



ACTS OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL

OF THE SALESIAN SOCIETY

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S. G. S. - ROMA

I. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

Rome, July 1974

My dear Confrères and Sons,

I have just returned from my long journey to Latin America. This time, instead of treating of one important subject, I shall pass on some family news culled in the course of my recent visits to the Provinces. In this way you will have time to think through some of the serious matters discussed in the preceding letters; and you will also get to know some of the more interesting aspects of life in the Congregation today. I think that such information can serve to foster the sense of unity which is life and strength for the whole Congregation.

With regard to the letter on vocations, which was sent out to you last January, it has given me great pleasure to hear that certain groups and communities have given it serious thought and have reached some solid conclusions. But I think that this is just what the Rector Major's letter is supposed to do: to present a set of principles that will be clear, up-to-date and definitely Salesian; and at the same time to offer to our communities not only reading matter for private and public use, but also points to study, ponder and discuss, so that the broad trend-lines may be translated into practical terms, a process so necessary if we are to carry through the renewal that the whole Congregation — with the Church — is expected to effect.

So I would like to invite you all to work hard on these ideas, to explore them in theory and exploit them in practice, because,

in their content, they play no minor part in building up that unity which the Congregation, if it is to be a congregation, needs as much today as ever.

A sad loss

To start with, there is the sad affair — sad, but at the same time a source of holy pride for us — of the death of Cardinal Trochta, that son of the Congregation, of whom we can be justly proud whilst we remember him in our prayers. You may have already received the obituary letter: I recommend that you make its contents as widely known as possible. He was, as one informed source has stated, a martyr of the modern history of the Church.

At about the same time as we received the news of the death of Cardinal Trochta, we also received notification of the appointment of the successor to the late Mons. Boric in the see of Punta Arenas in Chile. The new bishop is our own confrère, Tomás Gonzalez, who is already Vice-Provincial and Vicar of the diocese.

As we all know, Punta Arenas is "Salesian" country, and so is the whole of Patagonia. On the threshold of the Centenary of the first missionary expedition to Latin America in 1875, which was to develop so rapidly with the realization of Don Bosco's dreams for Patagonia and the Straits of Magellan area, the appointment of the young bishop carries with it a rich fund of hope for the new century in the life of the Catholic community, born of the tears and sacrifices of so many Salesians and Salesian Sisters.

The Meetings with the Provincials

In the last few months, following a plan previously worked out by the Council, I have visited many parts of Latin America and a number of Provinces there. I was able to meet hundreds

of the confrères, Salesian Sisters, Co-operators, Past Pupils and numerous groups of youngsters. I think the best thing to do is to take things as they happened, without going into too many details, which you can find in this number of the Acts and in the News-letters of the various Provinces.

As I mentioned above, the meetings followed a plan which had precise aims thrashed out in a series of plenary sessions of the Council.

The focal point of these visits has always been the meeting with the Provincials of the Regions. The meeting for the Pacific-Caribbean Region, held in Mexico City in October, 1973, was the first of the series; and it was followed by meetings in Rome for the English-speaking Provincials, and then for the Provincials from North-West and Eastern Europe. In April it was the turn of the Provincials from the Atlantic Region of Latin America. This one was held in the beautiful and peaceful house of the Salesian Sisters at San Miguel, near Buenos Aires.

To round off this account of the programme of work for 1974, I must include the meetings for the Iberian Region, and for the Italian Conference, held in the first fortnight of June. Next October there will be the meeting for the Far East, to be held in Hong Kong, and this will complete the series.

The business on the agenda of these meetings was all much the same, and is best represented by the reports of the Provincials, which really got down to the nitty-gritty, to use the current cliché. These were followed by exchanges of experiences and views, which made for a full and free discussion. The overriding consideration was the search for the basic ingredients of a genuine renewal, after the mind of our Special General Chapter. In those days of intense activity, the agendas covered the vast gamut of the Congregation's vital interests, including those arising from local situations. And the meetings were thoroughly Salesian in spirit, to which the liturgical celebrations — devout, dignified and well-prepared — contributed in no

small measure. Straight away there was a familiarity and friendship among those taking part, and a serene happiness — old songs, ay, and new ones too: we were all caught up by the spirit of the thing.

More than once, as these occasions drew to a close, I heard expressions of regret, almost of pain, that it all had to come to an end. How richly rewarding to the human spirit is an atmosphere of genuine comradeship.

But, while it is true that the peak occasions are the study-sessions with the Provincials, nonetheless when such meetings take place outside Rome, both the Rector Major and the Departmental Heads, who always take part in these meetings, embark on a round of visits and meetings arranged by the Regional Superior. In this way contact is made with the men on the job.

So Fr Viganò was busy with the problems of formation in the field, meeting the responsible men in the different Provinces; Fr Dho, with catechetics, the youth apostolate and vocations, and in particular with the aspirantates and minor seminaries, so important for the life of the Congregation. Fr Raineri worked on the problems of the laity with those responsible, especially in regard to the Cooperators, who are today coming into ever greater prominence as a key sector in the Salesian mission. With the Past-Pupils he studied ways of utilizing the mass media in the following fields: communications within the Congregation, publishing, and the use for our apostolate of audio-visual aids, which are becoming really essential.

I shall give you the more interesting and useful items of the visit.

Missions in Ecuador

My first stop was Ecuador, where I spent some days in April. The kindly insistence of the Provincial, echoing the general wishes of the confrères, the fact that in my various

journeyings in America I had never been to the country, the recent reuniting of the two Provinces, including two important missionary areas, were all contributory reasons for the visit, which, for all the weariness it involved, brought consolation and joy.

I shall give the main points of interest in the visits to the missions at Pastaza, Macas, Yaupi and Santiago. These enabled me to find out the work done by the Salesians, the Salesian Sisters and the VSO's in areas where they had to start from scratch under the most discouraging circumstances: areas that seemed positively resistant to any sort of civilizing action, either cultural or religious; this is the famous "cultivating dry sticks" that the late Mons. Comin used to speak of.

The present situation fully vindicates the faith and sacrifices of these tough brothers of ours, whose work is continued with the same sort of dedication by the present generation. All these confrères — and this is true of all the missions — are happy in their extreme poverty, in their simple, often primitive, way of life deliberately chosen in place of the familiar ways back home. It is obvious that behind this choice, made by so many of our confrères who have taken on the divine adventure, lies a deep faith and the call of Don Bosco: "Da mihi animas".

In the homeland of Zeffirino Namuncurà

I also visited the Missions at Bahia Blanca and Fortín Mercedes in Patagonia, Argentina. In the few days I was there I was able to realize how much had been achieved in a century's work by our confrères and our Sisters. To describe it as heroic would be no exaggeration — the facts speak for themselves. Generation after generation of missionaries in these lands of Don Bosco's dreams have merged into the social scene; indeed, they have become one with the people, in whose lives Don Bosco has become a close and firm friend, present everywhere.

At Bahia Blanca, which today is a modern town, I was much impressed by the wide range of business concerns, from bakery to garage, from farm to brick factory, that bore the name of Don Bosco. It is evidence enough of how deeply Don Bosco and his men have penetrated in these parts and of how much they have done, quietly and efficiently, for the cultural and social welfare of these good people in the process of bringing the Gospel to them. As we enter the Centenary year of the first expedition to Latin America, let us honour all those members of the Salesian Family who, over the last hundred years, have built in this territory a city of Christian culture.

And mention must be made of a characteristic development that I met with in the area of Salesian Patagonia that has Fortín Mercedes as its power-house of activity. It is hardly a village — a little Salesian village, if you like. It is the Mother House of the district. Many Salesians have received their initial formation there and regard Fortín Mercedes, and the little world that turns around it, as their home.

Today the fine Sanctuary of Mary, Help of Christians, in so many ways reminiscent of the original at Valdocco, is a centre of devotion to Our Lady and to the Venerable Zeffirino Namuncurá as well. His mortal remains are preserved there, and pilgrims flock to the sanctuary from all over Argentina. It is most impressive to see the love and fervour shown by so many people from all walks and classes of life and of all ages to this "flower of the Pampas". For good reason Zeffirino has become the symbol of the apostolic activity of our brothers among the people of the Grand Pampas.

It is everyone's fervent wish that the Lord will glorify this young Patagonian. We all hope that such an event, besides being the reward of a century's labours, will provide the stimulus for a continuation of the cultural and Christian development that will cope with the changing situation in the territory.

At the Brothers' Convention in Quito

Returning to Ecuador, I had the impressive experience of attending the Provincial Brothers' Convention. A good number, a wide age-range but with many younger men, and representing as wide a diversity of occupations as ever: mission-Brothers, technicians, agriculturalists, teachers, and the Brother who is a member of the Provincial Council.

The things that struck me most at the meeting were: the serious and careful preparation, and the fact that pretty well all the Brothers took part in the proceedings. Then there was the harmony and understanding between the priests and the Brothers, the sincerity and practicality in the handling of the material, and the absence of axe-grinding. In fact, there was a general preoccupation with the effort to rediscover and reactivate the vocation of the Brother in the light of the Special General Chapter and of recent experience. Overall there was an atmosphere of Salesian joy.

The experience at Quito confirmed the impression that I had received at the Provincial Conventions in Europe. Let us hope that the outcome of the other Provincial Conventions and of the World Congress will be in accordance with the desires of the Brothers and of the Congregation.

Vocations: signs of recovery

There is one thing I did observe in some Provinces, and I mention it because of the implications: I don't want to seem to be indulging in groundless optimism, but I can honestly say that in Latin America I found not only a general concern for vocations, but that in many Provinces the problem was being tackled methodically, and with dedication; it was felt to be a community responsibility.

And these efforts are beginning to bear some fruit. More than once I was told: "Vocations are beginning to pick up". All the more reason for renewed application to the task, while the errors of the past are corrected and the negative aspects ironed out.

One thing is sure: there is an increase in the number of novices, and still more in the number of aspirants. The signs are good, too, with regard to their age (round about twenty) and their studies (many have completed their pre-university course). A notable feature of the situation is that most of them are young men with a strong sense of spiritual commitment from our own schools and youth-clubs.

God grant that these signs of recovery may spread wider and wider, not only in Latin America but to other Provinces, where the signs are not yet discernible. It is certain, however, that developing a vocations' strategy is an obligation deep-set in community life and activity, and we cannot ignore the clear warnings that are provided by the absolutely negative results of the so-called "experiments" of the past few years.

Primary formation

A subject that has not failed to come up in the meetings with Provincials, Provincial Councils, Rectors and Formation Teams has been the primary formation (novitiate, preparation for perpetual profession and ordination). In many ways it is one of the most delicate problems affecting the life and future of the Provinces. The situation has been made all the more difficult by the closing of a number of our studentates and the dispersion of the students among a diversity of institutions, which has created problems both for the academic establishments they have been attending and for the communities they have been living with.

The problem is still with us; but obviously such situations cannot be allowed to continue, because they contribute nothing constructive towards the serious and solid formation that is to answer to the needs of the day. The bare fact of staying in one's own Province solves nothing: there are so many other considerations, and all too often the Provinces have not the men or the means to make adequate provision. The General Chapter did not mean to say that formation takes place almost of its own accord by the very fact that it is all done within the Province: it just does not make sense.

At Buenos Aires the Provincials of the Mar del Plata Group, recognizing that lasting solutions must be found to this problem, have undertaken a joint study of the practical ways of establishing one seminary which will be central to the Group and will be attended by the clerics from the member Provinces. All the problems that are inherent in such a foundation will, of course, be studied, especially the community-life of the students. One point of particular importance: the implementation of such a plan presupposes that the individual Provinces pull together, and it is incumbent on the Provincials to see that they do.

Whilst we all earnestly desire that the decision of the La Plata Provinces, through the effective co-operation of all concerned, should be realized on the ground, I think that I have the duty of reminding those responsible that the sure way — possibly the only way — of solving problems such as these is through the practical collaboration of the Provinces that are involved. The only way that plans like these can be carried through is by combining resources. But they must be made to work because they are essential to the life of the individual Province and amply repay whatever sacrifices are put into them. Solidarity means to give as well as to take: when the accounts are finally balanced everyone will show a profit.

Youth with an ideal

In some countries I had the pleasure of meeting young people, who, for all their differences, left me with much the same impression. These youngsters had committed themselves to an intense life of prayer and study of the Word of God. At the same time they had a lively desire to deepen their knowledge of Don Bosco, not only in his apostolic activities but still more in his method of education and in his spirit; and this is shown by their highly constructive apostolic work in the wide field covered by our mission. Some groups, as, for example, in Brazil, are already gaining useful missionary experience in many ways, employing their spare time to do all sorts of jobs: catechizing, teaching, social work etc. The consoling sight of so many young people actively sharing our work made me realize two important truths.

The first is this: there are very many young people who are longing to be involved in a seriously Christian life, and who are full of generosity and dedication to others; and, given the right guidance, they come to discover the richness of Don Bosco's spirit and the immediacy of his educational method. I would say, moreover, that they finish up by giving him and his system their whole-hearted loyalty. I remember the long and interesting exchange I had in Santiago, Chile, with more than fifty youngsters of the *Movimiento Juvenil Salesiano*. They were between sixteen and twenty-two years of age, and I was strongly impressed by their knowledge of Don Bosco and by their eagerness to learn more of the man and his mission.

The other point is: behind and beside these young people, there is always the Salesian, fired by faith, love and enthusiasm. And here you have it: the flourishing of these groups of youngsters, as of every other pastoral work in our mission-field, is bound up with the personality and work of the Salesian.

The confrère who is culturally and spiritually prepared, who can understand the needs of modern youth and feels the respon-

sibility of bearing the message of Christ in the Salesian apostolic spirit, has an immense field of useful labour.

Of course, things do not run smoothly all the time: there are always difficulties, and it must always be so. What activities are easy and trouble-free, especially nowadays? Faith and love, for us as for Don Bosco, will be our powerful means of overcoming every obstacle. Without these we are reduced to the negative states of immobility, futile complaint, frustration and destructive criticism; and then instead of forging ahead towards renewal, we succeed only in wasting time and in losing the ground already gained.

The children on the street

In the countries I visited I found many interesting examples of work for poor boys: some recently started, others well established, and all in line with the policies of our Special General Chapter.

In the big population-centres afflicted with the mushrooming of the favelas, it can be claimed that the Salesians are there. They are working right at the heart of this higgledy-piggledy agglomeration of wretched huts and hovels, sharing in the extreme poverty of these lowly people, stretched to the limit of endurance in their efforts to save the children, who see in these "fathers" so many sincere and disinterested friends who are seeking only their good. These Salesians, with a spirit of true apostolate and joyous dedication in the face of this heart-rending display of human misery, are striving to improve the conditions — cultural, social, and spiritual — of the boys for whom they work. This goes for Rio de Janeiro, Caracas, Port-au-Prince, Guatemala City, Guayaquil, Belém and many other places.

But in Latin America, apart from the slum areas, the Salesians are doing works of rescue in a large number of cities and settlements, such as Bogotá, Medellín, Managua, Belo Horizonte, Panama, Quito, La Paz.

I had the opportunity of visiting a number of these highly popular works; where so many poor boys are rescued, through constant, patient love, from idleness and vice, and from the exploitation to which they are subjected in countless ways. They are turned into good Christians by the Salesians, who send them out to jobs as apprentices and workers.

As I say, I have seen a number of many such places, which are obviously held in high regard by officialdom and by the people; but there is one establishment — or rather, educational complex — that I wish to cite as being, so to speak, very much on the agenda: the “Ciudadela de los niños” at Bogotá in Colombia. This, incidentally, is one of many works of social and moral rehabilitation that the Province is justifiably proud of.

In this Boys’ Town I saw our confrères in action: the sort of action, based on carefully elaborated methods of organization and education, that is completely in line with Salesian theory and practice. It is action that requires great courage and great tact in the rehabilitation of hundreds of “gamines” (street-arabs), unwanted, without family, home, or schooling; boys who literally live on the street, addicted to crime and to drugs, victims of prostitution: wretched creatures, in the strictest and saddest sense of the word, who have suffered the most incredible experiences.

During the night the Salesians go down the squalid streets where these poor boys drag out their existence, and invite them, with the aid of enticements after the style of Don Bosco, to spend the night in the house, where everything is arranged to provide for their rehabilitation. It is not, however a traditional hostel. The boys find food, toilet facilities and medical care (many are suffering from serious infectious diseases), and above all there is the friendly, peaceful atmosphere created by the Salesians and their helpers. There are also Sisters, who do invaluable work. The boy is free to stay if he wishes. In fact, I was deeply affected by the sight of some of the new arrivals begging me to

obtain their permanent acceptance in this house of new horizons.

These boys pass on to other houses as their rehabilitation gradually becomes more and more complete; until, at about the age of eighteen, equipped with vocational qualifications and a thorough Christian education, they are in a position to be integrated with dignity into the society on whose fringes they once stood as disorderly and subversive elements.

But before arriving at this happy outcome, how much work is needed, how much patience, and particularly — I use the confrères' own words — how much Christian and Salesian love, how much self-sacrifice in loving assistance in order to win their hearts, bruised and often corrupted.

With prayer and the Salesian way

Two reflections arise spontaneously from this account of my moving experiences. Thanks be to God, the Congregation has a large number of activities in which the Salesians are working in different ways and at an uncommon level of self-sacrifice, on behalf of boys who are poor, needy and literally abandoned by their practically non-existent families and by society itself.

Such work requires generous souls with a powerful fund of love and faith: they feel the need, something necessary and not merely desirable, to sustain their gruelling way of life by contact with God in personal prayer and community prayer. Without prayer, they say, we would not find the strength to do this work and the stamina to carry it through. Handling these boys and winning their hearts can never be work for the mere pedagogue or the mere psychologist, but is the task of true apostles and missionaries, who see and love God in souls.

In fine — and I pass on what these confrères repeated so often — the method of Don Bosco, involving the loving-kindness and assistance of a friendly, intelligent and continuous presence among the boys, is the indispensable key for opening and winning

the hearts of these poor boys, who, although they are dressed in rags and are prematurely perverted, are not insensible to love expressed in deeds, which was precisely Don Bosco's way.

Faced with these facts, I remain firmly convinced that the educational method of Don Bosco, thoroughly understood and put into practice, cannot be bettered. Perhaps it is we who need to rediscover it by serious study, and, more particularly, by living it with pastoral charity, the essence of Salesian education. Furthermore, apart from these "deprived" situations, current educational theory itself proposes, albeit with a different terminology and different perspectives, methods and techniques that, without any bother, we can find not only proposed but widely and successfully applied in the educational work of Don Bosco.

Communion-building

To conclude: on this journey to Latin America I have met many Salesians from various Provinces and I have never failed to hammer a point that I regard as supremely important, not only in America but everywhere in the Congregation: and that is, unity.

In my letter on this subject I dealt with another aspect; now I wish to invite you all to become builders of unity and communion.

A full and fruitful life needs unity and communion. How important it is then, that, in our love for the Congregation and in our desire to ensure its continuing harmony and effectiveness, we should make every effort, even at the cost of personal sacrifice, to build up day by day this vital spirit of community.

Anything that makes for tensions, cold-shoudering, suspicions, and, worse still, clashes and confrontations, prejudices the unity that we all deeply yearn for. We know that we simply cannot do without it and that we do harm to the souls entrusted to

us when we fail to achieve it. And who in a community will have the nerve to become Chief Disrupter and Trouble-maker?

But there is no such thing as unity without good will: the good will that is seen in action either passively, in the avoidance of anything that is in any way prejudicial to unity, or actively, in the fostering of unity. This is the good will that breaches the barriers, helping us to understand and feel for each other, so that everyone accepts everyone else, for all his faults and differences of age and ideas. In effect, we have to make every sincere effort to "dwell together in unity", to realize this major tenet of faith, and of the Christian and Salesian life, so often stressed by Don Bosco and the object of that great prayer left by Christ as his last testament: "that they may be one".

Let us turn to the new Constitutions and recall what Article 61, which is about the Eucharistic celebration, the central act of every Christian community, has to say: "There the Salesian community celebrates the paschal mystery in all its fullness and partakes of the Body of Christ, offered in sacrifice, in order to rebuild itself in him as a 'communion of brothers'".

Dear confrères, may the faith with which we celebrate the Eucharistic mystery and the love that wells up there transform us day by day into willing and efficient workers for communion in our own communities. If we do, the Congregation will be beholden to us.

Best wishes to you all in the Lord. And say a prayer for me.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Personnel requirements on the Missions

In the last issue (no. 274) the Acts gave notice of a new move on the part of the Councillor for the Missions. Fr Tohill sent a letter to the Bishops and Provincials of the Salesian Missions asking them to compile a list of the most urgent requirements for missionary personnel. The first half of the resultant list has already been published in issue no. 274 of the Acts; now we publish the other part.

LIST OF MISSIONS NEEDING PERSONNEL (Part 2)

a) *Africa*

GABON needs:

— *technicians and controllers* for the Catholic Radio and T.V. at Libreville.

MOZAMBIQUE needs:

— *Salesians* for the mission-stations and youth-clubs.

b) *America*

ARGENTINA: the Province of *Babia Blanca* needs:

— *confrères* to work in quasi-mission areas;

— *Salesians* trained in catechetics;

— *Salesians* for areas with German-speaking immigrants.

The Province of *Buenos Aires* needs:

— *Salesians* for the mission areas of South Patagonia;

— *Brothers* for the Agricultural School.

The Province of *Rosario* needs:

— *Salesians* to help in the parishes;

— *Salesians* for work in the suburban housing developments.

The Province of *La Plata* needs:

- *Salesians* to help in the parishes;
- *Salesians* for work in the suburban housing development;
- *confrères* to work with German-speaking immigrants.

BRAZIL: the Province of *Mato Grosso* needs:

- a group of *three or four priests* and *some Brothers* with a special interest in pastoral work, for a pilot-scheme in the field of evangelization amongst the settlers of Barra do Garças, Poxoreu, Xavantina, etc.;
- one or more *joiners* to instruct boys in the trade;
- one or two *mechanics* for maintenance work and to instruct the Indians in the trade;
- *priests or teachers* for the teaching of sociology, anthropology, psychology, ethnology, philosophy.

The Province of *Porto Alegre* needs:

- *three Brothers* for the management of workshops in the graphic arts, joinery and engineering at Porto Alegre, "Casa do Pequeno Operario"; at Viamao, "Novo Lar de Menores"; at Bagé, "Istituto Sao Pedro".

CHILE needs:

- *two experienced agronomists*, one of whom should be a specialist in zootechnics, for the agricultural school at Las Mercedes (Tierra del Fuego);
- *two printers* (or linotypists or technicians in typography) to take over the technical side of publishing and the supervision of the press at Macul, La Gritud, Concepción;
- *a qualified priest* for courses in continuous formation and for the Religious Formation Centre at La Florida, Santiago;
- *an expert in the mass media* (press, radio, T.V.).

ECUADOR: the *Vicariate of Mendez* needs:

- *a Brother* for the mission at Yaupi (stock-rearing and mechanized farming);
- *a Brother* for the mission at Chiguaza (instruction in joinery for the boys on the three courses at the boarding school there);
- *a priest or a Brother* for the Federación Shuara di Sucua (controller and director of the Federal Radio);

- *a Brother* skilled in joinery for the mission at Taisha;
- *a Brother* skilled in stock-rearing for the mission at Sevilla Don Bosco;
- *an itinerant missionary priest* for the mission at Limon.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC needs:

- *a teacher* of chemistry for the agricultural school at La Vega;
- *a teacher* of chemistry, physics, mathematics for the Don Bosco Secondary School at Santo Domingo;
- *a teacher* of chemistry for the junior seminary at Jarabacoa;
- *priests and brothers* for work in the parishes and clubs.

VENEZUELA needs:

- *a formation-counsellor*, who would also teach philosophy at the School of Philosophy, for at least two years;
- *one or more Salesians* for work in the rural districts with the children in those areas;
- *a Salesian Technician* for each of the following trades: electronics, electricity, lithography;
- *an expert in accountancy* and administration for work in the Economist's Department.

The Mission at *Puerto Ayacucho* needs:

- *missionary priests*;
- *a mechanic* for the maintenance of machinery on the mission.

c) *Asia*

BHUTAN needs:

- *specialists* in machine-maintenance and electrical engineering to take over the workshops.

THE PHILIPPINES needs:

As for Bhutan, plus printing.

JAPAN needs:

- *young confrères* for the schools, parishes and missions.

TIMOR needs:

- *Salesian missionaries*;
- *Salesian agricultural technicians*.

2. The World Congress of Salesian Brothers

Preparations for the Brothers' World Congress (31st August - 6th September, 1975) are going ahead at an ever-increasing tempo.

The Reports of the Provincial Conventions

During the month of April the Provincial phase was concluded: in the next few months the Regional Conventions will be held. The Provincial Commissions are now finalizing the publication of the "Reports of the Provincial Convention", and many of the reports have already been submitted to the Regional and Central Commissions. Some of these Reports consist of a few pages, others are considerable volumes; all are the fruit of a strong sense of duty and of dedication to the cause.

The Provincial Commissions that have not yet finalized the work are urged to speed things up, because the Reports are indispensable to both the Central Commission and the Regional Commissions (particular urgency here), which cannot complete the work for their Conventions until the material is sorted out and arranged systematically.

So these Reports are not meant to pass into eternal oblivion, but are needed to provide the material which the Regional Commission will systematize and pass on to the delegates, who will then be in a position to prepare for the Regional Conventions.

The Regional Conventions will take place from July to September, 1974, and — as already stated in the last issue of the Acts — there will be sixteen of them. That is, where there are Regions so extensive as to create too many language difficulties, there will be Inter-Provincial Conventions within the Regions. The immediate aim of these Conventions will be to prepare for the World Congress. For this purpose, attention will be given to the "Official Themes" already set out in no. 274 of the Acts, p. 46.

The World Congress

Meanwhile the Central Commission is working on the arrangements for the meeting in 1975. The list of speakers who will address the assembly on the various themes, is being prepared. They will need

time to work up their material thoroughly in the light of the contributions, which have been gleaned from all over the Congregation.

Next October, there will be a meeting of these rapporteurs with the Central Commission for the purpose of coming to some agreement about the scope of the themes and about the way they should be drafted.

This World Congress on the Salesian Brothers is felt by many to be a really vital issue for the Congregation, and for this reason ample provision has always been made for prayer at the various meetings that have been held so far, in order to seek the assistance of the Holy Spirit, especially in the liturgy, for on Him depends the success of all human endeavours.

3. Salesian Bishops

Cardinal Stefan Trochta, Bishop of Litoměřice, in Czechoslovakia, died on the 6th of April last. A full obituary notice has been sent by the Rector Major to all the Salesian houses.

Also deceased is Mons. Mauricio Magliano, Bishop of Río Gallegos (Argentina) since 1961.

Mons. Tomás González is the new Bishop of Punta Arenas, Chile, and succeeds the late Mons. Boric.

4. Appointments

The Holy Father has appointed the Salesian priest, John Bosco Shirieda, Under-secretary to the Secretariat for Non-believers. Fr Shirieda, who is Japanese, is the Rector of the Salesian Seminary in Tokyo.

5. The new President of the Confederation of Salesian Past Pupils

Last April the Rector Major appointed Dr José M. González, a Mexican, President of the Confederation of Salesian Past Pupils. The new President lectures in the Faculty of Law at the University

in Mexico City. He is President of Catholic Action in Mexico and of Pax Romana; and last year he organized the 4th Congress of the Latin-American Past Pupils. He is married and has seven children. Dr González Torres succeeds Señor Taboada Lago, a Spanish lawyer, in the post; he is the 6th President (the first non-European) and is elected for six years.

6. Fraternal solidarity (13th report)

PROVINCES THAT HAVE SENT OFFERINGS

ITALY

Adriatic	Lire	40.000
Central		262.000
Lombard		186.500
Subalpine		3.250.060
Veneta San Marco		810.000
Generalate		250.000

EUROPE

N.N.		25.000
Belgium, South		154.360
Spain, Bilbao		1.475.000
Spain, León		787.500

AMERICA

Argentina, Córdoba		1.000.000
Ecuador		798.000
Venezuela		7.000.000
N.N.		100.000

<i>Total of the amounts received between 7th March and 9th June, 1974</i>		16.138.420
<i>Existing fund</i>		388.064
<i>Total as at 9th June, 1974</i>		<u>16.526.484</u>

b) DISTRIBUTION OF THE MONEYS RECEIVED

EUROPE

Subvention to the Course for Novice Masters	223.000
Ireland, Dublin: for the recreational equip- ment of the Boys' Club	500.000
Poland, Krakow: for catechetical expenses	1.000.000
Poland, Lodz: for catechetical expenses	1.000.000

ASIA

Korea: bursary for the ecclesiastical studies of one of our priests	1.000.000
India, Madras: for the novitiate at Yercaud	500.000
India, Madras: for a chapel at Sholurmattam	1.000.000
India, Gauhati: for the novitiate at Shillong	500.000
Thailand: bursary for the studies of one of our priests	1.000.000

AFRICA

Ethiopia: to Mons. Worku, Adigrat	436.695
To the drought-stricken areas: the White Fathers	500.000
To the drought-stricken areas: the Con- solata Fathers	500.000
To the drought-stricken areas: the Holy Ghost Fathers	500.000
To the drought-stricken ares: the Capuchin Fathers	500.000

AMERICA

Brazil, Prelature of Porto Velho: for a Catechetics Room	1.000.000
Brazil, Mato Grosso: for the Cidade D. Bosco, Corumbá	500.000
Brazil, Porto Alegre: for the building of a church in the deprived area of São Pedro Bagé	1.000.000

Brazil, São Paulo: bursary for the missio- logical studies of one of our priests	Lire	1.500.000
Peru: bursary for the theological studies of a cleric studying in Europe		1.000.000
Uruguay: bursary for one of our priests		1.000.000
		<hr/>
<i>Total of disbursements from the 7th March to the 9th June, 1974</i>		15.159.695
<i>Balance</i>		1.366.789
		<hr/>
<i>Total</i>		16.526.484
		<hr/> <hr/>

c) GENERAL FLOW OF CASH

<i>Total received as at the 9th June, 1974</i>	255.132.658
<i>Total disbursements at the same date</i>	253.765.869
<hr/>	
<i>Balance</i>	1.366.789
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IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL AND MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST

On the Calendar of the Superior Council the period from the middle of March to the end of June, 1974, was to be given over to the Visitation of the Regions, and in fact there has been a multiplicity of visitations, conferences and meetings of all sorts.

The Rector Major has completed two journeys, the other six Superiors of the Council have been on their travels overseas, many Provincials and confrères have converged on the meeting-places or have come to Rome to explain their problems and to seek a solution round the conference-table in the spirit of Don Bosco and of the post-conciliar renewal.

1. The journeys of the Rector Major

To mark the 75th anniversary of the Salesian work at Baracaldo (Bilbao, Spain), Fr Ricceri went there last March. Between the 27th and the 31st he visited almost all the houses in the Province. He was received with great cordiality, and he congratulated the confrères (who belong to one of the most recently-established Provinces of the Congregation) on the ever-increasing number of vocations they are receiving, the fruit, as someone remarked, of a praying, hard-working, self-sacrificing and extremely willing community.

Longer and more urgent was the visit of the Rector Major to Latin America, which lasted from 17th April to the 18th May and took him to eight countries: Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Venezuela. He himself deals with all this in his letter.

2. The meetings of the Superiors with the Provincials of the Regions

The purpose of these meetings, occurring in the middle of the six-year period between the last General Chapter and the next, is to determine just how far the decisions taken in 1971 have been worked out in the various Regions.

Three such meetings have taken place in the last three months: the first, as mentioned above, at Buenos Aires for the Atlantic Region of Latin America; the second and third at Rome for the Iberian Region and the Italo-Middle-East Region. They last a week on average and follow an established pattern: a day of recollection; an address from the Rector Major dealing with the Provincials' field of action; the reports of the Provincials; and then meetings with the individual Departmental Heads.

At Buenos Aires the day of recollection was preached by the Archbishop of Santa Fe, Mons. Vicente Zazpo. Besides the Provincials, there was one delegate from each Province taking part in the meeting, which was well organized by Fr Giovanni Vecchi. Amongst other things, they decided on the programme for the Centenary of the Salesian Missions: it was in Argentina that our Missions began.

The Provincials of the Iberian Region, who met with Fr Antonio Mérida, gave particular attention to the problems of the formation of the confrères, both primary and continuous; the re-dimensioning of the work and the contributions in men and materials which the Region intends to offer for the Centenary of the Missions.

The Provincials of Italy and the Middle East, meeting with Fr Luigi Fiora, have planned a number of enterprises for the formation of the confrères in the pastoral work of the Salesian Mission. Particular attention was given to the promotion of meetings and activities in connection with the Youth Apostolate.

In the vast Region of Fr George Williams, the Provincials, on account of the distances involved, have to meet in three groups. Last February, the Western Provincials had their meeting in Rome; in October it will be the turn of the Far East; and later the Provincials from India.

3. Other meetings of the Higher Superiors

Special importance attaches to the presence of the Prefect General, *Fr Gaetano Scrivo*, representing the Rector Major, at Oswiecim on the 15th May last for the celebrations held to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Salesian work in Poland. Two cardinals attended (the Primate of Warsaw and the Metropolitan of Krakow), and also the Salesian Archbishop Mons. Baraniak. With *Fr Scrivo* there was the Economer General, *Fr Pilla*, the Regional Superior, *Fr Ter Schure*, and the Delegate for Poland, *Fr Rokita*. The thousand Salesians of the two Polish Provinces, who have acquitted themselves so admirably as members of the Congregation and of the Church, fully merited this act of esteem and encouragement.

Frs Viganò, Dho and Raineri, after meetings at Buenos Aires, worked through a very tight schedule of meetings with the confrères of the South American Provinces. These confrères, responsible for particular sectors of the Salesian work, were interviewed for the most part in the Provincial Houses. For three days they put their various problems to the three Superior Councillors.

Fr Viganò met Rectors, staff and boys at Buenos Aires, Fortin Mercedes, Rosario, Córdoba, Montevideo, Porto Alegre, and in the Provinces of Belo Horizonte, Manaus, and Caracas. He held a study-week in the theological college in Guatemala City.

Fr Raineri had meetings with Rectors, Parish-priests, mass-media specialists, Co-operators and Past Pupils; met the National Presidents of the Past Pupils in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay; spoke to Salesians in training and to groups of Salesian Sisters.

Fr Dho, besides his meeting with the Rectors of all the Argentinian Provinces and of other groups of confrères from Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil, had meetings on different days with those responsible at Provincial level for the Youth Apostolate in Argentina, and the Rectors of the aspirantates in Argentina and Brazil. In order to take part in these meetings over such vast tracts of territory, many confrères faced long journeys covering hundreds of miles. And they did it cheerfully, and from a strong sense of duty: evidence enough

of the very real desire for dialogue and renewal that exists in the Congregation today.

The Councillor for the Missions, *Fr Bernard Tobill*, went on several journeys to make contact with the centres of missionary activity. He met the Salesians of the Missionary Office in Madrid. In London he visited a number of missionary agencies, including non-Catholic ones, for an exchange of information and mutual help. In Poland he met the confrères in the houses of formation and told them what was going on in the Congregation's mission-fields.

The Economer General, *Fr Ruggiero Pilla*, after his visit to Poland, went to Lisbon to preside over the "Meeting of Provincial Economers" of the Iberian Peninsula from the 27th to the 29th May. They took stock of the Provincial Economer's position in relation to the Province, to the Houses and to the Superior Council.

4. Other activities of the General Executive

Formation: At the Salesianum the second four-monthly Course of Continuous Formation is in progress, this one being for the confrères from Latin-America.

There has been a short meeting of preachers and directors of retreats from Italy in preparation for an international congress.

Preparations continue for the World Congress of Salesian Brothers.

Adult Apostolate: The new Regulations for Salesian Co-operators have been presented to the Superior Chapter and have been approved; the text has been translated from the Italian and distributed in Spain, Argentina, and Brazil (and other translations are in preparation).

In June *Fr Raineri* met the Committee of the Confederation of Past Pupils at Rome.

Mass Media: the enquiry into Salesian publishing interests has been concluded and the results have been passed on to the people concerned.

5. In the coming months

In the period July-September, the Regional Superiors will return and the full Council will examine the situation as reported.

Youth Apostolate: Fr Dho will be holding some meetings: in June, with the Rectors of the aspirantates in Spain, and in September with their opposite numbers from Italy; during the month of August Fr Dho will be present at a course on the Youth Apostolate to be held at Lima, in Peru, for the delegates from Latin-America.

Adult Apostolate: Fr Raineri will be present at the 5th "Dialogue on the Salesian life", which is to be held at Freiburg and which will have for its theme the image of the Salesian Co-operator. A "Co-operators Manual" is in preparation.

V. DOCUMENTS

Poster competition for the Centenary of the Salesian Missions

For the celebration of the Centenary of the Salesian Missions, the General Executives of the Salesians and of the Salesian Sisters have decided to run an international competition for the official Centenary Poster and have handed the arrangements over to the appropriate Social Communications Offices.

The Rules are as follows:

OBJECT: to give expression to some facet(s) of the Salesian Missions in the world today.

It should symbolize: the values of Christian culture;
a century of mission work;
evangelization and social work.

ENTRY: the competition is open to artists all over the world who wish to pay homage to Don Bosco and his missionaries.

STAGES: there are two stages: Provincial, and International.

PROVINCIAL STAGE (optional):

1. In each Province, this stage is the responsibility of the Provincial.

2. In each Province, there will be a "Provincial Organizing Committee", which will make the preliminary arrangements, appoint the panel of experts, and organize the exhibition.

3. The Panel will judge the entries, announce the winners and award such prizes as are at the disposal of the Provincial Committee.

The entry obtaining first prize is sent on to the International Stage.

4. The closing date for the International Stage is the 31st December, 1974. The winning entry must be submitted to the International Stage at Rome by the 31st January, 1975 (Allowance will be made for irregularities in postal deliveries: the date of posting will be the criterion).

INTERNATIONAL STAGE:

1. This stage is in the hands of an organizing committee nominated by the General Executives of the Salesians and of the Salesian Sisters.

2. The committee will appoint an International Panel of Judges, arrange the exhibition of the entries from the Provinces and prepare for the final stage of the competition.

3. All the works submitted will be exhibited at the Salesian Missions' Centenary Exhibition to be held at Rome in 1976.

4. The International Panel will judge the entries on the 31st March, 1975, announce the winners and award the prizes that are available.

5. The Poster gaining First Prize will be printed as the official Centenary Poster.

PRIZES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE:

1. The winners of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes at the International Stage will be offered a return ticket to Rome with a month's stay during the official Centenary Celebrations.

2. Other prizes will be awarded according to what is available to the Committee.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ENTRIES

1. *Dimensions:* The Poster should not exceed the following dimension: width - 70 cm (27½ ins); height - 100 cm (39½ ins).

If it is smaller, the dimensions should be proportional to those given; e.g. 21 ins by 30 ins.

2. *Identity of artist*: each entry must be countersigned on the back with a two-word device. In a separate, sealed envelope the competitor should submit his full name, age and address (in full), along with the device by which the entry is identified.

3. *Wording on the Poster*: the official title — “Centenary of the Salesian Missions” — should appear either on the poster itself or in some convenient place outside the design, e.g., at the foot. Appropriate wording may be incorporated in the design. *Any language may be used.*

USE OF THE ENTRIES

It is understood: that the entries at the International Stage are sent in for the benefit of the Missions;

that submission of the entries implies authorization to publish.

VI. FROM THE PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTERS

1. Province of León: Act of Faith in the Salesian mission

The Salesians of Medina del Campo have compiled a capsulated summary of the doctrinal principles contained in the Constitutions (from the Provincial Newsletter, Madrid, May, 1974, p. 9).

I believe that the origins of the Salesian Family are divinely-inspired, that Jesus Christ is my living Rule, and that the Holy Spirit is strength and light leading me in Christ to the Father.

I believe that Mary is the founder and guide of our Family; that God and the Church have given me, in Don Bosco's way of life, a powerful exemplar.

I believe that God is calling me; with a religious and apostolic consecration that puts me at the heart of the Church and at its service, to follow Christ closely in a life that is intensely evangelical.

I believe that living and working in common is a basic requirement of the Salesian vocation; that we must live united to the Superior, who represents Christ and unites his community in the service of the Father.

I believe that my mission is to be a sign and a bearer of the love of God to young people; that it is essential to be with them, imitating Don Bosco in his hard and demanding labours and in the continuous striving for renewal; living with him, the active contemplative, and basing all my hope on the active presence of the Holy Spirit in my life. Amen.

2. The Southern Province: after the meeting on the Salesian Family

On the 17th and 18th March this year, the Province organized a Study Group on the Salesian Family at Castellammare. Representatives of all branches attended. Here are the comments of some of those taking part (Newsletter, April 1974, pp. 30-32).

A Salesian: The high-lights for me were: the fraternal spirit shown at the times of prayer and of community life; the keenness of all concerned in the talks and group-reports; the absence of any contentiousness; and, above all, the shared prayer that brought it to an end. These seem to show that the Salesian Family, the new reality brought to light by the Special General Chapter, is a going concern in our Province, and that it is well set on its way to the full realization of Don Bosco's grand scheme.

A Young Co-operator: This experience of the common life has made me feel more "Salesian", that is, more fully integrated with the Salesian Family. I began to realize the common origin and mission of the various groups as a basis for the better co-ordination of activities and hence for a more effective orientation of the same mission. So the demand for a change of mentality, for the breaking down of some fences and the puncturing of some water-tight compartments seems to me to be just what is wanted.

A Co-operator: We have had meetings before, and some of the present company have attended them. But this time we have had the opportunity of exchanging our points of view in frank and unruffled dialogue. We got to know each other not only on the personal level but above all on the level of group commitment to an apostolic work. And we are taking away some new ideas.

A Volontaria di Don Bosco: The cordiality, the family spirit and the exchange of ideas have made this meeting really rich and constructive. There is only one regret: it did not last long enough and we have to separate before getting to know each other properly.

A Past-Pupil: This has been an experience of living in the Salesian Family, which at last has come together and sees its problems

not merely on the level of so many pious sentiments but on the level of commitment, so that we can tackle the problems together.

A Salesian Sister: The plan is clear, and the prospects are marvellous. What we have to do now is to find out the facts at all levels and then get on with the job.

3. Bolivian Province: the Ciné-apostolate

For the last six years a Salesian theatre in La Paz has been a centre of intense activity in the field of Christian formation, a form of apostolate hitherto little exploited in Bolivia. The following is an extract from a letter sent by Fr Renzo Cotta (Newsletter of the Lombardo-Emilian Province, April, 1974, p. 12).

At La Paz there is a modern style of Salesian work that may be called "the Ciné-apostolate". Six years ago the Salesian School completed the laborious construction of a 960-seat ciné-theatre that slowly rose from its foundations, brick by brick. The 1,800 boys of the school were not the only ones who were delighted by the quiet dignity of this building: the authorities wanted to use it for the performances of the National Symphony Orchestra until other accommodation could be found. This made the Salesians put on their thinking-caps: why not use it to meet the pressing public needs? And with the help of a confrère who was experienced in the art of cinema, they reckoned to put the hall to good apostolic use.

And so they opened a public cinema with first-screening rights, showing films of Christian value and constituting a cultural enterprise and not a commercial one. In the six years these objectives have been pursued steadily, and various other services have burgeoned little by little: critical commentaries are published, special shows are put on for the members of film-clubs, a specialist library has been formed along with a collection of pocket editions on the cinema, and an annual prize is presented for the best film shown in Bolivia.

These activities, carried out in conjunction with the National Catholic Film Office, are being extended to the Salesian houses in other towns. There is a proliferation of film-clubs, chiefly for the

young, and these are the centres for the formation of groups of helpers, who are worried about the state of Christianity in the country. They are running courses of instruction in cinematography for the young, for adults and for teachers.

This is an apostolate that is not very wide-spread in South America (the Salesian venture is about the only one of its kind in Bolivia); it is, however, a youth-apostolate that is of paramount importance. The days of the simple "don't" are long past; now the only way to do something about the effects of the media on the young is this: to train the young to understand the language of the cinema, to engage their critical faculties and so enable them to discern the worth-while and to spurn the rest.

4. Australian Province: Clerics and the renewal

The eight Australian clerics doing theology claim that their present conditions are fully in line with the requirements of the last General Chapters, that these requirements are well suited to the needs of young religious and that they, the students, are finding fulfilment.

The 19th General Chapter wanted the students of theology to study at institutions that conferred academic degrees. We are eight clerics at Oakleigh, doing our theology at the diocesan seminary, which forms part of the University of Melbourne and offers us its graduate courses. The Chapter also wanted the students to be given an introduction to such "literary and scientific disciplines of human culture relating to the sacred sciences" as would open up the minds of the future apostles to the problems of the day; and part of our time we are spending at the three State Universities of Victoria.

Again the Chapter recommended that the buildings for theological colleges should be simple and functional: our buildings are wooden barracks originally used by the army during the war, and subsequently acquired and transported here by the Salesians. They are now our highly functional residence (*pace* one of the local clergy who calls them "The Dog-boxes").

Another of the Chapter requirements was that the houses of theology should be situated where there were opportunities of ob-

taining experience in the various apostolic works. And here we could hardly have it better. Groups of youngsters come over from Pakenham, Jordanville, Preston, Mildura etc. and use the facilities of the club, especially for liturgical events. The nearby parish-school of Niddrie is named after St John Bosco (a rare thing in Australia!) and we have "adopted" it. We have run week-end camps, and there is religious instruction on Thursday evenings for Catholic boys and girls attending non-Catholic schools. The Cooperators have acquired an old hotel at Crossley, near the sea, and have turned it into a boys' club. Two of us clerics often go there to give a hand with the boys. And we also help the various local parishes with their church-services.

5. Sub-Alpine Province - Too many priest-masseurs...

Comments of the Provincial, Fr Mario Bava, on his visitation of the houses. (Letter of March, 1974, p. 2).

Dear Confrères,

I feel bound to examine my conscience on my visitation of the houses, and especially of the clubs. Too many priests are still doing what are properly laymen's jobs. In little tuck-shops I see priests selling lemonade and sweets. On the sports-fields I see priests who are coaching and refereeing and massaging. On the stage there are priests doing the prompting, fixing the scenery. In the sacristy there are priests standing behind the votive candles. Certainly, the willingness of the Salesian priest to turn his hand to anything is praiseworthy: but there are limits.

Let the priest be a priest: let him preach the Gospel, catechize, encourage, advise, assist, hear confessions, prepare his talks and lessons; and generally be open to everyone; but don't put the layman in the shade — leave him to take his proper responsibilities.

I'd like to remind you of what our Special Provincial Chapter says: "These activities should be entrusted to lay helpers who are qualified both technically and spiritually; in this way the system will not be allowed to swallow up almost entirely the time and attention that should be given to work proper to a priest". (Art. 23).

6. Province of Thailand - Newsletter No. 500

The Newsletter "Inter Nos" of the Thai Province came out last April with its 500th issue. With its 34 years of publication it is probably the doyen of Provincial Newsletters.

No. 500 opens with the letter which the Provincial at the time, Fr Giovanni Casetta, wrote to the confrères to launch the news-sheet. The letter, dated the 1st August, 1940, contains observations no less valid today than they were then. "Each house should have someone who is charged with the compilation of a chronicle of the confrères' activities, interesting news items, newspaper articles, public administrative decisions and policies that may affect our work..."

"Ad multos annos" to the doyen of Salesian Provincial Newsletters and to its seventy sister-publications scattered across the world.

VII. PONTIFICAL MAGISTERIUM

Invitation to a closer acquaintance with the Pope

A chance of keeping in touch more fully with what the Pope has to say is offered to our communities by

"THE OSSERVATORE ROMANO - WEEKLY".

This reasonably-priced periodical is published in five languages besides Italian — French, English, German, Spanish, and Portuguese — and carries accounts of the Holy Father's activities and of the more important documents of the Holy See that appear in the daily edition of the "Osservatore Romano".

Don Bosco, if he were alive, would probably invite all his Salesians to subscribe to this publication. He writes: "If our faith is to be vital and fruitful, it must always be illuminated by the Vicar of Christ" (MB 9, 228); and again: "The word of the Pope must be our rule in everything and for everything" (MB 6, 494).

"The Osservatore Romano Weekly", introduced regularly into our libraries and used for private and community reading, will help Salesians to "sentire cum Ecclesia".

Some of our communities in various parts of the world are already subscribing to the O.R. Weekly; for several years now some Provincials have been sending in their lists of houses regularly to the Subscriptions Office; some Rectors provide subscriptions for individual confrères, especially those engaged in pastoral work; some clerics doing their theology also have their personal copies.

Subscriptions can be opened through almost any important Catholic book-shop, or directly with the

AMMINISTRAZIONE DELL'OSSERVATORE ROMANO
00120 CITTÀ DEL VATICANO (ITALIA)

As you know, the administration of the Osservatore Romano has been entrusted by the Holy See to our own confrères. Specimen rates are as follows: Europe, air mail - 7,500 lire; U.S.A., surface mail - 10 dollars; U.S.A., air mail - 18 dollars.

1. The Good News and the Mass Media

On the occasion of World Communications Day (26 May, 1974), the Pope reminds us once more that it is of very special interest, indeed, of obligation, to Christians to utilize the mass media for the spreading of the Christian message, particularly to those of the world beyond the reach of direct evangelization.

Message of His Holiness Pope Paul VI for the 8th World Communications Day, 26th May, 1974

The importance of the instruments of social communication in the structure of society today goes on steadily increasing, as likewise does their influence on the shaping of human relations. Conscious of this growing importance We reiterate Our firm conviction that all men are called to offer their own contribution in the field of media, in such a way that all become involved in communication in one way or another, each according to this own particular circumstances. The manner of this involvement can take the most varied forms, ranging from direct intervention in programming and production to the making of responsible choices concerning what one will watch or listen to. And again, each must make his own informed decision whether to accept wholly or only with some reserve, each particular message which he receives from the social communications media.

We hold, too, that Christians in particular are bound to keep themselves alert always in relation to the media, ready to make fresh evaluations with each new advance in the field, quick to establish updated criteria and thus keep pace with new demands as these present themselves. This Day, now being celebrated for the eighth successive year, is intended to promote and to accomplish precisely this. It is a pause for reflection on the mass media, this extraordinary modern phenomenon. It is a moment for re-evaluation, for determining attitudes.

Duty to spread the Word

On this year's World Day We invite you to reflect with Us on "Social Communications and evangelization in today's world", a theme which suitably coincides with the study conducted in the various countries in preparation for the coming Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

"If the Church—We said in Our encyclical letter *Ecclesiam Suam*—is truly conscious of what the Lord wishes her to be, there must arise in her an overflowing fullness and a compulsion to spread, with a clear advertance to a mission which transcends her, to an announcement that she must broadcast".

The fulfilment of this duty is conditioned by the particular circumstances of each period in history, and thus it must in our time be carried out by means of the instruments of social communication. "It would be difficult to suggest that Christ's command was being obeyed unless all the opportunities offered by the modern media to extend to vast numbers of people the announcement of the Good News were being used" (Pastoral Instruction *Communio et Progressio*, no. 116).

Evangelization is an integral part of the mission of the Church, sent by Christ into the world to preach the Gospel to every creature. The Church carries out this duty above all in her liturgical life, but she is constrained to fulfil it also in all the ways and by all the means which are available to her to use as she abides among the people of each continent.

Evangelization continues

On close reflection it will be seen that the entire life of the Christian, in so far as it conforms to the Gospel, is in a permanent situation of evangelization in the midst of the world. The Christian, living as he does amongst other men, sharing their anxieties, sharing the world's suffering, engaging himself in matters of temporal development, himself always there among the currents of human search, idea, debate and exchange—he bears his evangelical witness, he makes his contribution, the contribution of a Christian leaven, a Christian influence within. And in the social communications world this Christian influence finds a vast perspective and assumes an enormous importance.

There are many urgent necessities which vie for our attention in this context. For one, there is the need to set the contemporary vehicles of information and allied services along a line of development which will facilitate the diffusion of the Good News and create a favourable climate for the strengthening of concepts such as the dignity of the human person, justice, universal brotherhood; values which make it easier for a man to understand his own true vocation and which at the same time open the way to a constructive dialogue with others and to union with God.

Then, there is the search for new and improved methods of apostolate which apply the new audio-visual and related instruments to catechesis, to educational work in many forms, to the presentation of the Church's life, of her liturgy, her aims, her difficulties, but above all to the witness of faith and charity which animates and ever renews her.

Using the best methods

Finally, Christians must consider how best to employ the instruments of social communication in order to reach countries, societies and persons to whom the apostolate of the Word cannot be brought directly because of particular situations, or scarcity of ministers, or because the Church is unable to exercise her mission freely.

We are well aware of the efforts which are in fact being made and of the research which is being conducted—even if not yet sufficiently advanced—to find solutions to these various problems, thanks to the generous and solid work of Bishops, priests, religious and of following with careful attention the initiatives of Our Commission for Social Communications, of the Episcopal Commissions in the various countries of the world, of the International Catholic Organizations for mass media, and of Catholic professionals. We know very well the difficulties which they are encountering, in some cases because of local conditions, in others because of limited resources, in all to some extent because it is new ground which they are breaking.

We address to them Our word of comfort and encouragement. We address it too to all men who are served by the instruments of social communication and helped towards the true advance of the human family and a better tomorrow in the world.

2. It's up to you young people to bear witness to Christ

As the children bore witness to Christ on the day of His entry into Jerusalem, so the children of today have to bear witness to Him today, when He is discussed and forgotten. The appeal of His Holiness, the Pope, addressed to a congregation of young people in St Peter's last Palm Sunday (7 April, 1974), will also provide educators with useful matter for discussion.

Paul VI has just spoken of the solemn entry of Jesus into Jerusalem a few days before His passion, and he continues as follows:

The Messiah

It is very important to know the meaning of this scene from the Gospel. You remember it; Jesus, as the meek king riding on an ass, comes up from the Eastern part of the city after Bethany, from Bethphage, towards one of the eastern gates, to Jerusalem. The thing to be noticed is the crowd, an enormous crowd gathered there, increased by the vast numbers of people coming to Jerusalem from every part of Palestine on the occasion of the Hebrew Passover, that was being celebrated precisely at that time. And it is to be noted that Jesus, seated on his humble mount, becomes the centre of an extraordinary manifestation. Everyone presses about him, the Teacher who by his miracles and his words made himself so much talked about, after the raising of Lazarus, especially for a question that disturbed public opinion very much, and which the Jewish leaders of Jerusalem did not want even talked about. The question was this: who is this Jesus of Nazareth? who is this young teacher, who makes himself so talked about? who is he? a prophet? a deceiver of the people? who is he? the Messiah? Here we have a word that is important for understanding the profound meaning and the suffering of that event.

The Messiah, which means the one consecrated by God, was a prophetic figure whose famous name imbues, from David onwards, the adventurous and unhappy history of the Jewish people, like a sign of hope, freedom and greatness. This idea of the coming of the Messiah had taken hold of public opinion, under the domination of

the Romans, precisely at the time of Jesus. The preaching of John, that brave prophet of the desert, with his fearless words and his baptism of repentance, near the mouth of the Jordan, had given new life to the expectation of the Messiah, who was considered to be about to come.

The enchanting preaching and the surprising figure of Jesus had given fresh impulse to this premonition, but had at the same time aroused, among the dominant element of the Pharisees, a blind opposition to the idea that Jesus, a workman from Nazareth, lacking any sign of political power or glorious kingship, but strong in polemical words and disturbing miracles, should be recognized as the Messiah. He was a puzzling and dangerous figure; he had to be suppressed. And now here Jesus, in contrast to his usual manner, was on this day making himself known, in simplicity and humility, but making himself known for what he was: the Son of David, that is, the Messiah.

Here there occurs a decisive circumstance, the one that interests us now: the acclamation of the crowd. In fact, the crowd, which must have been immense and filled with one single feeling, recognized and proclaimed Jesus of Nazareth, the humble prophet, who was coming up to Jerusalem on that ordinary everyday means of transportation, without military and political victories, for what he really was, that is as "Son of David", that is, the one sent by God, as the heir of the age-old hopes of the Jewish people, as the one who was coming to set free and save his people and to establish a new future. The identification of the person was genuine, but the interpretation of his kingdom was false: it was a question no longer of the earthly kingdom of David, but of the "kingdom of heaven", of the "kingdom of God" preached by Christ in the Gospel. But on the Cross of Jesus Pilate's inscription in three languages, giving the reason for the Lord's condemnation to that cruel punishment, will still tell the accusation: "King of the Jews"; as such he was crucified.

People acclaim Jesus

What we need to note is that the messianic proclamation of Jesus, though it was indeed predisposed by him, came from the mouth of the people, and that among that people what most loudly made

that prophetic, historical and religious acclamation was the shout of the young people, the high voices of the children. And this has a symbolic and permanent value for us today. And still today, young people and children listening to us here, we can say again: it is for you to proclaim the glory, reveal the mission and affirm the identity of Jesus Christ: he is the Messiah, he is the centre of the destiny of mankind, he is the liberator, he is the Saviour; and then we shall understand the profound reasons for this: for he is at one and the same time the Son of man, that is, the man par excellence, and the Son of God, that is, the Word of God made man: he is the Saviour, the Teacher, the world's heavenly Bread; he is the one whom no one can do without; he is the one with whom we can and must all be friends; he knows us, he loves us, he saves us; he is the Light of mankind, he is the way, the truth and the life. Enthusiasm for Christ, when one has understood something about him, has no limits; he is the joy of the world, our joy!

Christ's message

Young people and children listening to us! You especially must understand this messianic message. You must understand Christ, with a special intuition, one that we can indeed call charismatic: your wisdom is your special gift; to understand Christ!

With this first result: there must be born in you the conviction that you must, in some way, bear witness to Christ.

Bearing new and victorious witness to Christ, in our time, is the task of the young generation, the task of the children, the adolescents, the youth! Today it is your task, if tomorrow it is to be the task of the adults.

Our talk becomes complicated and delicate: how can children and young people be witnesses to Christ? And what we say for the boys of course holds good for the girls—the girls know this. Therefore: how can you be witnesses to Christ? We could sum up the immense and difficult extent of this duty in one word: be Christians, real Christians. You have been baptized. Do you think about this? Do you pray, that is, talk to Christ and to God, our most loving heavenly Father? Are you sincere and good, in his presence? Do you love your families and your schools? Do you do some act of goodness for

the person who is suffering? And so on. You know all these things and certainly you do them: and so you bear witness to Christ, if and because you live like Christians.

Witness involves action

But there is something more to be done. Witness involves some positive act of loyalty to Christ. So listen. We shall suggest to you a short set of steps that lead to witness to Christ. The first step is that of courage for the Christian name. Are you ashamed of being Christians, of going to Church? That is the first cowardice to be overcome. We must not be ashamed and run away when showing ourselves to be Christians causes others to despise us, or in some way endangers our reputation or interests. The second step to be climbed is this: that of malicious and often unjust criticism of the Church, her institutions, her members. Protest has become fashionable, and it fills the heart with bitterness and pride; it causes love to dry up, even if this love takes on forms that are puritanical, which, alas, often tend towards attraction to and even solidarity with the enemies of the Church. Be faithful and humble, and you will be strong; and you will be able to bear good and positive witness to your Christian and Catholic belief. This is the third step: be willing and proud to give your name and your active support to some militant organization in the fields of action, piety or charity. Today, as we know, people no longer want to give militant support to some cause or idea that has religious, Catholic or Christian connections, or even that is purely and nobly for the common good. People prefer to stay free and not bound by obligations to an organization. This is not always a good thing. Witness becomes easier and strong if it springs from union, from a shared commitment and collective loyalty. Moreover, we must not inwardly prefer the easy ways of intellectual, spiritual and social indifference. Individualism, isolation and indifference to good causes are not in conformity with the Christian way, especially in what concerns the matter that interests us now, namely, witness to Christ the Lord.

Dear young people and children, you must know that the Church, and perhaps history itself, now awaits precisely from you a Christian

profession that is not denied, not simulated, not indifferent, but one that is frank, reasonable, joyful and also, for our modern world, exemplary and convincing.

3. I'll make you fishers of men

Just as Christ one day called His apostles and they abandoned their nets and followed Him, so the Pope invites the young people of today to listen to the call from the heart of mankind, from the very heart of God. The message of Paul VI for the "World Vocations Day" (5 th May, 1974).

I am speaking to the young people—to you young people. Yes, I am speaking in a special way to you. Today there is achieved—almost with tangible realism—a Word, a promise of Jesus Christ. He spoke it to Peter and to Andrew his brother, those fishermen who were casting their net in the Lake of Galilee. Walking along the bank Jesus saw them and said to them: "Come with me and I shall make you fishers of men". What tone did his voice have? What figure did the young Teacher strike at that moment—the young Teacher whom the two fishermen had met a little while before, down towards the mouth of the Jordan, in that mysterious atmosphere of the messianic preaching of John the Baptizer? Who knows? The fact is that the two fisherman—think of it!—immediately left their nets and began to follow the Teacher that they had hardly come to know. A few steps later the scene repeats itself in regard to two other brothers, James and John, sons of Zebedee; they too abandon their nets; they too leave their father, the boat and those helping them and follow Jesus, who is drawing to himself a small group in order to preach the coming of the kingdom of heaven.

Prophetic scene

It is a symbolic scene, a prophetic scene. Is it too fantastic to think that it is reflected in my own present situation? Think of the Pope, who portrays very imperfectly the profile of Jesus and the likeness of Peter; and yet he is the Successor of Peter and the Vicar of that very same Christ. The Pope is standing not on the bank of

a tranquil lake but on the edge of a swelling and whirling river, the river of history, the overwhelming river of modern life, in which you, the young people of this rising generation, are carried along by the delirious violence of our time and in which, like everyone else, you are searching for satisfying experiences, however marvellous or frightening they may be.

Gift of self

I am issuing a call; I am calling you. I know that this is rash on my part, perhaps vain, perhaps annoying; but I must raise my voice, as Jesus did: Come with me. I shall say something more: my call is serious. To come with me means making an extremely precious gift: the personal gift of yourselves to our Lord; it means a sacrifice without limit. But it is like that. I must be sincere: my call, which I would like to be a vocation for you, is something intensive and demanding. (And I shall mention to you—although you understand it anyway—how much affection there is in this call. The one who follows it will have this seemingly contradictory experience: a vocation—penetrating and profound, hidden within the secrets of conscience—is something very gentle, something thrilling; there is nothing—no pleasure, no love that can surpass it. But this comes later). Now it is enough for me to call out: Is there anyone who wants to come? Is there anyone who, amidst the confusion of a thousand sounds in this world of ours, hears and listens to my voice?

At least do not refuse this invitation: try to listen!

You ask me: to listen to what? Listen, in my call—as a first invitation—to the call that rises up from mankind which still cries out today and expresses, usually in suffering, its most real needs. It cries out for truth, it cries out for light, it cries out for help. Do you not perceive in this call the cry of hope, followed by the lament of disillusionment, confusion, suffering and despair? Do you not hear the cry of so many unhappy children, so many lonely poor people, so many needy sick, so many weak and oppressed? Do you not recognize the fearful and languishing call of the person who does not know to whom to confide some jealous and sorrowful secret that he has? And do you not hear the call of the worker, the student, the one who is restless, and in the end does not know why?—the why of life, or who

it is that can awaken him, or who can say to him as to a brother: "The one who walks in my footsteps does not walk in darkness". Who can console mankind for the vanity of its efforts, for the absurdity of its vanities, for the fleetingness of its days? Who can give sense and value to human knowledge, who can purify and fortify love, who can teach the true secret of beauty, who can realize the precious value of tears, who can open the door to the dreamed-about possibility of a supernatural life?

These questions and a hundred others connected with ideals and with the sublimation of human life make up the symphony of a vocation. God calls through the word of mankind aspiring to the transcendent fullness of its life—a fullness that would otherwise be lacking.

Who knows how to listen to this pleading chorus? This is the first characteristic stage of a modern vocation: the sociological-religious stage.

Are you afraid of becoming fascinated by human compassion?

Young people, listen a little longer. But this time you must listen to another wise and friendly voice. This is the second stage: the psychological-religious one. Here an expert is needed, that is, a teacher of the soul, a spiritual director: here there is needed a friend who is an expert in the secrets of hearts.

Appeal to young people

I am speaking to you young people—to everyone who is able to understand the language of an extraordinary vocation, that of a total giving of self to the love and service of Christ. It is a case of catching the most mysterious signals of the Holy Spirit. It is not something easy. One must be knowledgeable in a technique (excuse the expression) which reads signs; that is, one must possess "the discernment of spirits", the discernment of spiritual signs; we could use a term which is relevant today, adapting it to the religious sphere, by saying: a psychoanalyst of the Gospel is needed. We would even add, one needs a charism. This is an essential need, but the solution is not that difficult if the choice of the person needed falls on someone wise and holy—and this type of person is certainly not lacking in the Church of God.

But yes, the question becomes dramatic in the sense that the voice that calls is twofold: there is the external human voice of one person and the personal, internal inspiration of someone else. Which one prevails? Which one is of greater importance? This phase is the decisive phase in reaching certainty about a vocation—and on this there can depend the destiny of one's life and a thousand other consequences. A certain tension arises. But there is no cause for fear; and this for two reassuring reasons. The first is provided by a characteristic experience in this tormenting but only apparent ambiguity. This is so because when the vocation is genuine the two voices coincide and their harmony produces an indescribable certainty.

The other reason comes from the fact that the divine call to the priesthood is definitively expressed through the responsible and reassuring voice of the hierarchy and through the imposition of the hands of the bishop, who certainly must judge whether the candidate is motivated by the right intention and has the essential qualities for the ministry.

We are in the realm of a personal freedom concerned with an exceptionally great and responsible choice, because, strictly speaking, a vocation in itself does not constitute either an imperative obligation or an optional right. The moral bond springs from the sincere desire for a higher ideal and a greater reward: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me". And this is the third stage, which can be called the canonical-religious moment.

Vocations today

But the puzzling uncertainty of vocations—young people, admit it—is manifested today no longer in stages but in other spheres. Here my discourse should pause, or, even better, here your reflection should linger. Let us simplify it: there are three of these sectors in which are found such strong objections against a vocation saying that although a vocation is hypothetically possible, today it easily dries up as the sterile grain of the parable.

What are these spheres? The first is the specifically religious one; it concerns not just strictly priestly vocations but also the vocations of men and women to a state of perfection. The objection is

formulated in a common question: Is it worth it? Thereupon the objection touches the critical analysis of religion, that is, of the truth of our faith, which today is assailed and challenged by the most radical philosophical and biblical views; the objection concerns also the moral evaluation of the sacrifices which a vocation involves. Is it worth it to stake one's own existence on a life-formula that the Church presents as a sure interpretation of absolute fidelity to the following of Christ? And Christ—who is he, that he has to have an unconditional oblation of my life? This objection is so powerful and complex that it engages the entire explorative, speculative and moral capacity necessary for attaining a certainty, a victorious Truth. And this truth, young people, is not difficult to attain through study, reflection, counsel, prayer, and above all through grace. A vocation is a grace. By its nature it presupposes and requires that a voice should be heard—the voice of the Father through Christ and in the Holy Spirit, the wonderful invitation: Come! This is a grace that has in itself its own power of attraction, of conviction, of certainty. Basically, it is only a question of testing it and then of accepting it generously. And the other sphere? that of objections, difficulties and obstacles that often seem paralyzing and insurmountable? It is the sphere of the social environment. This environment grips us, absorbs us, conditions us in such a way that it is very difficult today to free oneself of it and to go out of it by adopting an ecclesiastical attitude, life style and commitment. At one time this "human respect" was not so strong and overwhelming. Today it is perhaps the most serious practical and psychological obstacle. Young people realize how outmoded, absurd and uncharacteristic it is for them to depart from common practice and to embrace a priestly or religious vocation without worldly compromises, which are so unworthy of such a vocation. This departure is a specially important moment. For some it is an agony. But it is the most free, most love-filled, most generous moment that could characterize one's life, one's Christian life. And it is only a moment, a moment of personal courage.

Sign and instrument

And then we come to the third sphere: the Church. Yes, the Church, in her ordinary, human, historical, visible and canonical

reality. The Church with her permanent contradiction: between the ideal and reality. This contradiction is all the more annoying to the extent that the ideal is affirmed as sublime, evangelical, sacred and divine; and to the extent that the reality is often presented as base, narrow, defective and sometimes even egoistical and degenerate. But it is the Church! that social institution which each one, by belonging to it, can transform and which, human and limited as it may sometimes be, is always "the sign and instrument" of our salvation. The Church is always the dispenser of the divine mysteries; she is the true Church, holy Mother Church, for which Christ gave his love and his blood. The Church is always worthy of being loved by you young people! Yes, the Cross is put on our shoulders; but it is the Cross of Christ, who waits for Simon of Cyrene to help him to bear its weight. It is the heroic drama of God's glory, of the salvation of the world and of the incomparable honour to which you young people are called.

Here we do not wish to add anything else. You know that it is the Pope who speaks to you. He regards you with immense affection, with anxious hope and great joy.

VIII. NECROLOGY

Father Amore Amori

* Assisi (Perugia, Italy), 13.11.1899; † Prenestino, Rome (Italy), 8.2.1974; 47 years of age; 55 prof.; 49 priest.

A simple and thoroughly likeable character, he applied himself with single-minded zeal to the needs of his pupils. His long experience with boys made him particularly valuable as an assistant. He also worked hard at preaching and hearing confessions. In the immediate post-war period he was ecclesiastical assistant of the Catholic Workers' Association. Behind the external activity lay a deep life of prayer, in which he persevered to the very end.

Father Josef Augustaitis

* Voverei (Suvalkai, Lithuania), 12.2.1886 † Lima (Peru), 20.2.1974: 88 years of age; 63 prof.; 54 priest; 3 rector.

A man of deep piety and great zeal, he worked unremittingly for the Indian boys of the Peruvian Andes. His good work earned him a decoration from the Government. For many years he was confessor.

Father Antonio Ballesio

* Rivarossa (Turin, Italy), 30.12.1901; † Cuorgnè (Turin) 27.4.1974: 72 years of age; 50 prof.; 43 priest.

A late vocation, he answered the call promptly and generously, his sole concern being the faithful service of God and of his confrères. In the same spirit of acceptance he bore the suffering with which God was pleased to bring to a close his 50 years of religious life.

Father Johan M. Birkenbihl

* Camberg im Taunus (Hessen Nassau, Germany), 16.8.1903; † Cologne (Germany), 15.2.1974: 70 years of age; 48 prof.; 39 priest.

He lived at Valdocco for some years; for six of them he was secretary to the Prefect General, Don Pietro Berruti, whose memory he was to treasure for the rest of his life. He found his model Salesian in Don Berruti, to whom he attributed his recovery from a serious illness in 1964. In a second spell there, Don Ricaldoni entrusted him with the post of archivist in charge of the writings and effects of Don Bosco, which he proceeded to arrange and classify with great patience and exactitude.

Father Antonio Claudino Duarte

* Vilar do Cadoval (Estremadura, Portugal), 30.9.1918; † Mogofores (Portugal), 4.4.1974: 55 years of age; 38 prof.; 29 priest;

He was a zealous and vigorous assistant and teacher of theology. For a time after his ordination he also worked in the parish at Estoril, in the boys' club and amongst the Past Pupils at Porto. Then he was put in charge of the Co-operators, and he was tireless in his efforts to spread the work through talks and sermons. His wide range of contacts enabled him to promote vocations, especially for the Salesian Sisters. As parish-priest in the years preceding his death he promoted catechetics, the sacramental life, boys' clubs and evening classes.

Father Auguste Crozes

* St. Just sur Viaur (Aveyron, France), 21.2.1900; † Rieupeyroux (Aveyron, France), 2.5.1974: 74 years of age; 53 prof.; 45 priest; 9 Rector.

With his great capacity for work he carried out his Salesian mission at Nazareth for 17 years, then in his home-land and finally in Algeria (where he went at the age of 68) as headmaster at Bouisseville. He had a deep love for Don Bosco and always remained meticulously faithful to the Salesian tradition. Even in his old age he was to be seen among the boys in recreation, with his kindness and patience. His whole life was a gift to God.

Father Cajetan Thomas D'Amato

* San Francisco (California, U.S.A.), 23.10.1919; † Los Angeles (U.S.A.), 11.10.1973; almost 54 years of age; 35 prof.; 25 priest.

A sick man for many years, "Father Tom", as he was called by community and boys alike, found a heavy cross in his inability to work as he would have liked. But he knew how to conceal his sufferings behind his cheerful smile. If someone came out with a crudity, he would say: "Keep the peace", a saying that became his motto. He was indefatigable in his work for the missions, for which he would muster funds and help of every sort. The boys will always remember him as their true friend and educator.

Father Felipe Diez

* Los Tremellos (Burgos, Spain), 26.5.1898; † Madrid (Spain), 22.2.1974; 75 years of age; 55 prof.; 47 priest.

As a priest he was exemplary in his devotion to duty and his dedication to his pupils; as a Salesian he was always faithful to Don Bosco. Through attentive reading of the Biographical Memoirs he became thoroughly acquainted with the Founder's life and thought.

In his old age he was happy to be amongst orphan boys, for whose spiritual welfare he was always solicitous.

Father Ildefonso Gomez Urbán

* Fuentes de Andalucía (Seville, Spain), 21.11.1899; † Sevilla-Macarena (Spain), 19.9.1973. 73 years of age; 47 prof.; 38 priest.

He was brought into the society by an army comrade who had the same Christian name and surname, and happened to be a Salesian. It was his simplicity and his constant accessibility that won the confidence of the young, many of whom went to him for advice and help.

Father Wladyslaw Klimczyk

* Minoga (Kielce, Poland), 24.8.1893; † Oświęcim (Poland), 6.2.1974: 80 years of age; 60 prof.; 52 priest; 11 Rector.

Destined for the missions from the time of his novitiate, he went to India in 1929 after serving as catechist and bursar in his home-country. In 1939 he returned to Poland for the purpose of collecting funds for

the construction of a church on his mission; but the war put a stop to the project. Only after the cessation of hostilities could he return to "his people", as he called them. He came back home finally in 1959, and he was appointed first Rector and then Confessor, working with complete dedication to the cure of souls until his death.

Fr Marc Michalon

* St. Etienne (Loire, France), 3.8.1922; † Lyons (France), 2.5.1974: aged 51 years; 28 prof; 20 priest; 12 Rector.

In his request for admittance to the noviciate he stated that he wanted to work for poor children, and to them he dedicated his whole Salesian life. The boys were quick to reciprocate his genuine love for them, and they responded fully to his extraordinary affability coupled to a deep understanding of their problems. His witness to the faith lay in his readiness to render any sort of service at any time.

Brother Gregorio Odúber

* Copadare (Falcón, Venezuela), 28.11.1885; † Caracas (Venezuela), 5.4.1974: 88 years of age; 46 prof.

His spirit of generosity led him to offer himself for the missions, and he stayed at Puerto Ayacucho in the High Orinoco for 24 years, working on general maintenance. Salesians, pupils and staff found in him a true apostolic spirit, a model Christian and religious.

Father Pedro Telmo Ortiz

* Bolivar (Buenos Aires, Argentina), 13.3.1890; † Bahia Blanca (Argentina), 29.7.1973: 83 years of age; 66 prof.; 57 priest; 8 Rector.

He might well be called a Patagonian, because few priests have worked for so long in Patagonia and loved it as much as he did. His teaching was all the more effective for being instinct with the feeling of the immanence of God in everything, rocks and plants and animals. He had a fine artistic temperament, which found expression in his Photographic and Ciné Workshop. This he managed until nearly the end of his life. On the

occasion of his golden jubilee of ordination he said: "May I, until my last breath, spread around me the true joy and optimism of the children of God." A prayer fully answered by God.

Brother Antonio Otero

* Torneiros, Allariz (Orense, Spain), 6.9.1906; † Sevilla (Spain), 16.11.1973: 67 years of age, 47 prof..

Almost all the houses of the Province received a contribution from his apostolic work. He had a zest for work and was faithful to the practices of the religious life. His love for his pupils was very obvious in his careful marking of their work and the respect he always accorded them as persons. He was most faithful in his Salesian assisting, right up to the last days of his life.

Father Elias Otero

* San Adrián del Valle (Léon, Spain), 16.2.1885; † Santander (Spain), 25.8.1973: 88 years of age; 69 prof.; 56 priest.

He spent almost half of his long Salesian life at Santander, working in the confessional. He was endowed with a strong and original personality, a good mind and a special gift for languages. In spite of his wide culture, he was not given to discussion, thereby showing his respect for others. Orderly and exacting in class, a disciplined religious, he had a great gusto for life: for working, always teaching something new; for celebrating Mass early in the morning, and for offering the boys his wise counsel.

Father Francisco J. Pereira Leite

* Vieira (Braga, Portugal), 22.9.1886; † Evora (Portugal), 10.2.1974: 87 years of age; 69 prof.; 54 priest; 24 Rector.

One of the last survivors of the "heroic days" of the Society, he saw the beginnings of the work in Portugal, and its restoration in 1920. He was a watchful and fatherly assistant and counsellor, although somewhat exacting, and he was a priest and religious of true apostolic mettle. At the time of the suppression of the religious orders, he chose exile, first in Italy and then

in Spain, in order to stay faithful to his vocation rather than slide into a cosy niche in civil life. Outstanding in his love for the Congregation and his spirit of work, he was simple and joyful: a great help in the parish and a much sought-after spiritual director and confessor.

Bro. Manuele Maria Pérez

* Roa (Lugo, Spain), 20.10.1888; † Boulogne (Buenos Aires, Argentina), 23.4.1974: 85 years of age; 5 prof.

He came into the Congregation when he was almost eighty, like the worker arriving at the eleventh hour. Conscious of the short time at his disposal, he gave himself unreservedly to Don Bosco. He looked after the welfare of the house and its occupants down to the smallest detail. His union with God and his deep love of Don Bosco were reflected in his prayer-life.

Fr Gerardo Poblete

* Chuquicamata (Antofagasta, Chile), 13.5.1942; † Iquique (Chile), 21.10.1973: 31 years of age, 11 prof.; 2 priest.

His life was short, but he gave all of it to the service of youth. He worked out his own pastoral methods to bring the boys face to face with the figure of Christ, the Redeemer. His death, occurring after only 2 years of priesthood at such a difficult time for his countrymen, confers something of the Paschal mystery on his life of sacrifice for the young.

Brother Thomas Poonolly

* Trichur (Kerala, India), 6.6.1937; † Cochin (India), 2.12.1973: 36 years of age; 15 prof.

Head-master of our school at Vaduthala, he was a competent teacher and an exemplary religious. Before an acute form of meningitis cut him down whilst still young, he had shown how to put his various gifts, especially his outstanding prowess in sport, at the service of the poorest youngsters, who were his special interest.

Fr Ercole Provera

* Mirabello, Monferrato (Alessandria, Italy), 11.4.1891; † S. Paolo, Turin (Italy), 13.3.1974: 82 years of age; 63 prof.; 54 priest.

After a period of life in the country at Lombriasco and Cumiana, for almost half a century he was one of the prominent characters of the workingclass suburb of San Paolo in Turin. Besides being much in demand as a preacher and confessor, he was also a very able administrator; but his charismatic mission was a form of social work, "assistente sociale": a mission peculiarly his own, in which his zeal for souls and his strong will led him to move heaven and earth to help anyone who turned to him. The number of jobs and lodgings he found and the financial aids he provided for the needy defies calculation; but never did he keep or use anything for himself.

Brother Juan Riera

* San Hilaria Sacalm (Gerona, Spain), 30.8.1881; † Havana (Cuba), 29.3.1973: 91 years of age; 71 prof.

He began his very long Salesian life as assistant and farm-foreman at Gerona. His meeting with Don Rua, into whose hands he made his profession, affected him profoundly. A man of lively faith, of solid spirituality, and open to the aggiornamento, he could ride every difficulty with a healthy optimism. He said of himself: "Mary, Help of Christians, has guided me all my life: I hope she'll guide me to heaven. I have always carried her with me and she knows that I have given her everything".

Father Francesco Rigamonti

* Lambrugo (Como, Italy), 15.2.1917; † Como (Italy), 1.4.1974: 57 years of age; 40 prof.; 30 priest.

He will be remembered chiefly for the warmth and depth of the human relationships he developed during his long period of teaching, and he kept in touch with a large number of Old Boys. His last years were given over to the spiritual direction of the Salesian Sisters. A hard trial, that hindered his every action, prepared him for a sudden, but expected, meeting with God.

Fr Leo Rodenbeck

* Liemke (East Prussia), 1.5.1906; † Sannerz (Germany), 4.1.1974: 67 years of age; 47 prof.; 38 priest.

He was parish priest for 25 years at Sannerz, and had to look after many other neighbouring communities. He was very well loved and his work was much valued. His impressive funeral, which was attended by two brothers, also Salesians, spoke eloquently of the standing he enjoyed with the whole community.

Father Miguel Rodríguez Fernández

* Barruecopardo (Salamanca, Spain), 3.3.1909; † Algeciras (Cádiz, Spain), 29.11.1973: 64 years of age, 47 prof.; 37 priest.; 6 Rector.

He was supremely tactful with everyone, especially during his term of office as Rector. His life can be summed up in these words, spoken at his funeral: "He was always a priest, always a Salesian, always attentive to everyone's needs". His spirit of obedience, his work in the school and as spiritual director were all characteristic of the man. He prayed for a speedy end, so as not to be a burden to his confrères; and he died suddenly, of a heart-attack.

Brother Alejandro Ramón Sequeira

* San Lorenzo (Santa Fé, Argentina), 9.4.1898; † Alta Gracia (Córdoba, Argentina), 7.3.1974: 76 years of age; 23 prof.

As a boy he had the desire to consecrate himself to God, but only in his fifties, after the death of his mother was he able to enter the Congregation. In the meantime he had filled important posts in public administration as an attorney. For many years he had been Director of Catholic Action alongside the present Cardinal Caggiano. A man of outstanding ability he held, as a Salesian, positions of great responsibility in the administration of the houses and of the Province. In spite of his strong personality, forthright and tough, he could be understanding and forgiving.

Deacon José Maria Teixeira

* S. Paulo (Brazil), 26.2.1923; † there, 26.6.1973: 50 years of age; 32 prof.; 22 deacon.

He was about to be ordained priest with his companions when he fainted and was unable to go on with the ceremony. After the example of St Francis of Assisi, he wished, from motives of humility, to remain a deacon for the rest of his life. He had had brilliant results from his course in the economic sciences, and, being well qualified in this field, he was consulted by many religious communities. He directed the construction of some of our schools and of the new building for the Editora Don Bosco. He was a man who could visualize and translate his vision into reality; reserved and humble, a prolific and tireless worker, he aimed above all to construct the Kingdom of God.

Cardinal Stefan Trochta

* Francová Lhota (Moravia, Czechoslovakia), 26.3.1905; † Litoměřice (Czechoslovakia), 6.4.1974: 69 years of age; 49 prof.; 42 priest.; Rector 11; Bishop from 1947; created Cardinal in 1969 and proclaimed in 1973.

His father died when he was eight years old, and he had to help his mother to keep his younger brothers, even at the expense of his own studies. He came to know the Salesians and he joined the Society. When he had finished his studies in Turin, emerging with a degree in theology in 1932, he returned to his homeland, where, with his outstanding talents and enthusiasm, he contributed substantially to the development of the Congregation, which was just taking its first steps in Czechoslovakia. Then the war hit Europe, and he went through the terrifying experience of three concentration-camps: Teresin, Mauthausen, and Dachau. His constitution, normally robust and healthy, was shattered by the privations of the camps. In 1945 he returned to Prague, where the boys gave him the welcome of a man risen from the dead.

In 1947 he was consecrated Bishop. He bent his energies and tenacity to the reorganization of his diocese, but he did not even complete the first visitation: the political situation had gone wrong again. In 1950 he was forbidden to act as a bishop; in 1953 he was arrested and, next year, was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. For years he was forbidden to celebrate Mass. In 1960 he received an amnesty, but he could not practise his ministry and was reduced to the status of a worker. In 1968, as a result of an improvement in the political climate, his sentence was annulled altogether and, from the 1st September, he was able to resume

his direction of the diocese. The next year Paul VI appointed him Cardinal "in pectore", and it was not until the March of last year that the Pope made it public.

He was a man of prayer, contemplation and action, and the riches of his experience found expression in a great serenity and affability. It can be said of him that he learnt to endure all things and overcome all things with the love of Christ. He was an outstanding example of deep salesianity and of total loyalty to the Church, the Pope and his country. He placed his pastoral experience at the disposal of the Holy See as member of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law, and as member of the Secretariat for Non-believers.

Father Serafino Zaccagnini

* Rome (Italy), 26.7.1915; † San Salvador (El Salvador), 27.2.1974: 58 years of age, 42 prof.; 31 priest; 2 Rector.

He went out very young to the Province of Central America and spent there the whole of his life as priest and educator. He had a highly refined artistic sense enriched with a considerable training in literature, and he exercised a valuable apostolate as teacher and preacher. He was well able to impart his love for Mary, Help of Christians, to his pupils and to the faithful. His final sacrifice was a painful illness during the last months of his life.

Brother Octavio Zuluaga

* El Santuario (Antioquia, Colombia), 7.4.1916; † Bogotá (Colombia), 2.3.1974: 57 years of age, 37 prof.

A firm friend and an exemplary worker, he devoted himself unremittingly to the formation of the young. When the Holy See entrusted the vast plains of the Ariari to the Salesians, he went there to serve the poorest of the poor. He is the first Salesian of the Ariari to die. He was a genial character, full of nervous energy and wrapped up in his work. And he was a man of prayer. He had to struggle for three years against the threat of cancer. His Provincial, speaking at the funeral, said: "His practical bent, his religious and ascetic principles, his loyalty to the Congregation, his youthful spirit that kept old age at bay, the warmth of his words, his friendly approach right down at the level of the little and the needy, made him the very prototype of the true Salesian".

2° Elenco 1974

- 49 Sac. AMORI Amore † Roma-Prenestino (Italia) 1974 a 74 a.
- 50 Sac. AUGUSTAITIS Giuseppe † Lima (Perù) 1974 a 88 a.
- 51 Sac. BALLELIO Antonio † Cuornè (Torino - Italia) 1974 a 72 a.
- 52 Sac. BIRKENBIHL M. Giovanni † Köln (Germania) 1974 a 70 a.
- 53 Sac. CLAUDINO DUARTE Antonio † Mogofores (Portogallo) 1974 a 55 a.
- 54 Sac. CROZES Augusto † Rieuepeyroux (Aveyron - Francia) 1974 a 74 a.
- 55 Sac. D'AMATO Thomas Gaetano † Los Angeles (USA) 1973 a 54 a.
- 56 Sac. DIEZ Filippo † Madrid (Spagna) 1974 a 75 a.
- 57 Sac. GOMEZ Urbán Ildefonso † Madrid (Spagna) 1973 a 73 a.
- 58 Sac. KLIMCZYK Ladislao † Oswiecim (Polonia) 1974 a 80 a.
- 59 Sac. MICHALON Marco † Lyon (Francia) 1974 a 51 a.
- 60 Coad. ODUBER Gregorio † Caracas (Venezuela) 1974 a 88 a.
- 61 Sac. ORTIZ Telmo Pietro † Bahia Blanca (Argentina) 1973 a 83 a.
- 62 Coad. OTERO Antonio † Sevilla (Spagna) 1973 a 67 a.
- 63 Sac. OTERO Elia † Santander (Spagna) 1973 a 88 a.
- 64 Sac. PEREIRA J. Leite Francesco † Evora (Portogallo) 1974 a 87 a.
- 65 Coad. PEREZ Emanuele Maria † Boulogne (Buenos Aires-Argentina) 1974 a 85 a.
- 66 Sac. POBLETE Gerardo † Iquique (Chile) 1973 a 31 a.
- 67 Coad. POONOLLY Tommaso † Cochin (India) 1973 a 36 a.
- 68 Sac. PROVERA Ercole † Torino - San Paolo (Italia) 1974 a 82 a.
- 69 Coad. RIERA Giovanni † La Habana (Cuba) 1973 a 91 a.
- 70 Sac. RIGAMONTI Francesco † Como (Italia) 1974 a 57 a.
- 71 Sac. RODENBECK Leone † Sannerz (Germania) 1974 a 67 a.
- 72 Sac. RODRIGUEZ Michele Fernandez † Algeciras (Cadiz - Spagna) 1973 a 64 a.
- 73 Coad. SEQUEIRA Ramon Alessandro † Alta Gracia (Cordoba - Argentina) 1974 a 76 a.
- 74 Diac. TEIXEIRA Maria Giuseppe † S. Paulo (Brasile) 1973 a 50 a.
- 75 Card. TROCHTA Stefano † Litomerice (Cecoslovacchia) 1974 a 69 a. Fu per 27 anni Vescovo e 5 Cardinale.
- 76 Sac. ZACCAGNINI Serafino † San Salvador (El Salvador C.A.) 1974 a 58 a.
- 77 Coad. ZULUAGA Ottavio † Bogotà (Colombia) 1974 a 57 a.