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3-20-1970

### CSSP Newsletter-No.6 (1970)

Congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers

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March 20th. 1970

27A-51-6  
N° 6

## MISSIONARIES EXPELLED FROM THE EAST-CENTRAL STATE OF NIGERIAN FEDERATION

On the 19th. of February a second group of missionaries, headed by Bishop Joseph Whelan, Bishop of Owerri, arrived in Rome. They had been expelled after "trial" and a short period of imprisonment at Port Harcourt. In the group were two Vincentians, one diocesan priest from Ireland, eight Holy Rosary Sisters and one Maryknoll Sister. Nineteen Spiritans were expelled as part of this "second phase" in the aftermath of the recent war in East Nigeria:

Bishop J. Whelan, E. Agnoli, F. Caffrey, S. Darcy, D. Dorr, D. Foley, A. Geoghégan, D. Kavanagh, P. Kearney, G. Lahiffe, E. McMahon, D. McManus, T. Maguire, H. Malone, W. Malone, J. Mohan, T. O'Neill, J. Peters, R. Walsh.

A third phase in the deportations took place in March. This time there was no trial or imprisonment; instead the remaining missionaries were quietly deported from the war zone. Included in this group were two Kiltegan Fathers, seven Holy Rosary Sisters, three Sisters of St. John of God, and one Holy Child Sister. The confreres in this group were twenty-eight in number:

S. Agnoli, D. Buckley, S. Byron, P. Crosbie, J. Doyle, L. Doyle, M. Fallon, J. Fitzgibbon, M. Frawley, G. Gogan, J. Guina, P. Holohan, J. Keane, D. Kennedy, R. Lehane, J. McNulty, E. Madden, H. Mullin, J. Murphy, C. O'Mahony, D. O'Mahony, J. O'Sullivan, D. Rogers, J. Shanley, R. Thornton, J. Tobin, K. Tam, C. Woulfe.

Five Spiritans are still serving the Catholic population of the East-Central State in areas which were occupied by Federal troops before the capitulation. They are: T. Flynn, P. Dinan, B. Heery, T. Buckley, and Brother Eunan. A number of Holy Rosary Sisters and two Marist Brothers are "holding the fort" at Nsukka, Ihiala and Uturu, thus providing a valuable element of continuity in the pastoral and social work of the Church in this area. As far as we know the confreres in the East-Central State are in good form and happy to be able to continue the work.

PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS AT LOME,  
TOGO

Forty-two archbishops and bishops from the French-speaking areas of West Africa met in Lome from the 12th. to the 18th. of February, 1970. Cardinal Zoungrana presided, and the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. G. Mariani was present. The plenary assembly declared its full agreement with the Pope's declaration on priestly celibacy. Clergy and faithful were reminded that emphasis on the formation of an elite should not lead to neglect of the ordinary members of the flock. The gap between rich and poor has widened, and there is a real danger of opposition between the different social classes. In their declaration on social justice the bishops drew attention to the poor results obtained in the struggle for national development to date.

Accordingly, the rich nations were called on to share their abundance, but the assembly underlined the need for local development, reminding their people that they should rely mainly on their own initiative and resources. The declaration draws attention to the fact that an owner-class has become entrenched, a class characterised by indifference and oppression, by a lack of professional ethic, even by violence, subversion and torture. Africans were called on to act together with a view to aiding the poor, demanding freedom of speech for all, and finally, freedom of religion. Without complete respect for man, the bishops said, a valid and stable temporal order is impossible.

PRINCIPAL SUPERIORS MEET AT LIBREVILLE

Principal superiors of the Districts of Yaounde, Doume, Bangui, Brazzaville and Libreville met at Libreville from the 21st. to the 24th. of January. Fourteen dioceses involving 535 Spiritans were involved in the proceedings. The General House was represented by Father Ledit, 2nd. Assistant, and the Province of France by the Provincial, Father Morvan. Contracts between the Congregation and the bishops formed the principal item on the agenda.

Terms of reference were provided by the text prepared by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Contracts already in force were examined with a view to arriving at a

common text for the "general provisions" to be embodied in all future contracts. The "particular provisions" are primarily of a financial nature, and consequently cannot be easily reduced to a common format.

Training and refresher courses for missionaries were also discussed with a view to setting up such courses either in Europe or Africa. This problem of missionary renewal is a pressing one today, and we look forward to printing further information on the proposals and experiments of the various mission districts.

### CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

Father Jorge Sanches, Assistant General, carried out the visitation of the District of Cape Verde during the month of February. The two islands of the Cape Verde Archipelago form the District of the same name; the islands are situated 455 km. from the mainland of Africa, roughly opposite Dakar. Though it is one of the smallest and most recent of the Congregation's works, the District is second to none in terms of apostolic achievement and the difficulties encountered in preaching the Gospel. The islands are small: Santiago - 991 sq.km. and Maio - 269 sq.km.

Among the difficulties encountered by the confreres there is above all, the poverty of the region; frightful periods of drought sometimes endanger the very existence of the population which depends entirely on agriculture. Besides there is a real shortage of missionary personnel: 14 priests and one scholastic are doing their best to minister to the needs of more than 120,000 inhabitants, almost all of whom are baptized! Moreover, the population is spread in small groups over an area difficult of access and without roads.

When they came to the islands thirty years ago the Spiritans found that their flock had reverted to superstition through lack of pastoral care. Despite the difficulties these three decades of apostolate by the Holy Ghost Fathers have seen the growth of a genuine Christian community. However, growth in vocations and the formation of a local clergy has not matched that of the community. They lack the local vocations necessary to assure the service of the local church, vocations which could free the Holy Ghost Fathers for the work of evangelization which

is properly theirs.

Cape Verde is also an example of a more general problem: how to enable the local church become self-sufficient in personnel and resources; how to adapt and develop the local structures so that a given community after long years of evangelization does not remain in a state of spiritual mendicancy vis-a-vis some outside source or group. When social and economic structures are allowed to divide men into two groups - under and over developed - the results are often disastrous. Indeed for many centuries now the monolithic structure of the ministry has led to the same dangerous imbalance inside the Catholic Church.

This is the most important problem encountered by the missionary action of the Church today, and it should not fail to interest the members of an institute such as ours. Logically, it should take first place among the priorities of our missionary strategy. It would seem that our District of Cape Verde is an area in which this problem is posed with greater insistence, and appeals most strongly to our human, Christian and missionary conscience.

J. Sanches.

#### TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT TAKES CONTROL OF ALL SCHOOLS

The Education Act which was passed by the National Assembly of Tanzania in December has since been signed by President Nyerere, and has thus become law. The Act gives management of all grant-aided schools to the Government, and all grant-aided staff will be employed by the State.

For the Catholic Church this involves handing over the management of nearly 1,500 schools. While the Church retains ownership, the Government takes control, but leaves religious instruction in the hands of religious organizations approved by the Minister of Education. Seminaries and novitiates are specifically exempted by the Act.

This development had not been unexpected. An Education Act had been proposed for the previous session of Parliament, but had been delayed by the Tanzania Episcopal Conference and the Christian Council of Tanzania (representing all non-Catholic Christians), who expressed a desire for prior consultation. A number of guarantees given by the Government during these con-

sultations appeared in the amended Act; for instance, exemption of teaching Sisters from becoming mere civil servants.

During the course of a meeting held between Government and the two Church Councils, President Nyerere explained the object of the legislation. He assured the various Church bodies that the role of the Churches in schools was not finished. Government does not want to identify itself with the influence of any specific religious body in the country, but it guarantees that religious groups will play their full part in freedom within the area of their specific responsibility.

While negotiations were going on to ensure a smooth transfer and equitable adjustment, the Ministry of Education requested the Churches to retain the Education Secretaries at their posts until the transfer is effected. Plans for further cooperation with the Churches are being prepared, because it says, the Ministry is convinced that religion has an important contribution to make in education.

Starting a century ago, the Church pioneered in the field of education, and built up a vast school system in Tanzania; at the same time the colonial governments did not establish many schools of their own. By the time Tanzania became independent eight years ago, it was mentioned in Parliament that two-thirds of those who received an education in the country had received it in mission schools, most of which were Catholic schools. This was by way of an expression of gratitude on the part of the new government for what the Church had achieved in this field. We can be rightly proud of the Spiritan contribution to education during the pre-colonial as well as the colonial period. It is sufficient to mention the pioneering work done in the Morogoro and the Kilimanjaro areas, and the role played by Pugu in secondary education during the fifties.

However, before long it became apparent that the Government was not happy to see more than half the country's educational establishments being managed by a non-governmental body, even though the Church rightly claimed that these schools gave an education equal to those managed by the State, followed the same syllabus and sat for the same examinations, while at the same time they fulfilled the wishes of the parents to have their children educated in a Gospel atmosphere.

During the period of the colonial regime, the Church was

offered and accepted the principle of grant-in-aid for its schools. At first, realizing the possible dangers, it resolutely refused to accept a 100% grant. However, as expenses mounted, a full grant was eventually accepted, and in this way came more and more Government supervision and control of the schools.

After independence, the United Teachers' Service Act of 1964 redressed certain inequalities that had existed between Mission and Government teachers but it also put all grant-aided teachers in Tanzania under one central authority. Some time after, the Government advanced the argument that, marks being equal, Mission schools should not refuse admittance to any pupil on religious grounds. This led to greater and greater control by Government of school admissions, especially at the secondary level. Originally, the Catholic agency had and paid its own school supervisors. Later the Government gave a grant for this purpose and the number of supervisors was increased, then withdrew the grant and offered its own supervisors to fill the gap.

What will the future contribution of the Church be in the field of education in Tanzania? A statement from the Catholic Secretariate in Dar-es-Salaam said: "Although management has been taken over, we can still be active in the field of education, at the service of the development of the people, for the promotion of religious and moral education in the nation and by the contribution of our dedicated and qualified personnel. The Church is certainly giving up administration and direction, and a position of some status and freedom, but she is losing neither service nor work."

And Bishop Sipendi wrote in his diocesan newsletter: "Now that we have entered the post "education act" period, we are faced with the question of changing our attitudes and gearing our efforts into other fields of Community Development. This year the emphasis is on Adult Education. This field is still wide-open to us. We have our community centres and homecraft centres in our parishes. We can make greater use of these for the campaign for adult education and for promoting the general education of the masses of our people. This is not just a question of teaching them to read and write, but one which can show them the value of such activities through a better understanding of Ujamaa (brotherhood or community) and self-reliance, especially in view of the second Five Year Development Plan, which is essentially a plan to educate our people for better living. In all these activities of adult education we come into contact with the general public in an atmosphere which gives us ample opportunity to inculcate in them the social Christian virtues that spring from our Christian religion."

In the past the Church did not entirely neglect children in non-Catholic schools, but put her main effort, most of the time and practically all her personnel and money into her own schools. Now that she no longer has most of her own schools, it is hoped that she will turn her attention more to her children than to her institutions, even though these had a valid role to play.

Although the new Education Act does not forbid teachers to teach religion in government-owned schools, there is no guarantee that Catholic teachers will be on the staff of schools attended by Catholic students. Eventually the Council of the Faithful may be instrumental in getting this guarantee, and will try to provide the required religious formation for the Church's children wherever they may be.

## DOES THE IBO CHURCH STILL NEED MISSIONARIES?

The expulsion of some missionaries on the grounds of illegal entry does not mean that it is the policy of the Nigerian Government to exclude missionaries from the former Eastern Nigeria. The Ibo Church is highly developed in native personnel, both as to quantity (3 Bishops, 150 priests, 163 Sisters), and in quality, and would certainly be able to survive without missionaries, though for some time to come, the Ibo personnel would still welcome assistance on the part of the missionaries.

Speaking only from the point of view of the Spiritan contribution to the growing Churches in Iboland, the following is the general picture:

Before the war, there were 300 Holy Ghost missionaries of the Irish Province assigned to work in the five dioceses of Onitsha, Owerri, Enugu, Umuahia and Port Harcourt. (Part of the last-named diocese coincided with the non-Ibo Rivers Province.) The majority of these missionaries were involved in parishes or missions; the remainder were engaged in education - in seminaries, secondary schools, technical or commercial colleges.

The proportion of missionary priests to Ibo diocesan priests before the war was 3 to 1. The 100 Ibo priests were, like the missionaries, for the most part engaged in parochial ministry, but some were also involved in education.

The total number of parishes before the war was 144. To this figure must be added a further 14 units which for practical purposes were parishes even though they were the pastoral responsibility of the staffs of secondary schools. Should these secondary schools be unable to look after their pastoral needs, the Bishops would have to find parish priests to send to these 14 towns. So a total of 158 parishes must be counted.

Not counting schools owned by a village community and entrusted to the Catholic Mission for administration by priests, there were 65 educational establishments administered by the Mission. Apart from the seminaries, these establishments, mainly secondary, technical and commercial schools, with very few exceptions were managed by one priest, African or Irish, who employed African lay-staff.

C.S.Sp. missionary personnel, owing to the closure of the schools at the outbreak of the war and to the shrinking of Biara before the advancing Federal army, dropped finally to 67, the number found inside the enclave at the cessation of hostilities on January 12th. With the exception of a few, all these entered Biafra at some stage without Nigerian permits, and were consequently subject to deportation. It remains to be seen whether or not the others employed temporarily elsewhere during the war, will be re-admitted.

Should all Irish C.S.Sp. personnel be excluded, what would be the situation in Iboland? A recall of all Ibo priests studying abroad, and a postponement of missionary destinations for the Ibo Holy Ghost Fathers would bring the total number of Ibo priests to 150. Ibo personnel who are members of the Congregation are: 2 bishops, 11 priests, 1 brother and 35 scholastics. Two of the priests are working in Sierra Leone. This total for the 158 parishes alone, not counting the 65 schools, is entirely inadequate. For the educational work, one could dispense with priest-



principals or chaplains, and entrust the entire administration to the many excellent Catholic lay graduates who have been members of the staffs hitherto.

The exclusion of all missionaries at this stage in the history of the Church in Iboland would impose a heavy burden on the African bishops, of whom there are present three (the other two sees will shortly have African bishops appointed to them), and on their African clergy. The only hope lies in the consoling fact that there are at present 266 senior seminarians (in philosophy and theology), whose studies have continued uninterruptedly throughout the war. With the help of God's grace, if these excellent young men persevere (and the level of perseverance in the past years has been much higher than in the average European or American senior seminary), it will bring the Church in Iboland a long way towards autonomy in personnel.

D.O'Sullivan

### Bishop Okoye transferred to Enugu, Nigeria

The "Osservatore Romano" of March 19th, 1970 announced the transfer of Bishop Godfrey Okoye, C.S.Sp. from the Diocese of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, to the Diocese of Enugu, East-Central State, Federation of Nigeria.

### FIRE DESTROYS PART OF THE SCHOLASTICATE AT THE ABBAYE - BLANCHE, MORTAIN

The destruction of part of the senior scholasticate at Mortain was the occasion of a great demonstration of sympathy and solidarity on the part of the local population. Since the time of Archbishop Le Roy, the Abbaye-Blanche at Mortain and the Holy Ghost Fathers have become well-known in the area, and their influence extends into the parishes and homes of the neighbourhood. Professors and scholastics aid the diocesan clergy, while the Abbey is well-known as a liturgical centre and as a place for youth gatherings and refresher-courses for missionaries.

At the moment there is a project for creating a missionary institute at Mortain in collaboration with the S.M.A., the White Fathers and the Foreign Missions of Paris. Other missionary institutes may yet join in this plan.

### Missions in Latin - America

According to statistics provided by CELAM, Latin America in 1968 had 268 million inhabitants and 42,669 priests, which gives an average of 1 priest per 6,000 inhabitants. Thus there is a real need for a substantial increase in the number of the clergy, otherwise the regular increase in population is going to lead to a serious pastoral situation. The statisticians tell us that in 1970 there will be 273,500,000 inhabitants in Latin America, and 363,000,000 in 1980. The situation in the 54 territories which depend on "Propaganda Fide" is no better; here we find a population of 4,800,000, of which 4,535,000 are Catholic while there are only 1,125 priests to minister to them.

During the Council, a number of bishops petitioned to have their dioceses placed under the jurisdiction of "Propaganda Fide" but were refused by the Congregation because of the various concordats governing the nomination of bishops in those areas.

## THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES OF AFRICA

The independence referred to here could be defined as follows: "the creation and existence, permanent or temporary, of an organized religious movement by a tribe or group. This movement claims to be Christian in the sense that it recognizes Jesus as Saviour and Lord, and has separated itself from a missionary Church or from an autonomous African Church. On the other hand it may have developed independently of these Churches, and become a new religious entity due to African initiative and under local authority." Accordingly, this definition excludes hundreds of para-Christian movements, more or less syncretistic, throughout the Continent of Africa.

Close on 5000 schisms have taken place since the year 1860 or thereabouts. Independent Churches embracing 7 million members have arisen in 32 of the 41 countries of Africa South of the Sahara, including Madagascar. The most important concentration is found in the South-East and Southern part of the continent (this is particularly true of South Africa where there are 3 million adherents of these Churches - roughly a quarter of Bantu Christians), that is, in regions which experienced sustained activity on the part of European and American missionaries. Statistics show that these movements have arisen especially in areas worked by the Anglican or Reformed Missions, and much less so in the case of Pentecostal or Adventist groups. As to the Catholic Church, separatist movements are a rare phenomenon, such as the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart founded in 1955 among the Bambas of Zambia, and the Church of the Legion of Mary which appeared in 1963 among the Luos of Kenya.

It was generally believed that such movements were principally due to a reaction to foreign missions. Rather they were more in the nature of a revival or renewal which aimed at creating a truly African Christianity. The part played by women should be emphasised at this point; they are often responsible for these Churches and form a majority of the members. This is true of the Church of Lalou in Ivory Coast (1922) and of the Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina in Zambia (1954) which numbers almost 100,000 adherents.

Every year the independent Churches gain a large number of new members. It is estimated that between 1965 and 1970 their membership increased from 7 to 9 millions. What makes them so attractive? Firstly they favoured the development of the African personality and the emergence of forms of worship specifically African. Furthermore, fraternal love linking the members of the community was seen as a Christian version of traditional values: community life, solidarity, hospitality, philanthropy towards those in need.

One should not conclude from the above that all these movements have produced ideal ecclesial communities. The majority separated for reasons which were far from idealistic: personal ambition, clan rivalries, political manoeuvres, etc... Congo-Kinshasa is the best example of these motives, so much so that the government has refused to grant recognition to new Churches. Only one, the Kimbanguist Church of the Congo is a member of the W.C.C. Twenty have been recognized by different national councils, and six are members of the Conference of African Churches.

## A GUIDE TO AFRICAN RELIGIONS

The Secretariat for Non-Christians recently published a document entitled "Encounter with African Religions" (189 pages). It is one of a series of manuals produced by this Secretariat which aims at furthering dialogue with other religions of the world.

Three reasons summarize the value of such publications today:

- 1) Traditional religions still exist in Africa today, and it is estimated that more than 100 million people are influenced by them.

- 2) Contrary to what is generally believed, their influence is on the increase.

- 2) Finally our aim should be to enter into dialogue with those who belong to these religions; hence the need for a genuine grasp of what these religions really mean to their adherents. Take for example this definition of animism, a label often used to classify African religions "in globo": A vision of the world in which one believes in one's own existence and the existence of natural beings and forces, living principles and spirits capable of intervening in the life of human beings.

### NECROLOGY

Brother Vincent Karregat, of the Dutch Province, died at Gennep on January 22nd., 1970, at the age of 77 years. He was professed for 50 years.

Father Michel Weiss, of the District of Bangui, died at Strasbourg, French Province. He was 64 years of age and had been professed for 44 years.

Father John O'Meara, of the District of Kenya, died at Nairobi at the age of 62 years, after 43 years of profession. (March 15th)

Mr. Paul Vuez, scholastic of the French Province, died on the 18th of March, 1970, aged 25 years, after 7 years of profession.

Father André Maniglier of the French Province died at Paris aged 67 years, after 45 years of profession. (March 19th)

R. I. P.

The Holy Ghost Documentation Centre has been transferred to the General House, Rome, Clivio di Cinna 195, 00136, ITALY. Fathers Joseph Bouchaud and Gerard Tannam are at the disposal of the confreres, not only to provide information... but also to be grateful recipients thereof...

The documentation contained in this issue derives from the FIDES Agency, the Italian Missionary Service, the magazine "Omnis Terra", mission newspapers, and from our own correspondents.

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