in full freedom ».

Dearly beloved brothers, these are some of the thoughts suggested to us by the anniversary of the Council, that « providential instrument for the true renewal of the Church ». In joining with you in all fraternal simplicity to examine our fidelity to this fundamental mission of proclaiming the word of God, we have been aware of responding to an imperative duty. Someone perhaps will be surprised, may even protest. In the serenity of our soul we call upon you to witness to the necessity that urges us on to be faithful to our charge as shepherd; we call upon you likewise to witness to our desire to join with you in taking the means most adapted to our days and at the same time most in conformity with the Council's teaching, the better to ensure its fruitfulness. As we join you in entrusting ourselves to the sweet motherly care of the Virgin Mary, we invoke with all our heart upon you and your pastoral mission the abundant graces of « him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen ».

May these wishes be supported by our Apostolic Blessing, which we impart to you with affection.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the eighth day of December, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the year nineteen hundred and seventy, the eighth of our pontificate.

*Paulus PP. VI*

**2. The study of Atheism and the formation of seminarians to dialogue with the secularized world**

*(A note by the Secretariat for non-believers).*

PREAMBLE

1. In the vaster programme of an organic and global restructurization of ecclesiastical studies and a more adequate formation of candidates for the priesthood, the S. Congregation for Catholic Education, in the document « Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis sacerdotalis » lays particular stress on the urgency of educating these youths in good time for the dialogue with non-believers and on greater attention being paid by teachers and pupil to the phenomenon of the progressive tendency of the contemporary world to atheism and secularization.

2. The Secretariat for non-believers is in complete agreement with the S. Congregation for Catholic Education in this effort to renew ecclesiastical studies, which it considers necessary to meet the needs and the expectations of society today. It agrees particularly with that part of the document of the S. Congregation for Catholic Education which devotes special attention to atheism and dialogue.

3. Without going into the question of the concrete implementation of that programme, which is the exclusive competence of the S. Congregation for Catholic Education and of the Episcopal Conferences, the Secretariat considers it expedient, however, (for the purposes of the renewal of ecclesiastical studies and of the formation of the clergy) to underline the importance of a more thorough knowledge of the secularizing and atheistic forms of modern culture and a more responsible preparation of the clergy for dialogue with nonbelievers. It trusts that the Commissions that will be set up by the Episcopal Conferences for the elaboration and adaptation of the « Ratio Studiorum » to the needs of their own diocese, will follow the suggestions indicated below on the study of atheism and formation to dialogue, gauging in each separate case to what extent these suggestions may be useful in their countries, and will diligently examine what other aspects, more in keeping with the requirements of their regions, should be kept in mind in drawing up the « Ration Studiorum ».



I

*Reality of atheism and secularization*

4. In this connection it will be useful to reflect first of all that the phenomenon of secularization and atheism in society is a reality today. It is met with more and more not only at the level of an intellectual élite, but also to a vast extent among the masses.

Atheism, the outcome of many and different causes, is becoming increasingly widespread, more deeply rooted and aggressive. In the Eastern world, where it is nourished and imposed by political and social ideologies, it concerns hundreds of millions of persons, and it is winning over peoples and nations more and more every day. In the Western world, where it has its most virulent roots in neopositivism and pragmatism, it has become a mentality that is more and more operative and ingrained in culture today. And its presence seems to be felt in the developing countries to the same extent as in Western and Eastern peoples, in proportion as they reach the level of culture of the developed peoples.

5. Potentially, atheism and secularization are leavens working in the whole of humanity, not excluding that portion that is considered more specifically and traditionally Christian and believing.

The reality of this phenomenon cannot be ignored any longer. It was stressed by Vatican II, which indicates its causes, the variety of its forms and the remedies that can be adopted to safeguard Christian faith and culture. And all the pontifical and ecclesiastical documents following that great event have not failed to refer to it constantly, calling everyone's attention to the impact it has upon the future of the whole of mankind.

II

*Urgency of adequate information on this reality*

6. If these considerations are true, as it seems, candidates for the priesthood must be given the opportunity to become fully aware of this reality, in order that they may be prepared to cope with the needs of a world that is further and further estranged from God, but perhaps athirst for God all the same.

How this preparation of candidates may be carried out cannot be determined once for all, nor in the same way for everyone. The type of secularization and atheism varies with peoples, cultures and times. The methods, therefore, used to prepare suitable means with which to tackle this phenomenon and to prepare the clergy for the specific tasks awaiting it in the contemporary world, must also vary.

Anyone who is to work in a world that is underdeveloped on the cultural plane will not need the same type of information as is, on the contrary, required by one whose activity will be carried out among the workers or in University circles with a high level of culture. But in both cases it is necessary to know the problems and questions in the mind of those to whom they are speaking.

7. It will be incumbent on the Episcopal Conferences and on those in charge of education to direct and prepare the programmes of study according to the various needs of the cultural regions and the communities in which they operate. It will also be for those in charge of education to decide, in accordance with the different circumstances, if the study of atheism and secularization should be dealt with in specific courses or included in the normal courses on history, philosophy and theology.

What is certain, in any case, is that the candidate for the priesthood should become fully aware of the seriousness of the phenomenon and be suitably prepared to understand the reasons that seem to be driving mankind towards more and more radical atheism. In this way he will not be disarmed before this reality but will be able, on the contrary, to make his contribution to the clarification and affirmation of the Christian faith in the world.

From this point of view, both specialized courses on atheism and secularization, and their inclusion among the various yearly subjects, can be equally efficacious or inefficacious. Everything depends on the effort made by teachers and pupils, and on the relevance of the specialized or non-specialized courses to the requirement and the reality in which the candidate for the priesthood is living and operating. In the last analysis, it will always be the sensitiveness of the teachers, more than the specific or generic programming that decides the success or failure of that preparation in keeping with the times, which is required in aspirants to the priesthood today.

8. It might also be said that the problem of whether to deal with atheism and secularization in specialized courses or not, is of secondary importance. The real problem is that of creating a new mentality, a keener awareness, among students and in the teaching staff, of this vast human reality which is tending more and more towards atheism and secularization. A humanistic formation more in keeping with the new times is necessary to bring the priest nearer to modern man, who, as such, finds it more and more difficult to accept the faith.

In this connection a remark is useful. One gets the impression that, since the Council, there has been a growing tendency, at least in certain regions, to reduce the philosophical training of candidates for the priesthood in order to have more time and more space for the study of theology and for personal scientific research work. This tendency seems a very dangerous one. If the formation of aspirants of the priesthood is organized according to this criterion, the result may be that future priests will be able to dialogue with dissident believers, particularly Protestants, but will be disarmed in the dialogue with modern non-believers.

Hence not only must philosophical formation not be reduced, but care must also be taken to focus the programmes and the teaching of philosophy on man and on his ultimate problem, that is, his openness to the Transcendental or not. The fundamental subjects of the future priest's philosophical studies should be: Man (philosophical anthropology) and the dimensions of human existence, in which signs indicative of transcendence appear (among which history is becoming more and more important). Today knowledge of human culture is a necessary premise for knowledge of man himself.

### III

#### *Marxism*

9. As regards Marxism, in particular, it must be dealt with separately, not only because it concerns wide strata of mankind, as has already been mentioned, but also because it presents quite peculiar characteristics both in its social, political and philosophical doctrinal content and in its methods of introducing itself into culture and into society.

The preparation of candidates for the priesthood must therefore include as wide and precise information as possible on Marxism. This

information must include not only exact knowledge of the thought of the founders of Marxism, C. Marx and F. Engels, and of its roots in the philosophy of George V. F. Hegel and above all Ludwig A. Feuerbach, but also those transformations of their doctrine which are particularly important today: in the first place Marxism-Leninism, the doctrinal basis of all Communist movements, with its derivations (such as Maoism and Castroism), its various revisionistic movements (that is, Yugoslavian Communism, the 1968 Czech experiment, opposition thinkers such as Roger Garaudy, Georges Lukacs, Ernest Bloch...), and finally the different neo-Marxist movements such as the structuralistic Marxism of Ludwig Althusser, the « Frankfurt school » and Herbert Marcuse, which have inspired the « new left » youth movements, the ideological content of which is vague.

This knowledge should not be limited merely to the atheism contained in Marxist doctrine and to its materialistic philosophy, but should also be extended to the whole set of Marxist-Leninist doctrines, including those of the social and political order. Exact knowledge of political doctrines is highly necessary in carrying on dialogue with Communists. Dialogue, especially public dialogue and the dialogue of collaboration, is always a fact of political order for them; for such dialogue is always set by Communism in a system of political doctrines and in an over-all strategy, created by Lenin and aiming at the conquest of power by means of alliances with other political forces.

Now, to be able to judge the expediency of offering oneself as an ally, and to avoid becoming an ally without wishing to or unknown to oneself, it is absolutely necessary to know exactly the strategy and tactics of Communism. This necessity is particularly urgent in times such as ours so characterized by dialogue.

#### IV

##### *Secularization*

10. As regards the complex problem of secularization and its introduction into the curriculum of candidates for the priesthood, the considerations put forward for atheism in general and Marxism in particular are partly applicable. The problem of secularization is distinct from the problem of atheism, but it is connected with it in some ways.

It is necessary, however, to keep in mind the ambivalence of secularization, as a result of which it presents, together with some negative aspects, also positive ones which may have consequences for the updating of pastoral work. A suitable distinction must also be made between secularization as a fact and secularism as an ideology.

Rather than insist on the formulation of a theory of secularization, it is necessary to gather its multiple elements and show their progressive development in the last four centuries.

One of the greatest shortcomings of the clergy is the deficient historical and cultural information that can sometimes be noted in them. This shortcoming is the origin of their inferiority complex before the world of today. The gap between the wealth of historical information that the lay Universities supply to students and the poverty that sometimes characterizes, in this field, the culture of aspirants to the priesthood in the Seminaries, is the cause of a certain mortification for the latter. Candidates for the priesthood will never be able to understand the contemporary world, unless they know its historical formation. Every thought is embodied in life, and life is established in history. The very teachings of the Church on social matters cannot be understood unless in reference to the times and the human experiences in which they were expressed.

## V

### *Dialogue*

11. Finally, as regards formation to dialogue, rather than set up separate theoretical courses, it is a matter above all of accustoming the pupils to an open mentality ready to listen to every opinion. It is a question of a form or type of life, which must be lived and perfected at all levels and at all moments of human experience.

School is certainly the most suitable environment, where the relationship between teacher and pupil, particularly outside the lessons, can be developed and perfected. Candidates for the priesthood must feel they are engaged, together with the teachers, in a scrupulous search for the truth, in a respectful assessment of contrary opinions, in a criticism, preferably from the inside, of the doctrinal positions of others, in a serene and disinterested comparison of their own and others' opinions, even if the latter seem almost or quite unacceptable, from a personal or revealed standpoint.

This approach cannot be communicated to pupils with exclusively doctrinal and theoretical information, even though a specialized course may be very useful. It is particularly the outcome of continuous, lived experience.

It is clear that dialogue implies difficulties and dangers that are by no means trifling. The candidate must know them, forestall them, avoid them. Dilettantism and improvisation must be avoided. The candidate must have a solid doctrinal basis in theology and particularly in philosophy, so that he will not find himself disarmed in meeting the secularized and atheistic world.

It is necessary to discern where dialogue is really possible and where on the contrary, it is a purely « political » expression, openly or deviously used to attain aims quite extraneous to the quest for truth and mutual human understanding. This should be kept in mind particularly when it is a question of public dialogue with the Communist world both on the theoretical and practical level or on the level of collaboration.

Care must be taken not to make an idol of dialogue, fostering the illusion that it gives us the capacity of understanding everything and solving everything, dispelling problems and prefabricating adequate answers. It is certainly not possible to have, always and everywhere, instant solutions for all problems, nor is dialogue able to provide entirely.

Rome, from the Secretariat for nonbelievers, July 10th, 1970.

### 3. **Pope Paul at F.A.O.**

*(Pope Paul's discourse to delegates of more than 100 countries at the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome, Monday, November 16th).*

*Brotherly love and solidarity can bring about a new world...*

Mr. President.

Mr. Director General,  
Gentlemen,

It is a profound joy for us—and also an honour—to bring in our turn to this rostrum the debt of gratitude and the cry of anguish and

hope of millions of men and women, on this twenty-fifth anniversary of FAO. What a road has been travelled since that far-off day, the sixteenth of October 1945, when the representatives of forty-four States were invited to sign the act which set up the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture. Historians will point out the remarkable accomplishments of FAO, its progressive influence, its unflagging dynamism, the boldness of its views, the variety and breadth of its activities—since « it is above all else an institution orientated to action »—the courage of its pioneers and finally the love of man and the universal sense of brotherhood which are the driving force behind its undertakings. They will point out also the extraordinary challenge thrust at you today: as your efforts increase and become organized, so the number of men multiplies, the misery of many is intensified and while a small number of people is sated with ever-increasing and ever-diversified resources, an ever greater part of mankind continues to hunger for bread and education and to thirst for dignity. The first decade of development—it would be vain to conceal it—was marked by a certain disenchantment of public opinion in the face of frustrated hopes. Would it thus be the case, as with Sisyphus, to grow tired of rolling the heavy stone and give in to despair?

*The Pope's and the Church's support for the aims of FAO*

Such an idea could not be expressed in these precincts, in this meeting of persons who face the future with the aims of harnessing it for the service of mankind, notwithstanding the obstacles which may present themselves along the way. From the time of his first meeting with FAO, our predecessor Pope Pius XII, highly praised the deep insight « of your institution, specialized for food and agriculture, the magnanimity which characterizes its economy and application, and finally the wisdom and the circumspect method which determine its realization ». His successor, good Pope John XXIII, would seize every opportunity to express to you his sincere admiration. For our part, we first knew the International Institute of Agriculture in its modest quarters in Villa Borghese, before seeing FAO « traverse the entire road which has led it to the magnificent developments which it knows today ». From that time on we have not ceased to follow with sympathetic interest your generous and disinterested initiatives—particularly

the campaign against hunger—to render homage to your many activities and to call upon the Catholics of the entire world to collaborate generously therein, together with all men of good will. Today we are happy to come to the headquarters of your Organization, situated within the very territory of our Diocese of Rome, and thus to return to FAO the many visits which the members of your working sessions have paid to the Vatican.

How could the Church, solicitous for the true good of men, not be interested in an activity so clearly orientated as is yours to the alleviation of the greatest distress? How could the Church not be interested in your activity, which is engaged in a merciless combat to provide each man with enough to live—to live a truly human life, to be capable by his own work of guaranteeing the upkeep of his family and to be able through the exercise of his intelligence to share in the common goods of society by a commitment freely agreed to and by an activity voluntarily assumed? It is at this higher level that the Church intends to give you her disinterested support for the great and complex work which you carry out. Your work consists in stimulating international action for providing each person with the nourishment he needs, both in amount and quality, and thus promoting the progressive lessening of hunger, undernourishment and malnutrition. It means eliminating the cause of many epidemics, preparing trained labour and finding for it necessary employment so that economic growth may be accompanied by social progress without which there is no true development.

*A courageous and complex undertaking. The environment.*

By what means do you intend to attain these goals, which we approve with all our heart? The absorbing study—as we can well describe it—of the many dossiers furnished us on your multiple activities have revealed to us the extraordinary and growing complexity of your efforts organized on a world-wide scale. A more intelligent utilization of basic physical resources, a better use of land and water, forest and oceans, an increased productivity from farming, livestock raising and fishing—all this certainly provides commodities in greater quantity and better quality. At the same time nutritional needs grow under the double pressure of a demographic increase—at times very swift—and of a consumption whose graphic curve follows the progression of income.



The improvement of soil fertility, the intelligent use of irrigation, the redivision of plots of land, the reclaiming of marshes, the effort at plant selection and the introduction of high-yield grain varieties almost seem to fulfil the vision of the ancient prophet of the agricultural era: « The desert shall rejoice and blossom ». But the carrying out of these technical possibilities at an accelerated pace is not accomplished without dangerous repercussions on the balance of our natural surroundings. The progressive deterioration of that which has generally come to be called the environment risks provoking a veritable ecological catastrophe. Already we see the pollution of the air we breathe, the water we drink. We see the pollution of rivers, lakes, even oceans—to the point of inspiring fear of a true « biological death » in the near future, if energetic measures are not immediately and courageously taken and rigorously put into practice. It is a formidable prospect which you must diligently explore in order to save from destruction the fruit of millions of years of natural and human selection. In brief, everything is bound up together. You must be attentive to the great consequences which follow on every intervention by man in the balance of nature, whose harmonious richness has been placed at his disposal in accordance with the living design of the Creator.

*The control of growth: a moral problem.*

These problems surely are famlier to you. We have wished to evoke them briefly before you only in order to underline better the urgent need of a radical change in the conduct of humanity if it wishes to assure its survival. It took millennia for man to learn how to dominate, « to subdue the earth » according to the inspired word of the first book of the Bible. The hour has now come for him to dominate his domination; this essential undertaking requires no less courage and dauntlessness than the conquest of nature itself. Will the prodigious progressive mastery of plant, animal and human life and the discovery of even the secrets of matter lead to anti-matter and to the explosion of death? In this decisive moment of its history, humanity hesitates, uncertain before fear and hope. Who still does not see this? The most extraordinary scientific progress, the most astounding technical feats and the most amazing economic growth, unless accompanied by authentic moral and social progress, will in the long run go against man.

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*An essential acquisition: international solidarity*

Well-being is within our grasp but we must want to build it together: individuals for others, individuals with others and, never again, individuals against others. Over and above the magnificent achievements of these twenty-five years of activity is not the essential acquisition of your Organization this: the consciousness acquired by peoples and their governments of international solidarity? Are you not, sometimes without knowing it, the heirs of Christ's compassion before suffering humanity: « I feel sorry for all these people »? Do you not constitute by your very existence an effective denial of the discredited thought of ancient wisdom « Homo homini lupus »? No, man is not a wolf to his fellowman; he is his compassionate and loving brother. Never in the millennial course of the inspiring adventure of man have so many peoples, so many men and women, delegated such a number of representatives with the unique mission of aiding men—all men—to live and to survive. For us this is one of the greatest motives of hope amidst the many threats that weigh upon the world. Those who in the years 2000 will bear the responsibility of the destiny of the great human family are being born into a world which has discovered, more to its advantage than to its disadvantage, its solidarity in good as well as evil, its desire to unite in order not to perish and, in brief, to work together to build a common future for humanity ». We hope that soon the circle of your family will widen and that the peoples that are now absent from this meeting may also sit down at your table so that finally all may contribute together to the same unselfish goal.

*Always at the service of man: the demographic problem.*

Certainly in the face of the difficulties to be overcome there is a great temptation to use one's authority to diminish the number of guests rather than to multiply the bread that is to be shared. We are not at all unaware of the opinions held in international organizations which extol planned birth control which, it is believed, will bring a radical solution to the problems of developing countries. We must repeat this today: the Church, on her part, in every domain of human action encourages scientific and technical progress, but always claiming respect for the inviolable rights of the human person whose primary

guarantors are the public authorities. Being firmly opposed to a birth control which according to the just expression of our venerable predecessor Pope John XXIII would be in accordance with « methods and means which are unworthy of man », the Church calls all those responsible to work with fearlessness and generosity for the development of the whole man and every man; this, among other effects will undoubtedly favour a rational control of birth by couples who are capable of freely assuming their destiny. On your part, it is man whom you help and whom you support. And how would you ever be able to act against him, because you do not exist except through him and for him and since you cannot succeed without him?

*Encouraging the free cooperation of all those involved*

One of the best assured invariable principles of your action is that the finest technical achievements and the greatest economic progress cannot effect by themselves the development of a people. However necessary they may be, planning and money are not enough. Their indispensable contribution, like that of the technology which they sponsor, would be sterile were it not made fruitful by men's confidence and their progressive conviction that they can little by little get away from their miserable condition through work made possible with means at their disposal. The immediate evidence of results creates, as well as legitimate satisfaction, the decisive commitment to the great work of development. In the long run, if nothing can be done without man, with him everything can be undertaken and accomplished; it is truly the spirit and the heart that first achieve true victories. As soon as those concerned have the will to better their lot, without doubting their ability to do it, they give themselves fully to this great cause, with all the gifts of intellect and courage, all the virtues of abnegation and self-sacrifice, all the efforts of perseverance and mutual help of which they are capable.

*Presenting an ideal to youth: a fruitful earth for all men*

The young in particular are the first to give themselves with all their typical enthusiasm and earnestness to an undertaking which fits their capabilities and their generosity. The youth of the rich countries, bored

because they lack an ideal worthy of claiming their support and galvanizing their energies, the youth of the poor countries, in despair at not being able to work in a useful way, because they lack the proper knowledge and the required professional training: there can be no doubt that the combination of these young resources can change the future of the world, if we adults can prepare them for this great task, show them how to approach it and furnish them with the means to give themselves to it with success. Is not this a plan that will claim the support of all young people, rich and poor, transform their outlooks, overcome enmity between nations, heal sterile divisions and finally bring about a new world: a world that will know brotherly love and solidarity in effort because it will be united in the pursuit of the same ideal—a fruitful world for all men?

*Putting an end to scandals: armaments, wastage, commercial malpractices*

A lot of money would be necessary, certainly. But will the world not finally grasp that it is a question of its future? « When so many peoples are hungry, when so many families are destitute, when so many men remain steeped in ignorance, when so many schools, hospitals, and homes worthy of the name remain to be built, all public and private expenditures of a wasteful nature, all expenditures prompted by motives of national or personal ostentation, every debilitating armaments' race becomes an intolerable scandal. It is our duty to denounce it. Would that those in authority would listen to us, before it is too late! ». How is it possible not to experience a deep feeling of distress in face of the tragic absurdity which impels men—and whole nations—to devote vast sums to armaments, to fostering centres of discord and rivalry, to carrying out undertakings of pure prestige, when the enormous sums thus wasted would have been enough, if better employed, to rescue numbers of countries from poverty? It is a sad fate which weighs so heavily upon the human race: the poor and the rich are for once treading the same path. Exaggerated nationalism, racism engendering hate, the lust for unlimited power, the unbridled thirst for domination: who will convince men to emerge from such aberrations? Who will be the first to break the circle of the armaments' race, ever more ruinous and vain? Who will have the good sense to put an end to such non-sensical practices as the brake sometimes applied to certain

agricultural products because of badly organized transport and markets? Will man, who has learned how to harness the atom and conquer space, finally succeed in conquering his selfishness? UNCTAD—we like to hope—will succeed in putting an end to the scandal of rich countries buying at the lowest possible prices the produce of poor countries, and selling their own produce to these poor countries at a very high price. There is a whole economy, too often tainted by power, waste and fear, which must be transformed into an economy of service and brotherhood.

*Need for an effective world authority and international law.*

In view of the worldwide scale of the problem, there can be no fitting solution except on the international level. In saying this we do not in any way mean to belittle the many generous initiatives both private and public—suffice it to mention our indefatigable *Caritas Internationalis*—whose spontaneous appearance keeps alert and stimulates so much disinterested good will. Quite the contrary. But, as we said in New York, with the same conviction as our revered predecessor John XXIII in his encyclical *Pacem in Terris*: « Who can fail to see the need and importance of thus gradually coming to the establishment of a world authority capable of taking effective action in the juridical and moral spheres? ». This you have in fact understood, and you have undertaken this World Indicative Plan for agricultural development (PIM), which is intended to integrate in one worldwide view all the various factors in this sphere. There is no doubt that freely entered into agreements between states will assist its being put into practice. Nor is there any doubt that the transition from selfish and exclusive profit-based economies to an economy which will voluntarily undertake the satisfaction of mutual needs calls for the adoption of an international law based on justice and equity, at the service of a truly human universal order.

It is therefore necessary to be brave, bold, preserving and energetic. So many lands still lie fallow, so many possibilities remain unexplored, so many human resources are as yet untapped, so many young people stand idle, so much energy is squandered. Your task, your responsibility and your honour will be make these latent resources bear fruit, to awaken their powers and to direct them to the service of

the common good. Here lie the breadth, the vastness, the urgency and the necessity of your role. Among responsible statesmen, publicists, educators, scientists, civil servants—indeed among all men—you must untiringly promote study and action on a world scale, while all believing men add their prayers to « God who gives the growth ». Already there are appearing important results, which yesterday were still unhopd for, but which today are the guarantee of solid hope. In these recent days who has not acclaimed as a symbol the award of the Nobel Prize for Peace to Norman Borlaug, « the father of the green revolution », as he is called? How true it is that if all men of goodwill throughout the world could be mobilized in a concerted effort for peace, the tragic temptation to resort to violence could then be overcome.

*Final appeal: brotherly love. The suffering Christ.*

More than one, perhaps, will shake his head at such prospects. Yet, permit us to say it plainly, on the human, moral and spiritual level which is ours: no strategy of a commercial or ideological nature will soothe the complaint which rises from those who are suffering from « undeserved misery », as the young, whose « protest resounds like a signal of suffering and an appeal for justice ». If need and self-interest are powerful and often decisive motives for men's actions, the present crisis can only be surmounted by love. For, if « social justice makes us respect the common good, social charity makes us love it ». « Charity, that is to say brotherly love, is the driving force behind all social progress ». Preoccupations of a military nature and motives of the economic order will never permit the satisfaction of the grave demands of the men of our time. There must be love for man: man devotes himself to the service of his fellowmen, because he recognizes him as his brother, as the son of the same Father; and the Christian will add: as the image of the suffering Christ, whose word moves man in his most hidden depths: « I was hungry and you gave me to eat... ». This word of love is ours. We present it to you as your most precious treasure, the lamp of charity whose burning fire consumes hearts, whose shining flame lights the way of brotherhood and guides our steps along the paths of justice and of peace.

4. « **The rights of man** » for all the world's poor

(*Discourse to the dwellers in Tondo, Manila, 29 November 1970*).

*On 29 November 1970 Pope Paul went to Tondo, a poor quarter of the city of Manila, and he gave the following address to the inhabitants.*

I am grateful to those who brought me to this section of the city, because it is here I have been sent. It is my duty to come here because I have to have the same mission as that of Jesus Christ; and God, the Father in heaven, sent him, as he has told us, to bring to the poor the good news, the Gospel (*Lk 4:18*).

Coming among you, I become aware of my mission; and so I thank you too for welcoming me and for listening a while to what I have to say.

I come among you as one sent by Christ; this means as a shepherd to his flock, as a friend and as a brother. I am head of the Catholic Church and its servant and I feel it my duty to proclaim here before you that the Church loves you, loves you who are poor.

What does it mean to say that the Church loves you?

1. It means that the Church recognizes first of all your dignity as human beings, as children of God. She recognizes your equality with all other human beings. She recognizes, moreover, that preference is due to you because your needs are many in order to give your lives sufficiency and well-being, both material and spiritual. I feel obliged, here more than anywhere else, to proclaim the « rights of man », for you and for all the world's poor.

2. And so I must also say that the Church must show you love, give you assistance and aid you also in a practical way and with her generous service. She must promote your economic and social liberation, reminding herself and civil society to give real recognition to your fundamental human rights and to advance in every field your opportunities for attaining the development and well-being of modern living, through the dignified ways of assistance (which we call charity), and then through the ways of honest labor and civil order.

3. I must also remind you, in virtue of my apostolic ministry, that apart from material bread, apart from the temporal well-being to which you rightfully aspire, and for the attainment of which all are obligated

to you in solidarity, you, like all true men, have other higher needs. It is, as Jesus Christ taught: « A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions » (*Lk* 12:15). This is the great illusion of our time, to think that the supreme aim in life consists in struggling for and winning economic and social, temporal and external goods. You were created for a higher good, for a « kingdom of heaven ». Only there can one have fulness of life, present and future, just as Jesus taught us. You are also called to be Christians by faith, grace, honesty of life and by belonging to the Catholic Church. This is no vain imagining. It is truth. And like all the poor, all the suffering, all who long for justice and peace, you are the ones who are first and truly called to this destiny of redemption and happiness.

Permit me therefore, as the humble Vicar of Christ, to make his human and divine message resound here for you and for the world: « How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven » (*Mt* 5:3).

So, coming to you, I arrived « with rich blessings from Christ » (*Rom* 15:29).

## 5. Message for the missions of the world

*Paul VI's homily at Samoa.*

Dear sons and daughters,

Here I am in your midst! I come from far away, from Rome, from the place where the great Apostles Peter and Paul and so many other saints and martyrs are buried; I come to bring you their blessing.

It is not a desire for travel nor any self-interest whatever that has drawn me to you. I come because we are all brothers and sisters; or, to put it another way, you are my sons and daughters and it is fitting that I, as father of the family that is the Catholic Church, should show each one that he has a right to equal affection. Do you know the meaning of « Catholic Church »? It means that the Church is for the entire world, that she is for all, that nowhere is she an alien. Each man, whatever his country, his race, his age or his education has a place in the Church.

How can I say such an astonishing thing? Because that is what Jesus Christ, the first-born of all men, has wanted. He is the Son of



God, our Father, in heaven, and at the same time he is the Son of Mary, our sister, a human being like ourselves. It is he who saves us, it is he who is our teacher. He has sent me just as he sent your missionaries.

*More missionaries needed*

It is on behalf of Jesus Christ that these men and women of God have come to your islands. They have given you the same teaching that I bring; they were impelled by the same love as I have.

Missionary work in the name of which I am among you, began on the day of Pentecost and is still being carried on in our own day. It is always necessary and always urgent. There are still many men in the world who have not found the truth. For want of someone to teach them, the seed that God has put in their hearts has not found soil where it could grow and flower to its full extent.

And so I have a favour to ask of you. It is this. Let us together send a message, I mean a letter, an invitation, to all the Catholics of the whole world. Let us tell them that there are still many people, many peoples indeed, who have not yet received missionaries, or else have received too few of them. Let us say that they must send new men and women missionaries here and to all the islands and all parts of the world that still do not know Jesus Christ. They are needed to preach the Gospel, and to baptize all who desire to become Christians. They are also needed to educate the people, to teach the children, to instruct the youth in what is good and beautiful, to labour, and to give your life the chance to grow and develop. They are to come in order to proclaim to all the duty to respect every human being, to show to all the way to live well, in justice and peace, and to recall to all who the Risen Christ is, and that we must love God and love all men.

Do you like this idea?

*The missionary message*

I give you this sheet of paper. On it is written the missionary message. We will all sign it. It will be the Catholic Message from the Missions of Samoa for the Missions of the whole world. The whole world will listen to you.

We, Paul VI,

— *With the Catholic community of the Island of Upolu*, gathered around its Bishop, Pio Taofinu'u, and its clergy;

— *With our collaborators*, Cardinals Eugène Tisserant and Agnelo Rossi, Archbishops Giovanni Benelli, Agostino Casaroli and Sergio Pignedoli, and Bishop Jacques Martin;

— *Launch an appeal* that would be a call to the whole Church scattered to the four corners of the earth, from this privileged land, lost in the immensity of the Pacific Ocean, but long since open to the Gospel message;

— *Responding* to the anguished voices of those eager for light who beg us: « Come across and help us » (cf. *Acts* 16:9);

— *Seized with pity* for the multitude hungry for the bread of the Word and the Bread of the Eucharist but with no one to give them these;

— *Filled with admiration* before the riches which God has placed in men's hearts and the wonderful promises of a harvest for the Gospel;

— *We repeat the call* which, from distant times, God has addressed to generous hearts: « Leave your country, your family and your father's house for the land I will show you » (*Genesis* 12:1).

— *To you, bishops of the Holy Catholic Church*, who by virtue of the collegiality of the episcopate share the concern for the welfare of the whole Church (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 23), extend your apostolic ardour to the holy cause of spreading the Gospel throughout the world (cf. *Encyclical Fidei Donum*);

— *To you, priests*, whose faith aspires to communicate itself on wider fields, come and bring the fire of your zeal to those whose simplicity of life has safeguarded their sensitiveness to the values of the spirit;

— *To you, religious*, whose life is totally directed to imitation of the Lord, join the valiant generations of missionaries who for centuries have become, each in his turn, messengers of faith, peace and progress, by proclaiming Christ, their Model, their Teacher, their Liberator, their Saviour (*Ad Gentes*, 8).

— *To you, young men and women*, whose heart, eager for truth, justice and love, seeks noble causes to defend by disinterested effort, we say: Listen to the call to become heralds of the Good News of Salvation; come with the riches of your faith and your youthful enthu-

siasm, teach men that there is a God who loves them, who waits for them, and who wishes them to be close to him like children gathered round the head of the family; come to nurse the body, enlighten the intellect, teach how to live better and grow in humanity, and build the Church for the greater glory of God.

— *You who are rich*, give of your possessions which God has placed in your keeping that the apostle may live and that his pastoral undertakings may prosper;

— *You who are poor*, give your struggle and toil for your daily bread, that all may share that bread;

— *You who suffer, you who weep or are persecuted*, give your suffering, that the Body of Christ may grow in justice and hope (cf. *Colossians* 1:24).

— *To the whole of Catholic Christendom we say*: « Widen the space of your tent, stretch out your hangings freely » (*Is* 54:2); give the world, as it advances towards unity, the indispensable nourishment of harmony. For, while seeking the truth together brings men closer, only the meeting of hearts cements their unity. In the Spirit of Jesus Christ build up the immense Mystical Body which is the Church in process of being formed. It depends on you that peace and brotherhood should tomorrow scatter the darkness of death. God has need of you that about Christ the Saviour there should be raised and joined in harmony the hymn to the Creator, God who is Father of all (*Eph* 4:6).

Unknown brothers and sisters, listen to our voice. And the grace of the Lord be with you. Amen.

## 6. **Spotlight on youth**

*Homily of Paul VI, 2 December 1970 to 150,000 boys and girls from Catholic schools all over Australia present at the Mass.*

Dear sons and daughters,

It was our wish in the programme of our meetings this special contact with your world: that of the young people of Australia. It was not that you are not a part of the Catholic community—of course you are, since you share in the one baptism and the one faith

(*Eph* 4:5). But it seemed to us that within this people, itself so young, you are the young amid the young, and you have a right to a special message.

We would like you to see this talk as a sign of the special liking the Church has for youth. It is not that the Church feels old and looks for support in the strength of the young and vigorous. Certainly she can be glad of her long history, and the rich experience she has gained from contact with many generations of all races and cultures. We do not think that this is any hindrance to her taking an interest in the rising generation of today, or seeking their support. Her reason for existence and her justification is to extend the presence of Jesus Christ among men, to spread his Word and to communicate his life. Did Christ not call himself « the Way, the Truth and the Life » (*Jn* 14:6)? Is he not the Light for all men (*Jr* 1:9)? He is the new and perfect man, eternally young because he has mastery over the changing events of time. In our time just as in the first ages of Christianity he is the one who fully reveals man to himself and makes it possible for man to be completely fulfilled. The Council rightly called Christ « the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and of civilization, the centre of the human race, the joy of every heart, and the answer to all its yearnings » (*Gaudium et Spes*, 45).

### *The ray of light*

The Church's mission is directly related to Christ's will to go towards each person, in order to help him fully to develop his inmost being in accordance with his talents, and in order to raise him up and save him by making him a son of God. It is from Christ that the Church receives a power beyond that of any merely human society, the power to be the full answer for your young hearts; for she is « the real youth of the world » (The Council's Message to Youth, 8 December 1965). She renews herself unceasingly, offering each new generation and each new people the good news which saves them, as she draws from the infinite treasure of the Word of God the answer to the most puzzling situations.

That is why the Church comes to you in complete honesty and simplicity. She knows what values you possess—your enthusiasm for the future, your strength in numbers, your thirst for what is just and

true, and your aversion for hatred and its worst expression which is war, even your rejection of the out-of-date elements in present-day civilization. God placed these virtues in you so that you might meet a new situation with a new attitude. He who created life, he who wished by his Incarnation to share fully—except for sin—in our human condition, has likewise the ability to make human history go forward towards its goal. He can save this world from division and chaos by leading it, with the free cooperation of each individual, towards the wonderful destiny of the Kingdom of God.

There is an intimate connection, dear young people, between your faith and your life. In the very dissatisfaction that torments you and in your criticism of that society—which today is rightly called a permissive society—there is a ray of light.

In that society there are unfortunately every day more aggressive acts, new attitudes and behaviour patterns which are not Christian. When you denounce them and ask that society eliminate them and replace them with values authentically based on real justice, real sincerity, real moral rectitude and real brotherhood, you are indeed right. You have not only the approbation but the full support of the Church.

### *Sharing man's advance*

But be attentive to the manner in which you treat this matter and make this effort, for if you turn back on yourselves, if you set yourselves up as supreme judges of your truth, if you reject the past wholesale—that is to say, if you reject what has been built up by the efforts of representatives of the same human race to which you belong, people with fundamentally the same qualities and defects—then the world of to-morrow will not be noticeably better, even if it is different; the root of the trouble will not have been extirpated: namely, man's pride. « Man can organize the world apart from God », we said in our encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, « but without God man can organize it in the end only to man's detriment. An isolated humanism is an inhuman humanism » (42).

If on the other hand you agree to encounter the one who more than all others gave proof of his love for man by delivering himself up to death to save him, then you will light the flame of your ideals at the fire of his infinite love: in that case you will share in man's advance

towards the light. « For of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved » (*Acts 4:12*).

*For or against*

That is your vocation, dear sons and daughters. That is where your duty lies. You must make the choice: you will be either for man with Jesus Christ, or against man. It is not a matter of a sentimental or superficial choice. It is a matter of your lives and those of others.

It is up to you, with the help of your parents, educators and friends, among yourselves and within organizations suited to your age and your studies, to deepen your knowledge and understanding of these realities of your faith. It must not be that your lives as young people should now depend on the light of the faith you had as children.

Besides, it is not a matter of you alone. It is a matter of all your brothers and sisters of Australia. It is a matter that goes beyond your frontiers; it is a matter of the world's salvation. It was not as isolated individuals that God saved us; his plan for us was to form a united and peaceful people. You will find your happiness essentially in sharing it with others. There is no lack of opportunity to do so. They come from among your own numbers, from your companions in the same course. They come from your parishes, from the poor, from the sick. They come from beyond the seas, from the world which surrounds you and which is trying to find the real reasons of living.

With great fervour and affection we beg the Lord to enlighten those who doubt, to comfort those who suffer and to reveal himself to all of you. We pray that he who is so good and so close to each of you will give peace and joy to your hearts. With very deep affection we give our special apostolic blessing to you who are gathered here and to all the youth of Australia.

7. « **Every man is my brother** »...

(*Pope Paul's « Day of peace » message*).

Listen to Us. It is worthwhile. Yes, as usual, Our word is: peace. But it is the word of which the world is in need, urgently in need, and that makes it new.

Let us open our eyes at the dawn of this new year, let us observe two orders of general facts and events, which affect the world, its peoples, families and individuals. These facts, it seems to Us, influence our destinies deeply and directly. Each one of us can be their horoscope.

Observe the first order. In truth it is not an order, but a disorder. For the facts which We assemble in this category all indicate a return to thoughts and needs which, it seemed, the tragic experience of war had, or should have, wiped away. At the end of the war everyone said: Enough! Enough of what? Of everything that gave rise to the human butchery and the appalling devastation. Immediately after the war, at the beginning of this generation, humanity became suddenly conscious that it was not enough to bury the dead, heal the wounds, rebuild what was destroyed and renew and improve the face of the earth; the cause of the conflagration we had undergone must be removed. The causes: this was the wise plan: to look for the causes and to eliminate them. The world breathed again. Indeed it seemed that a new era was about to open, the era of universal peace. Everyone seemed ready to accept radical changes, in order to avoid new conflicts. For the political, social and economic structures a perspective of wonderful moral and social innovations was presented. There was talk of justice, of human rights, of betterment of the weak, of orderly co-existence, of organized collaboration, of world union. Great gestures were made: the victors, for example, came to the aid of the vanquished. Great institutions were founded. The world began to organize itself on principles of effective union and common prosperity. The way to peace, as a normal and fundamental condition of life in the world, seemed to have been finally planned.

### *Wars still rage*

And yet, what do we see after twenty-five years of this material and idyllic progress? We see, first of all, that, here and there, wars still rage, and seem to be incurable plagues, which threaten to spread and grow worse. We see a continuation of, and in places an increase in, social, racial and religious discrimination. We see a return of the old mentality; man seems to entrench himself in situations of the past, first psychological and then political. The demons of yesterday rise up again. The supremacy of economic interest, with the all too easy exploitation of

the weak, once more returns; so does class hatred and class warfare, and thus is born again international and civil strife. The struggle for national prestige and political power is back; the inflexible conflict of opposing ambitions, and of the rooted and uncompromising prejudices of races and ideologies had returned; recourse is had to torture and terrorism; recourse is had to crime and violence, as a burning ideal, heedless of the conflagration that may ensue. Peace is again thought of as no more than a balance of mighty forces and of terrifying armaments. Once again people feel a tremor of fear lest some catastrophic imprudence might lead to incredible and uncontrollable holocausts. What is happening? Where are we going? What has gone wrong? Or what has been lacking? Must we resign ourselves to doubting that man is capable of achieving a just and lasting peace, and to renouncing the task of implanting into the education of the new generations the hope for, and the mentality of, peace?

### *Progressive Peace*

Fortunately another set of ideals and facts appears before our gaze; and it is that of progressive peace. For, notwithstanding everything, peace marches on. There are breaks in continuity, there are inconsistencies and difficulties. But all the same peace marches on and is establishing itself in the world with a certain invincibility. Every man is conscious of it: peace is necessary. It has in its favour the moral progress of humanity, which is indisputably directed towards unity. Unity and peace, when freedom unites them, are sisters. Peace benefits from the growing favour of public opinion, which is convinced of the absurdity of war pursued for its own sake and believed to be the only and unavoidable means of settling controversies among men. Peace avails itself on the ever closer network of human relations in the fields of culture, economics, commerce, sport and tourism. We must live together, and it is good to know each other, and to respect and help one another. A fundamental cohesion is taking shape in the world. This favours peace. International relations are increasingly developing, and they form the premise and also the guarantee of a certain concord. The great international and supranational institutions are seen to be providential, at the source as well as at the perfection of humanity's peaceful coexistence.



### *Twofold question*

Before this double picture, on which are superimposed phenomena contrary to the purpose closest to Our heart—that is, peace—it seems to Us that a single, ambivalent observation can be drawn. Let us ask a two-fold question, concerning two aspects of the ambiguous scene the world presents today:

- why, today, does peace recede?
- and why, today, does peace progress?

What is the element which emerges, in a negative sense or indeed in a positive sense, from this simple analysis? The element is always man. Man abased in the first case, man upraised in the second. Let us venture to use a word, which may itself appear ambiguous, but which, given the thought its deep significance demands, is ever splendid and supreme. The world is « love »: love for man, as the highest principle of the terrestrial order. Love and peace are correlative entities. Peace is a product of love: true love, human love. Peace supposes a certain « identity of choice »: this is friendship. If we want peace, we must recognize the necessity of building it upon foundations more substantial than the non-existence of relations (relations among men are inevitable; they grow and become necessary), or the existence of relations of self-interest (these are precarious and often deceptive), or the web of purely cultural or fortuitous relations (these can be double-edged, for peace or for combat).

### *Founded on justice*

True peace must be founded upon justice, upon a sense of the intangible dignity of man, upon the recognition of an abiding and happy equality between men, upon the basic principle of human brotherhood, that is, of the respect and love due to each man, because he is man. The victorious word springs forth: because he is a brother. My brother, our brother.

This consciousness of a universal human brotherhood is also happily developing in our world, at least in principle. Whoever works to educate the rising generations in the conviction that every man is our brother, is building from the foundation the edifice of peace. Whoever implants in public opinion the sentiments of human brotherhood with-

out reserve, is preparing better days for the world. Whoever conceives of the protection of political interests without the incitement of hate and combat amongst men, as a logical and indispensable necessity of social life, is opening to human society the ever effective advancement of the common good. Whoever helps in discovering in every man, beyond his physical, ethnic and racial characteristics, the existence of a being equal to his own, is transforming the earth from an epicentre of division, antagonism, treachery and revenge into a field of vital work for civil collaboration. Where brotherhood amongst men is at root disregarded, peace is at root destroyed. And yet peace is the mirror of the real, authentic, modern humanity, victorious over every anachronistic self-injury. Peace is the great concept extolling love amongst men who discover that they are brothers and decide to live as such.

### *Spirit of brotherhood*

This then is Our message for the year 1971. It echoes, as a voice arising anew from the conscience of civil society, the Declaration of Human Rights: « All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood ». This is the summit reached by the teaching of civilization. Let us not turn back. Let us not lose the treasures of this axiomatic conquest. Rather let us all give rational and resolute attention to this formula, this goal of human progress: « Every man is my brother ». This is peace, in being and in the making. And it avails for all.

For us, brothers of faith in Christ, it is especially valid. To the human wisdom, which, with great effort, has reached such an eminent and difficult conclusion, we believers can add a needed support—before all, the support of certitude (for doubts of all kinds may besiege it, weaken it, destroy it), that of our certitude in the divine word of Christ our Master, as inscribed in his Gospel: « You are all brothers » (*Mt* 23:8). We can offer encouragement as to the possibility of applying it (for, in practical reality, how difficult it is to be truly brothers to everybody!). We can do this by turning to another of Christ's fundamental teachings, as to a practical and standard rule of action: « Treat others as you would like them to treat you; that is the meaning of the Law and the Prophets » (*Mt* 7:12). How philosophers and saints

have meditated on this maxim, which implants the universality of the precept of brotherhood into the individual and positive actions of social morality! And so, finally, we are in a position to provide the supreme argument: the concept of God's Fatherhood over all men, proclaimed to all believers. A true brotherhood, among men, to be authentic and binding, presupposes and demands a transcendental Fatherhood overflowing with metaphysical love, with supernatural charity. We can teach human brotherhood, that is peace, by teaching men to acknowledge, to love, to invoke our Father in heaven. We know that we shall find the way to God's altar barred if we have not first removed the obstacle to reconciliation with our brother man (*Mt* 5.23 ff., 6:14-15). And we know that if we are Promoters of peace, then we can be called sons of God, and be among those whom the Gospel calls blessed (*Mt* 5:9).

What strength, what fruitfulness, what confidence the Christian religion bestows on the equation of brotherhood and peace. What joy it is for us to find, at the meeting point of these two terms, the crossing of the paths of our faith with those of the hopes of humanity and civilization.

14 November 1970.

*Paulus PP. VI*

## 8. The Education of Youth

*Speaking before the « Angelus » on 31 January the Holy Father referred to the growing importance of the educational problem.*

The Sunday worship, wholly reserved to God, according to the liturgical reform, does not forbid us to recall the feast of St. John Bosco which occurs today. First, the memory of this Saint has interest enough for our time, and it serves as a model and provides the driving force of a great religious family, the Salesians, who are spread throughout the world and are so well-deserving in the Church. Secondly, the work of this Saint was directed principally to one of the most serious questions of our society, namely, the education of youth, with a preference for the children of the working class.

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Thus, recalling the feast of St. John Bosco, we are called to reflect upon this problem, now that youth has greater need and is more impatient than ever before to be initiated into modern culture by means of a complete, intellectual, moral and professional formation, and at a time when the schools are in process of reform and development.

Like Don Bosco, all of us must have a great love, esteem and confidence for youth, in whatever way they present themselves to us. By their numbers, their liveliness and their needs they constitute the dominant factor in the social community. It is a duty to wish them well, and to have a care for them and to be interested in them.

The educational problem is everywhere assuming immense proportions, new and complex demands. We must all recognize it as a matter of prime importance. We should wish that the family, society, the Church, and young people themselves were fully aware of their respective functions in regard to the education of youth and that their united moral forces be harmoniously encouraged.

As regards methods, science and experience can well suggest the best. As regards the means, we hope that these will not be lacking for any schools of proven worth whether public or free. As regards teaching personnel, we hope that the teaching vocation will always find many generous souls faithful to it. Finally, as regards principles, the Christian concept of life can furnish a unique treasure of wisdom on true anthropology, true deontology, on man's real capacity to reach his perfection as a person and in society, his destiny. Likewise, that Christian concept of life can avoid the danger that young people, living in the modern, agnostic and pluralistic climate, may grow sceptical and uncertain without rightly knowing where to find their bearings.

We repeat: youth, that enormous wave of the rising generations, must be for all a cherished, actual and pressing problem. At least let it be so in our prayer today.

## VIII. NECROLOGY

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*Fr. Francis Alessandri*

\* Corsica, France, 18.5.1877, † Morges, Switzerland, 22.5.1970, age 93, 69 profession, 64 priesthood.

*Coad. Virgilio Aluffi*

\* Agliano d'Asti, Italy, 10.7.1897, † Buenos Aires, Argentine, 16.12.1970, age 73, 44 profession.

From the end of his novitiate until his last illness he fulfilled the duties of infirmarian admirably and diligently. His charity and patience made him a real Good Samaritan, quiet and self-abnegating. A man of deep piety, his laborious life was interrupted only by visits to the chapel and by the rosary. His confreres and those he helped remember him with gratitude and admiration.

*Fr. Francis Alvarez Camacho*

\* Caracas, Venezuela, 23.2.1874, † Caracas, 13.8.1970, age 96, 50 profession, 58 priesthood, 6 Rector.

He died a saintly man, characterized by his ascetical life and mortification, his active holy life, strict religious observance, great spirit of prayer (he spent long and intimate hours before the tabernacle), his authentically evangelical poverty, his dedication to the poor and needy whom he helped through sacrifices and charity; his humility and self-abnegation in everything.

*Fr. Mario Giuseppe Anfossi*

\* Nice, France, 25.12.1902, † Sion, Switzerland, 1.6.1970, age 67, 47 profession, 38 priesthood.

*Fr. Isaia Avila*

\* Machetá, Colombia, 9.2.1895, † Bogotá, Colombia, 4.12.1970, age 75, 33 profession, 43 priesthood.

He worked on the Missions for fifteen years before returning home to dedicate himself zealously to the education of youth. His life was cut short unexpectedly by an illness that lasted only two days.

*Fr. Salvatore Baraca*

\* Sorso, Italy, 24.3.1891, † Cagliari, Sardinia, 7.1.1971, age 79, 50 profession, 46 priesthood.

With love, diligence and enthusiasm and as long as he could, he devoted himself to teaching and apostolate, especially confessions. He spent practically all his life in his native Sardinia, esteemed by his confreres and numerous past pupils, his cordial manner a fine memory in the community.

*Fr. Bernard Barreda*

\* Caimo, Peru, 24.8.1886, † Arequipa, Peru, 16.11.1970, age 84, 63 profession, 49 priesthood, 6 Rector.

As rector and prefect he occupied posts of responsibility for many years. From 1950 onwards he was confessor of the house and of many other religious communities. His lovable character won the sympathy of all. He nourished religious and Salesian vocations, seeking means to help the poor in order to fulfil the Gospel precept. He was esteemed by all for his zeal, priestly piety and fidelity to his religious duties.

*Fr. Clodomiro Bove*

\* Casalduni, Italy, 11.1.1908, † Vico Equense, Italy, 3.1.1971, age 62, 39 profession, 30 priesthood.

His meekness of character was reflected in his work as a priest and as a Salesian and he was ever available to all. For many years he was confessor to the novices and to religious communities; he was also prefect in various houses. His gifts of simplicity and goodness encouraged others to open their hearts to him.

*Fr. Charles Braga*

\* Tirano, Italy, 23.5.1889, † San Fernando, Philippine Islands, 3.1.1971, age 81, 65 profession, 57 priesthood, Rector 14, Provincial 23, 5 Provincial Visitor.

Serene-minded, an optimist, an ardent lover of souls and of the Church, enthusiastic about Salesian and missionary life, he gave great encouragement to a multitude of young people from many countries.

As Provincial of China from 1930 until 1953 he caused the work to flourish until the Communist persecution came. Then he became first Visitor of the new Salesian work in the Philippines, with the same spirit. His patriarchal life ended in the aspirantate of San Fernando.

*Fr. Andrew Capobianco*

\* Palermo, Sicily, 25.4.1922, † Messina, Sicily, 14.1.1971, age 48, 30 profession, 21 priesthood.

A humble and modest confrere he always promptly fulfilled his duties as a priest, teacher and assistant, esteemed and appreciated by confreres and boys alike for his goodness and piety.

*Fr Emanuel Cataluccio*

\* Florida, Italy, 10.2.1907, † Palermo, Sicily, 21.11.1970, age 63, 43 profession, 37 priesthood.

Even as a young professed he showed rare qualities as a teacher and assistant following the Salesian method. Soon, however, exhaustion caused him to limit his activities and, in recent years, to suspend it. He gave the example of resignation to God's will right until his call to eternity.

*Fr. Anthony Cianfriglia*

\* Palestrina, Italy, 18.10.1884, † Rome, 3.1.1970, age 85, 19 profession, 53 priesthood.

He entered the Congregation at a rather late age, becoming a diligent teacher and an esteemed director of souls in various Salesian houses, characterized by his gentlemanliness, attachment to poverty, promptness and diligence at his various duties.

*Fr. Joseph Coggiola*

\* Frassinetto Po, Italy, 15.6.1899, † there 8.12.1970, age 71, 55 profession, 46 priesthood, 4 Rector, 11 Provincial.

A fine Salesian figure, he was deeply attached to Don Bosco, to his spirit, to the Congregation. He was an intelligent, dynamic and enthusiastic worker who served the Congregation with deeds of extraordinary generosity. Whilst still a young priest he was sent to Bohemia and Moravia where he began the Salesian work, remaining there until

1938 when he was made Provincial of Peru and Bolivia. He ruled the province with his rare gifts and sense of balance, developing it marvellously, increasing the works, and above all vocations. In 1949 he was sent as Rector, then as Economer and confessor to Buenos Aires. His last years were upset by grave cardiac troubles which failed to change his serenity and the strong religious spirit of his soul.

*Fr Emilio Colombo*

\* Buenos Aires, Argentina, 6.10.1893, † there 19.10.1970, age 77, 60 profession, 52 priesthood, 18 Rector.

He was distinguished as a teacher and educator and, like Don Bosco, used his conjuring abilities and his sympathetic approach in attracting boys towards good. He formed generations of boys in the dramatic arts. For 15 years he was a parish priest and a wise and sought-after director of souls for 40, leaving a fine memory of goodness and priestly zeal.

*Fr. Daniel Colussi*

\* Casarsa della Delizia, Udine, Italy, 15.4.1911, † Cape Town, South Africa, 19.12.1970, age 59, 41 profession, 31 priesthood.

He spent 18 years in the missions of Assam, India, before returning to Italy on account of his health. Recovering somewhat he worked for ten years in Italy and then offered himself for the work in South Africa. Among the confreres and boys he left behind the memory of a good and exemplary priest right to the end.

*Fr. Albino Comba*

\* Frossasco, Italy, 5.3.1888, † Shillong, India, 1.12.1970, age 82, 58 profession, 50 priesthood.

After being a teacher in the State schools he entered the Congregation. In 1929, in spite of his age, he succeeded in being sent as a missionary to Assam, where he worked in the theologate and other houses of formation as teacher and confessor. Those who knew him loved him because he was a man of God, good to all, always cheerful and ready to help. No one ever heard him utter a word that sounded offensive, impatient, irritated.



*Fr. Angelo Conti*

\* Sarmeola, Italy, 5.12.1907, † Pordenone, Italy, 19.1.1971, age 63, 45 profession, 36 priesthood, 4 Rector.

Fidelity to Don Bosco was the constant norm of his life as an educator and priest. He had a high sense of mission in his priesthood wherever obedience sent him: as Delegate of the Cooperators, pioneer of the ACLI movement at Verona, first parish priest of our parish at Padua, and finally as confessor in the church of Don Bosco at Pordenone, where his life ended with a heart attack. He is greatly mourned by the confreres and by numerous souls whom he directed spiritually.

*Fr. Achille Cotta*

\* Milan, Italy, 22.9.1923, † Macau, East Asia, 13.12.1970, age 47, 31 profession, 21 priesthood.

He passed a great part of his priestly life at the Yuet Wa College at Macau, where he was greatly appreciated as a teacher and very much liked by the pupils and past pupils. As a priest and religious he was exemplary in everything and showed a natural inclination towards order and regularity. He was greatly devoted to Our Lady.

*Fr. Valentine Cricco*

\* Cachoeira, Brazil, 17.9.1893, † Vitoria, Brazil, 19.1.1971, age 77, 57 profession, 48 priesthood, 15 Rector.

In his way of speaking and acting, « Padre Valentim » showed the Salesian characteristics of joy and optimism, winning over the hearts of those who approached him. Open-minded, full of life and enthusiasm, he worked among the boys right until the last day, when death took him off unexpectedly.

*Fr. Paul Csik*

\* Kirbalov-Szabokö, Hungary, 4.2.1898, † West Haverstraw, U.S.A., 20.6.1970, age 72, 44 profession, 38 priesthood, 9 Rector.

A Salesian well esteemed and appreciated by all, he was a man of great work and sacrifice. His generosity and goodness knew no bounds, especially when working for poor and neglected youth, whom he conquered by his kind heart and pleasant smile. He spent his last years energetically in the erection of our Lady's shrine at West Haverstraw.

*Fr. Guido De Mattia*

\* Roveredo in Piano, Italy, 24.8.1899, † Santiago, Chile, 28.1.1971, age 71, 42 profession, 31 priesthood.

Simple and cheerful he was a worker and a man of sacrifice, spending 25 years among youth and in the huge parish of Gratiud Nacional, Santiago. His work was silent but deep, especially in the sacrament of penance, where he was a most appreciated and much sought-after spiritual director to very many priests and religious.

*Fr. Luciano Demolder*

\* Ypres, Belgium, 3.6.1908, † Jacquet River, Canada, 3.4.1970, age 61, 41 profession, 34 priesthood, 3 Rector.

He was a great missionary apostle who put into practice each day Don Bosco's motto, « Give me souls... ». He liked to be called « Don Bosco's vagabond » when he had charge of the propaganda among the Cooperators and benefactors at St. Pieters-Woluwe. In 1963 he was sent to Montreal to the parish of St. Clare, where he was a real apostle, sensitive to the needs of others and especially to those of the neglected poor. He was always animated by the true charity of Christ.

*Coad. Joseph Di Bella*

\* Bronte, Sicily, 27.1.1881, † Goshen, U.S.A., 20.6.1970, age 89, 8 months of profession.

He became a Salesian « at the eleventh hour », but for many years before that he worked with the aspirants at the house at Goshen, assimilating and practising the true Salesian spirit especially in his spirit of apostolate and self-sacrifice on behalf of others. Quiet and humble, he was admired by all, and especially by the young aspirants, because of his piety and joviality.

*Fr. Francis Donnelly*

\* London, England, 10.2.1894, † London, 28.12.1970, age 76, 49 profession, 42 priesthood.

After taking part in World War I he felt called by God to the Salesian Congregation. He was edifying for his obvious piety and his almost scrupulous love for the rules and traditions. His weak health did not permit him to take part in great apostolic works, but after various surgical operations which he bore with great strength of mind

and abandonment to God, the mission of his last years was that of prayer and sacrifice.

*Coad. Hugh Fassbender*

\* Oberlahnstein, Germany, 10.5.1914, † Helenenberg, Germany, 5.11.1970, age 56, 37 profession.

Because of his military service and being a prisoner-of-war, he was absent from community life for twelve years but returned full of goodwill and enthusiasm to fulfil his religious duties regularly. He adapted himself willingly to all the material duties of the house but also involved himself in the apostolate of youth, sacrificing himself personally and meriting the title of « Father » that they gave him.

*Coad. Adolf Forés*

\* Useras, Spain, 15.10.1946, † Valencia, Spain, 16.1.1971, age 24, 4 profession.

The Superiors accepted him into the Congregation in spite of his ailing health on account of his excellent virtues and disposition. His fervent piety, his optimism, his self-dedication to others, were all indications of the high standard of perfection he had attained to.

*Fr. Dominic Giannantonio*

\* Limosano, Italy, 26.7.1886, † Frascati, Italy, 6.6.1970, age 83, 66 profession, 57 priesthood, 4 Rector.

He was a valiant elementary school teacher for more than 40 years, diligent, methodical, quiet, calm — an educator. He fostered numerous vocations and worked for the Missions and the Pious Work of the Sacred Heart with real dedication. In the confessional he guided numerous souls who listened to him with confidence as he gave a word of fatherly comfort. A true son of Don Bosco, he was always poor, humble, cheerful, active, and most attached to the genuine Salesian spirit.

*Fr. Cyril Goemaere*

\* Deerlijk, Belgium, 20.9.1912, † Liege, Belgium, 18.1.1971, age 58, 37 profession, 28 priesthood.

With humility and serenity he earned the confidence and esteem of many, especially in the confessional. His fine character and competence

in teaching won over the hearts of very many pupils who often returned to visit him later. A long illness prepared him to meet his God.

*Fr. Valentine Grasso*

\* Turin, Italy, 3.3.1889, † Astudillo, Spain, 7.12.1970, age 81, 63 profession, 55 priesthood, 5 Rector.

The funeral of this most faithful son of the Church and of the Congregation showed the high esteem he enjoyed and the gratitude of so many for the life of one who knew how to deal simply with the young and so wisely in the confessional. He was delighted to give up the offices of Rector and Novice Master in order to dedicate himself better to others with goodness of mind and optimism in everything.

*Fr. Frederick Jordana*

\* Sarroca, Spain, 14.7.1889, † Barcelona, Spain, 9.11.1970, age 81, 62 profession, 53 priesthood.

He passed almost all his Salesian life at Sarrià, showing a special spirit of sacrifice amid his numerous pupils. On Sundays and feasts he used to go off to the Oratory in the nearby town of Badalona; there, with charity and zeal, he laid the foundation of a great social Salesian work that is much esteemed in the place. Confined for years to his room by a long illness he prayed constantly for the Congregation and for vocations.

*Fr. Francis Krpec*

\* Merkovice, Czechoslovakia, 25.3.1916, † Terni, Italy, 25.7.1969, age 53, 35 profession, 25 priesthood, 3 Rector.

*Fr. Francis Xavier Li Ang (Likhit Chavapraphan)*

\* Bangkok, Thailand, 23.9.1929, † Bangkok, 4.10.1970, age 41, 21 profession, 11 priesthood.

He was the first Thai Salesian to pass away. His priestly apostolate was mainly that of Catechist. Humble, pious, obedient and generous, he exercised an efficacious apostolate in our houses and missionary residences. He was an example to all in his life of prayer and his eucharistic and marian piety.

*Fr. Joseph Gómez*

\* Allariz, Spain, 16.5.1881, † Orense, Spain, 8.10.1970, age 89, 61 profession, 55 priesthood.

He was one of the oldest Salesians in the province. He did not enjoy good health but appeared always quiet and serene. Unable to do heavy work he dedicated himself generously to the delicate ministry of the confessional, meriting there the confidence of the confreres, pupils, outsiders, and particularly priests.

*Fr. Julius Moermans*

\* Zolder, Belgium, 26.1.1899, † Groot Bijgaarden, Belgium, 4.9.1970, age 71, 50 profession, 41 priesthood, 22 Rector, 9 Provincial.

His whole life was characterized by an unconditioned love of Don Bosco, whose example and teachings he carried out particularly as Rector and Provincial. An assiduous reader of the *Memorie Biografiche* he practised those Salesian virtues that urged him to work unceasingly for the Congregation.

*Fr. Theodulus Mortier*

\* Vlierzele, Belgium, 24.9.1918, † Kortrijk, Belgium, 14.6.1970, age 56, 35 profession, 28 priesthood.

Gifted with great qualities of intellect and heart, he gave himself totally to the service of religious and priestly vocations whom he guided to God above all by spiritual direction, teaching by example as well as word. Numerous priests and religious were thus formed by him.

*Coad. Anthony Murphy*

\* Naas, Ireland, 19.5.1907, † Oxford, England, 30.12.1970, age 63, 30 profession.

He entered the Congregation already a qualified carpenter and after his profession he directed the construction of the grand new school of agriculture at Warrenstown, Ireland. Transferred to Oxford he spent his last years at the service of the boys, whom he helped and edified by his good example. He was a man of good judgment, cordiality and simple faith, whose favourite devotions were the Holy Mass and the Rosary.

*Fr Luigi Nemeč*

\* Pertoca, Jugoslavia, 25.11.1905, † Trstenik, Slovenia, 22.8.1970, age 64, 45 profession, 35 priesthood, 3 Rector.

A promising apostle with excellent human gifts that were Salesian and ecclesial, he was called the Job of the community because of the illness that struck him down and gradually extinguished all his activities.

*Fr. Mark Paracchino*

\* Piano d'Isola, Italy, 12.5.1924, † Rome, 10.11.1970, age 46, 29 profession, 19 priesthood.

Knowing that his poor health could take him to the grave suddenly he created for himself a serene familiarity with death in an attitude full of faith. Obedience gave him mostly administrative charges which he carried out bravely and with a deep understanding of the most varied and sorrowful situations, always prompt to welcome with joy and dedication any occasion of apostolate that was specifically priestly and religious.

*Fr. Joseph Paz*

\* Martinopole, Brazil, 8.6.1938, † Fortaleza, Brazil, 26.10.1970, age 32, 13 profession, 3 priesthood.

He had commenced a fruitful activity in apostolate and teaching when his life ended suddenly in a tragic motor accident right in front of the House he worked in. His priestly life was very brief but the memory of it will long endure in the hearts of his confreres, the boys and the families of the area on account of his intelligence, zeal and goodness as a Salesian worker.

*Fr. Henry Pinci*

\* Palestrina, Italy, 8.3.1884, † Rome, 23.7.1970, age 86, 69 profession, 60 priesthood, 35 Rector.

He worked zealously during his Salesian life, teaching, preaching and in the parochial ministry. Deeply attached to Don Bosco and the Congregation, he was kind and cordial to all. In his last years he doubled his activities on behalf of his Salesian vocation.

*Fr. Nicholas Placentino*

\* San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy, 6.5.1920, † Naples, Italy, 15.11.1970, age 50, 34 profession, 24 priesthood, 6 Rector.

Good, strong, generous, habitually serene, he knew how to infuse his own optimism into others. Don Bosco and the Congregation were the abiding passion of his life as he spent himself in various houses and particularly at Tarsia, working with total dedication and lively charity among the deaf-and-dumb boys, especially those most in need of affection and understanding. With exemplary resignation he accepted a long and painful illness, offering it up for vocations and for the boys.

*Fr. Augustine Ramspott*

\* London, England, 5.12.1881, † Beckford, England, 11.1.1971, age 89, 69 profession, 62 priesthood.

He was the oldest confrere in the English Province. He worked for many years in the novitiate and in parishes; he loved music, singing, and to play the organ for liturgical functions. His goodness, his optimism and perennial good humour reflected a soul rich in the interior life and created about him an atmosphere of serenity and faith which contributed no little to make him esteemed and loved in the Congregation.

*Fr. Ludwig Réfi*

\* Bakonysag, Hungary, 6.1.1900, † Balatonfenyves, Hungary, 22.9.1970, age 70, 33 profession, 25 priesthood.

At a mature age, after having been a lawyer, he came to know Don Bosco and entered the Congregation, adapting himself with exemplary humility to the demands of common life, distinguishing himself by his piety, prompt obedience and indefatigable spirit of work. After the suppression of our communities he earned his living as a night-watchman for more than 15 years in a State factory, finding great consolation in the Holy Mass he celebrated privately in his room.

*Fr. Paul Smets*

\* Overpelt, Belgium, 24.7.1885, † Wilrijk-Hoboken, Belgium, 22.4.1970, age 84, 68 profession, 60 priesthood, 17 Rector.

He made his first profession ten years after the Salesian work began in Belgium. A true Salesian, he spared no labour when it was a matter of contributing towards the development of Don Bosco's work. A truly poor and obedient religious, he was also truly good, occupying posts of responsibility and always ready to give service to all. His life showed him to be a true son of Don Bosco.

*Fr. Francis Stöglebner*

\* Amesrait, Austria, 12.2.1904, † Linz, Austria, 3.2.1970, age 65, 42 profession, 33 priesthood, 20 Rector.

Like Don Bosco, he was zealous and indefatigable in the care of souls. He was much esteemed as parish priest and Rector, working mostly for apprentices, among whom he enjoyed great sympathy as a friend rather than as a superior. Heart attacks ended his priestly activities within a few days.

*Fr. William Vagac*

\* Stará Turá, Slovakia, 18.8.1887, † Pezinok, Slovakia, 1.7.1970, age 82, 60 profession, 51 priesthood, 9 Rector.

At 19 he came to Italy for his Salesian formation and in 1924 began the pioneering Salesian work in his fatherland by going with the Slovak aspirants from Perosa Argentina (Torino) to Sastin. He vowed to go on the Missions for ten years if the Salesian work became established in his nation and hence Fr. Vagac left for Mato Grosso, where he worked as Rector and as parish priest for 15 years. He returned to his homeland to find a flourishing province with 13 houses and more than 250 confreres. Unfortunately the dispersion out of everything and this he felt far more sorrowfully than the fact of having to go to prison at the age of 70.

*Fr. Candido Valentini*

\* Javré di Villa Rendena, Italy, 25.6.1884, † Gorizia, Italy, 3.2.1971, age 86, 68 profession, 58 priesthood.

His was a long and hard-working life illuminated by faith, good conscience and a sense of duty and punctuality. Don Rua gave him the cassock at Foglizzo and this encounter remained vivid to him throughout his 68 years of religious life. In his last illness everyone was impressed



by his great serenity, which indeed was characteristic of his whole life and noticed by all with whom he had dealings.

*Fr. Ulric Steen*

\* Capelle St. Ulrich, Belgium, 5.7.1906, † Reus, Spain, 28.12.1970, age 64 44 profession, 34 priesthood.

In spite of his poor health he always tried to do good in his contacts with pupils, past pupils, lay teachers and Cooperators, always ready to give advice or help where this was possible, thus expressing his fidelity to Don Bosco.

*Fr. Geoffrey Vandewinkel*

\* Neeroeteren, Belgium, 12.12.1908, † Bree, Belgium, 1.11.1970, age 61, 43 profession 33 priesthood, 17 Rector.

Soon after ordination he went to the Congo, working there in many capacities as a travelling missionary, undertaking works of responsibility, planning and actuating necessary constructions for the development of the Mission. He was unable to finish all his generous plans but his dedication to the lepers, to the poorest and most unhappy of his flock will certainly have earned him a great reward.

*Fr. William Van Ek*

\* Hilversum, Holland, 9.6.1914, † Korbeek-Lo, Belgium, 2.1.1971, age 56, 35 profession, 27 priesthood.

The greater part of his apostolate as a priest was spent at Kortrijk where he gave himself indefatigably to the education of youth. He was distinguished by his cordial treatment of the past pupils and right until the end he did all he could to help especially the poorest boys. He endured a serious illness with serenity.

*Fr. Joseph Váraljai*

\* Boldogkövaralja, Hungary, 5.6.1898, † there 7.10.1970, age 72, 54 profession, 43 priesthood, 9 Rector.

From his early youth right until the end he fully observed the motto « Work and Prayer ». As an assistant he was attentive and self-sacrificing; as a superior an illuminated guide of consciences; as a confessor indefatigable and of high spirituality in directing souls. His

prudence was particularly manifested during the last war, in the subsequent occupation and in the closing down of our houses. As he so ardently desired, at the end he was assisted by a confrere priest.

*Cleric Julian Venturini*

\* Villa del Bosco, Italy, 4.7.1944, † Milan, Italy, 17.9.1970, age 26, 8 profession.

He had just finished his second year of theology. Although struck down by an inexorable illness, he clung to life and dreamt of vast fields of youth apostolate in the Philippine Islands where he had already generously spent the years of his tirocinium. Young, intelligent and gifted, he knew how to win over the boys and lead them on to good. He had a special predilection for orphans and was totally dedicated to the saving of the poor.

# 1° Elenco 1971

N.	COGNOME E NOME	LUOGO DI NASCITA	DATA DI NASC. E MORTE		ETÀ	LUOGO DI M.	ISP.
1	Sac. ALESSANDRI Francesco	Piana (Corsica) (F)	18.5.1877	22.5.1970	93	Morges (CH)	Pr
2	Coad. ALUFFI Virgilio	Agliano d'Asti (I)	10.7.1897	16.12.1970	73	Bs. Aires (RA)	BA
3	Sac. ALVAREZ Francesco	Caracas (VZ)	23.2.1874	13.8.1970	96	Caracas (VZ)	Vz
4	Sac. ANFOSSI Mario G.	Nice (F)	25.12.1902	1.6.1970	67	Sion (CH)	Pr
5	Sac. AVILA Isaia	Machetá (CO)	9.2.1895	4.12.1970	75	Bogotá (CO)	Bg
6	Sac. BARACA Salvatore	Sorso (I)	24.3.1891	7.1.1971	79	Cagliari (I)	Ro
7	Sac. BARREDA Bernardo	Caime (Perú)	24.8.1886	16.11.1970	84	Arequipa (Perú)	Pe
8	Sac. BOVE Clodomiro	Casalduni (I)	11.1.1908	3.1.1971	61	Vico Equensa (I)	Cp
9	Sac. BRAGA Carlo	Tirano (I)	23.5.1889	3.1.1971	82	S. Fernando (Fil)	Fi
10	Sac. CAPOBIANCO Andrea	Palermo (I)	25.4.1922	14.1.1971	48	Messina (I)	Sc
11	Sac. CATALUCCIO Eman.	Floridia (I)	10.2.1907	21.11.1970	63	Palermo (I)	Sc
12	Sac. CIANFRIGLIA Antonio	Palestrina (I)	18.10.1884	3.1.1970	85	Roma (I)	Ro
13	Sac. COGGIOLA Giuseppe	Frassinetto Po (I)	15.6.1899	8.12.1970	71	Frass. Po (I)	BA
14	Sac. COLOMBO Emilio	Bs. Aires (RA)	6.10.1893	29.10.1970	77	Bs. Aires (RA)	BA
15	Sac. COLUSSI Daniele	Casarsa d. Delizia (I)	15.4.1911	29.12.1970	59	Cape Town (S. Af.)	Ir
16	Sac. COMBA Albino	Frossasco (I)	5.3.1888	1.12.1970	82	Shillong (ID)	Ga
17	Sac. CONTI Angelo	Sarmeola-Rubano (I)	5.12.1907	19.1.1971	63	Pordenone (I)	Vn
18	Sac. COTTA Achille	Milano (I)	22.9.1923	13.12.1970	47	Macau (East Asia)	Ci
19	Sac. CRICCO Valentino	Cachoeira (BR)	17.9.1893	19.11.1970	77	Vitoria (BR)	BH
20	Sac. CSIK Paolo	Kirbalov-Szabóko (H)	4.2.1898	20.6.1970	72	W. Haverstraw (USA)	NR
21	Sac. DE MATTIA Guido	Roveredo in P. (I)	24.8.1899	28.1.1971	71	Santiago (RCH)	Cl
22	Sac. DEMOLDER Luciano	Ypres (B)	3.6.1908	3.4.1970	61	Jacquet R. (Canada)	NR
23	Coad. DI BELLA Giuseppe	Bronte (I)	27.1.1881	20.6.1970	89	Goshen (USA)	NR
24	Sac. DONNELLY Francesco	Londra (GB)	10.2.1894	28.12.1970	76	Londra (GB)	Ig
25	Coad. FASSBENDER Ugo	Oberlahnstein (D)	10.5.1914	5.11.1970	56	Helenenberg (D)	Kö
26	Coad. FORES Adolfo	Useras (E)	15.10.1946	16.1.1971	24	Valencia (E)	Va

27	Sac.	GIANNANTONIO Dom.	Limosano (I)	26.7.1886	6.6.1970	83	Frascati (I)	Ro
29	Sac.	GOEMAERE Cirillo	Deerlijk (B)	20.9.1912	18.1.1971	58	Liège (B)	Lb
29	Sac.	GRASSO Valentino	Torino (I)	3.3.1889	7.12.1970	81	Astudillo (E)	Le
30	Sac.	JORDANA Federico	Sarroca de Ballera (E)	14.7.1889	9.11.1970	81	Barcelona (E)	Bn
31	Sac.	KRPEC Francesco	Merkovice (Cecosl.)	25.3.1916	25.7.1969	53	Terni (I)	Bo
32	Sac.	LI ANG Francesco S.	Bangkok (Siam)	23.9.1929	4.10.1970	41	Bangkok (Siam)	Th
33	Sac.	LORENZO Giuseppe	Allariz (E)	16.5.1881	8.10.1970	89	Orense (E)	Le
34	Sac.	MOERMANS Giulio	Zolder (B)	26.1.1899	4.9.1970	71	Groot Bijgaarden (B)	Wo
35	Sac.	MORTIER Teodulo	Vlierzele (B)	24.9.1913	14.6.1970	56	Kortrijk (B)	Wo
36	Coad.	MURPHY Antonio	Naas (Irlanda)	19.5.1907	30.12.1970	63	Oxford (GB)	Ig
37	Sac.	NEMEC Luigi	Pertoča (YU)	25.11.1905	22.8.1970	64	Trstenik (YU)	Ju
38	Sac.	PARACCHINO Marco	Piano d'Isola (I)	12.5.1924	10.11.1970	46	Roma (I)	Ro
39	Sac.	PAZ Giuseppe	Martinopole (BR)	8.6.1938	26.10.1970	32	Fortaleza (BR)	Re
40	Sac.	PINCI Enrico	Palestrina (I)	8.3.1884	23.7.1970	86	Roma (I)	Ro
41	Sac.	PLACENTINO Nicola	S. Giov. Rotondo (I)	6.5.1920	15.11.1970	50	Napoli (I)	Cp
42	Sac.	RAMSPOTT Agostino	Londra (GB)	5.12.1881	11.1.1971	89	Beckford (GB)	Ig
43	Sac.	REFI Lodovico	Bakonyáság (H)	6.1.1900	22.9.1970	70	Balatonfenyves (H)	Un
44	Sac.	SMETS Paolo	Overpelt (B)	24.7.1885	22.4.1970	84	Wilrijk-Hob.(B)	Wo
45	Sac.	STÖGLEHNER Franc.	Amesrait (Austria)	12.2.1904	3.2.1970	65	Linz (Austria)	Au
46	Sac.	VAGAČ Guglielmo	Stará Turá (Slovac.)	18.8.1887	1.7.1970	82	Pezinok (Slovac.)	Sl
47	Sac.	VALENTINI Candido	Javrè (I)	25.6.1884	3.2.1971	86	Gorizia (I)	Vn
48	Sac.	VANDERSTEEN Ulrich	Capelle ST. Ulrich (B)	5.7.1906	28.12.1970	64	Reus (E)	Wo
49	Sac.	VANDEWINKEL Gof.	Neeroeteren (B)	12.12.1908	1.11.1970	61	Bree (B)	AC
50	Sac.	VANEK Guglielmo	Hilversum (ND)	9.6.1914	2.1.1971	56	Korbeek-Lo (B)	Wo
51	Sac.	VARALJAI Giuseppe	Boldogkovaralja (H)	5.6.1898	7.10.1970	72	Boldogk. (H)	Un
52	Ch.	VENTURINI Giuliano	Villa del Bosco (I)	4.7.1944	17.9.1970	26	Milano (I)	Fi