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CSSP - NEWSLETTER - CSSP

Congregazione dello Spirito Santo

Clivo di Cinna, 195 - 00136 Roma

October 1972

No. 30

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NEWS FROM ROME

The Holy Father has accepted the resignation of Most Rev. Auguste DELISLE, C.S.Sp. as Bishop of Lokoja (Nigeria), dated 30th July 1972.

Mgr. DELISLE was Bishop of Lokoja since 1964, but had been in Africa since 1934, the year of his ordination. He taught at first in the Junior Seminary of Akono (Cameroons), then he worked as a missionary in the bush area. In 1955 he went to Nigeria where he was named Prefect Apostolic of Kabba. While there, inspired by a great spirit of faith and apostolic zeal, he governed the missionary activity of the Prefecture with marked success, building a seminary, schools, and establishing social assistance works. On July 6th 1964, the apostolic prefecture became a diocese. After only eight years as Bishop, Mgr. DELISLE has had the joy of being able to pass over the direction of the diocese to one of its own sons.

- Most Rev. Alexis MAKOZI, who has been transferred from the titular See of Fallaba to the resident See of Lokoja, where he succeeds Bishop DELISLE, has been Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese for the past year and a half. He was born in Okene in 1932, was ordained priest on December 8th 1961 and was named auxiliary bishop on the 30th May, 1971. (FIDES)

Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples Cardinal ROSSI in Latin America

Cardinal Agnelo ROSSI, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, has recently visited South America on a tour which took him to eight countries. He had three objectives: 1) to have first-hand knowledge of the missions among the aborigines, 2) to get a better knowledge of CELAM (Episcopal Conference of Latin America), 3) to promote missionary interest among South American catholics, especially by means of the O.P.M. (Pontifical Missionary Works). In Brazil, the Cardinal hopes for a strong O.P.M. organisation and the development of missionary co-operation both among the missions of the Amazonas and those

- the rapid decrease in personnel,
- the aspirations of the young students towards more authenticity in our community life, in our prayer and witness among the African people,
- the attraction exercised by certain experiments in progress,
- the universal need for up-dating,
- solidarity between Province and Districts whose interests are fundamentally identical,
- the progressive urbanisation of the population in the third-world.

Consequently, it is essential that we work towards creating responsible communities and so "do ourselves out of a job."

(Spiritans in 1972, Sup. 159A, Bul.159)

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BELGIUM Spiritan Meeting

A meeting of Spiritans took place at Gentinnes, on August 17 and 18, to which 65 Belgian Spiritans had been invited: 20 accepted the invitation. Also present were Fr. G. BIEMANS, Provincial, Holland, and Fr. F. TIMMERMANS, Principal of Bangui. The aim of this meeting: a brotherly get-together, the study of reports, exchange of ideas, all of which should contribute to mutual enrichment. Having examined the situation in the Province, the following conclusion was reached:

"The immediate future is not very hopeful.. However, we must not be either defeatist or discouraged. We should continue, in a spirit of real faith, to promote the universality of the Church & to make known the teaching of the Gospel. As far as the French-speaking part of the country is concerned, all our hopes lie in Gentinnes, but on condition that we try to extend its influence, that we pass on to the young students an example of real missionary vocation and of a community which tries to live the Good News in joy and fraternity."

Fr. TIMMERMANS read a report on "Needs, changes and priorities in missionary activity" which are constantly evolving. The priorities differ, in this new perspective, from those of former times. In order to adapt to these changes, the need for up-dating missionaries becomes obvious. There is no lack of difficulties: tension sometimes between bishops and missionaries, the heavy burden of material structures, the generation gap, social and political implications, the decrease in and the ageing of personnel.

There were also papers and discussions on: missionary activity on the national level (F. DEVILLE), diocesan (H. BOON), missionary training (de CLEENE), the missionary's contribution to development (K. VERCAUTEREN), fostering vocations (A. BERCHMANS), Spiritans in diocesan work (A. BODARD).

It was generally agreed that the meeting had been enriching and that similar meetings should be arranged regularly. (Prov. Bul)

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UNITED STATES Centennial Celebrations

Centennial Commerative Ceremonies have been taking place with great success in most of our communities and are still continuing. A number of very flattering public statements have been made on this occasion. That of President Nixon was widely acclaimed. A letter was received from Cardinal VILLOT, Secretary of State,

expressing congratulations and greetings from the Holy Father, Many State Governors have expressed their goodwill and gratitude towards the Congregation.

The Superior General arrived in Boston from Canada on September 1st. He visited our works in the Eastern Province, assisted at several commemorative ceremonies and met the Provincial Council on September 18th. He also went to Puerto Rico. In the Western Province he took part in the first Regional centennial celebration which took place at Opelousas, on September 21st. On the 29th, at Washington, he attended a formal reception, together with the two Provincials, Fr. CONNORS and Fr. HARCAR, which was attended by the Apostolic Delegate, the ambassadors from our mission countries, members of Congress representing the states where we work, and several confreres.

MEXICO - Fathers HARCAR and REARDON from the Western Province, and Fathers CLYNES and CROWLEY from the Eastern Province, attended celebrations for the second centenary of the mission at Talanjas, where the building of the church was completed in 1772. All the confreres present assisted the Bishop at the Thanksgiving Masses which were concelebrated with the local clergy on July 25th and 26th. As part of our territory is being taken over by the government for a dam and that will result in a large displacement of the population, the Bishop has asked us to take charge of another region adjacent to the one where we are at present.

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CONGO

Episcopal ordination - Mgr. SINGHA

On Sunday, 6th August, Mgr. Georges SINGHA was ordained Bishop. He is the new bishop of Fort-Rousset, succeeding Mgr. Benoit CASSONGO, who in turn had succeeded Mgr. Emile VERHILLE C.S.Sp. The prelate officiating was Mgr. Mario TAGLIAFERRI, Apostolic Delegate for the Popular Congo Republic, assisted by Most Rev. Emile BIAYENDA, archbishop of Brazzaville and Most Rev. Joachim NDAYEN, archbishop of Bangui. Also present were Most Rev. Fernand ANGUILE, archbishop of Libreville (Gabon), Most Rev. DE LA MOUREYRE C.S.Sp. bishop of Mouila (Gabon) and Fr. PANNIER C.S.Sp. Vicar General of Pointe-Noire. The government was represented by Mr. Alphonse GANGOUE, Minister of Agriculture.

The diocese of Fort-Rousset, separated from Brazzaville on December 21st 1950, is the largest in the Popular Congo Republic, but at the same time it is the least populated, which makes the ministry difficult for the bishop and priests concerned. It has approximately 250,000 inhabitants, of whom there are more than 25,000 Pygmies and an area of 235,000 sq. kilometres. The catholic population numbers about 90,000, for whom the ministry is assured by the presence of about 40 priests, 30 sisters and 7 brothers. There are 19 parishes. (SEMAINE)

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ANGOLA

Golden Jubilee of Fr. ESTERMANN

On the 28th of October this year, Father Charles Estermann celebrates the Golden Jubilee of his ordination. The greater part of his 50 years of priesthood were spent in Angola, where he arrived two years after his ordination and where he has lived up to now, becoming "the most noted ethnologist who has worked in Angola." (Manuel Viegas-Guerreiro).

His extraordinary qualities as a missionary and as a scholar were given full scope in the vast and typical region of South-West Angola: typical in its countryside and in its inhabitants, it has today attracted world attention by a large project in

papers on consideration of Pan-African laity structures and relations with other Christian Churches, Moslems and Animists. Finally, on Friday, 18th August, the last day of the Symposium, the voting on the final resolutions took place, of which we quote below the main points:-

The Symposium approves, in principle, the proposals presented by the Provisional Pan-African Committee regarding the setting up of Laity Structures at the Pan-African level. Moreover, it endorses the work of the committee and requests it to appoint a General Secretary, have a permanent secretariat, and thus work towards the creation of an All-Africa Laity Council. The Symposium counts on the collaboration of SECAM and that of the Provisional Committee in order to realise this project.

To promote dialogue, the Symposium expressed the wish that National Councils of the Laity, Pastoral Councils and Parochial Councils should be set up as soon as possible, where they do not already exist...and that the laity be called to participate on a consultative basis in the work of the Presbyteral Councils and the Episcopal Conferences. The Symposium recommends the participation of the laity in material and financial matters, e.g. in drawing up and supervising the budget.

With regard to promoting development in Africa which would be truly African, the Symposium favours research in the fields of African anthropology, sociology, traditional religions, rites and ceremonies of African societies.

Still with regard to the promoting of African values, the Symposium recommends the use of mass media in the field of education, a 'permanent' education for adults and children,

With regard to the formation of the laity, which the Symposium regards as a matter of priority, the following points are stressed: Spiritual life, preparation for civil and political life, professional and technical training, rural development, literacy campaigns and mass education. The Symposium wishes that the training also include the promotion of the ecumenical spirit and knowledge of Islam, especially where Christians and Moslems live together.

On the subject of injustices in the world, the delegates unanimously declared that the Church in Africa must attentively follow the tragic events taking place there, defend the individual and condemn violation of basic human rights. On the other hand, the majority of the members felt that it is difficult for an assembly such as SECAM to be informed enough on the details and background of a specific situation to be authorised to make a judgement and to issue an official public statement. The Symposium agreed to set up a committee for African External Affairs which would study individual cases of injustice and oppression in Africa.

New Permanent Committee: Cardinal ZOUNGRANA (Ouagadougou, Upper Volta) was re-elected for three years as President of SECAM. Mgr. John AMISSAH (Cape Coast, Ghana) was re-elected First Vice-President and Mgr. Jean ZOA (Yaoundé, Cameroons) Second Vice-President. Bishop Leon LESAMBO (Inongo, Zaire) and Maurice OTUNGA (Nairobi) were elected as new members of the Permanent Committee.

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NIGERIA District of Makurdi

The diocesan paper, The Northern Cross, has appeared again, following four years in 'limbo'. Mr. R. JOLLY, a lay voluntary worker, has accepted the post of editor and the first number promises well. A Nigerian is being trained at present, who will eventually take over as editor.

Ordination of Permanent Diaconates

Recently three new deacons were ordained in the presence of Mgr. Thomas MONGO, Bishop of DOUALA, by Mgr. Simon TONYE, his Coadjutor. In fact, the Bishop of Douala and his Coadjutor seem decided to appoint more and more deacons and they intend to place one in each parish. There is at present a total of ten permanent deacons in the diocese. The parish priests in these parishes seem to be very satisfied with their services. The main difficulty arises from the fact that deacons have a profession also, but they are beginning to find their own place, as it were, between the parish priest and his parishioners.

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WEST AFRICA Regional Bishops Association

Just as the English-speaking countries of East Africa have their own regional Bishops' Association - AMECEA - so English-speaking West Africa has now got together on a regional basis, with four countries - Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Gambia - forming a regional Bishops' Association, with a total of 14 ecclesiastical circumscriptions. Nigeria, which has 26 circumscriptions, is not, at least for the present, a member of the organisation. The President of the Association is Mgr. Francis CARROLL, Vicar Apostolic of Monrovia and pro-nuncio to Liberia. Fr. P. BURKE of Liberia is secretary and Fr. P. VAN DE LAAR of Kumasi (Ghana) is assistant secretary. (FIDES)

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Meeting of Secretariat for Non-Christians

The secretariat for non-christians organised a study meeting which was held from 29th to 31st August, on the "impact of civilisation and modern culture on religious life in Africa," especially in the urban zones and the university milieu. The Secretariat had asked that each of the African Episcopal Conferences appoint someone to maintain liaison with Rome and prepare a report on the religious implication of present-day changes in African society.

The discussions and the general conclusion dealt with the discovery of the traditional religions, the phenomenon that religious attitudes, apparently contradictory, can be found in one and the same person, the efforts being made to promote African values, Church-State relations in the African countries, christianity in relation to socio-political problems, the role of the laity in the dialogue with unbelievers, the importance of the urban apostolate, and the need for an overall pastoral plan.

The Secretariat will publish shortly the reports presented at Abidjan, with recommendations made to the Episcopal Conferences and to the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples. Though unbelievers may be relatively few in Africa, there is a certain atheism creeping in, based on material prosperity.

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REUNION Unemployment among Youth

The most worrying aspect of unemployment in Reunion is that it affects especially the young people. A recent report showed that 35% of those applying for jobs were under 25 years of age and that 47% of the under 20s were either partially or totally unemployed or were not looking for work. A large number of them leave

school knowing just how to read and write, and at most look for manual work. These young people who have gone through school without getting very much benefit from it, have become aware of the existence of aspirations, rights, needs, pleasures etc. which others, more fortunate than they, find the means to satisfy. They have a very strong sense of injustice regarding the fact that they are condemned to be the spectators in an evolution which offers more and more luxuries but which they would never be able to acquire, as their work would never make it financially possible. In spite of emigration, birth control, better schooling etc. there will be a growing number of youth without work in the coming years. On the most favourable hypothesis, Reunion will have 480,000 inhabitants by 1975, 521,000 by 1980 and 564,000 by 1985. There will be more than 100,000 jobs to create! If the situation continues as it is progressing now, it is probable that the young will no longer remain simply passive. Having nothing to lose, they will be ready for any adventure. (Croix-SUD)

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BRAZIL

Pope's Message to the Brazilians

On the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of Brazil's independence, a message was sent by the Holy Father, from which we quote the following passage:

"The event which is commemorated today is not something that just happened once for all and is now finished with. It is a continual growing, an on-going process which is worked out from one day to the next. In this vital growth all concerned have their part to play, among them the children of the Church, since it is part of our fidelity to God that we should contribute to the indispensable progress of men in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

"Brazil has received the gift of faith and has become the cradle of a new people of God. But faith, which illuminates everything with a new light and makes known God's Will regarding the integral vocation of man, is a commitment, both for individuals and for groups alike: a commitment to everything ordained by God, bringing with it a real sense of responsibility, inspired by charity and the will to co-operate towards the common good, seeking always and in everything, the justice of the Kingdom of God.

"This should be reflected in individual behaviour and in social life, in the sanctity of the family and in united effort towards promoting collective order and progress to overcome want and to realise more and more a fraternal equality among all members of the community, thanks to a general participation in all the rights and responsibilities of its citizens."

(OS.ROM.)

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On the occasion of the 25th Mission Week held in BURGOS from the 7th to the 11th August 1972, Mgr. B. GANTIN paid a moving tribute to Mgr. TCHIDIMBO, adding: "We can imagine only too well what suffering he must be undergoing at the present time, in darkness and in silence."

The Secretary-adj. of Propaganda Fide continued: "Will churches in the West have sufficient detachment to be able to accept the particular characteristic slant which the Young Churches put on theology and liturgy?"

"This is a question which is worrying the Church in Africa.

+++++N E C R O L O G Y+++++

The list of confreres who have died since the publication of our last issue (June 1972, No. 29) appears in the General Bulletin No. 764, July-August 1972. To this list, we add the following:

- Brother Jakobus HUTHMACHER, of the District of Bethlehem, died in Bethlehem on August 25th 1972, at the age of 87. He had been professed for 65 years.
- Brother Sylvestre CRIBIER, of the Province of France, died at Chevilly on September 30th 1972, at the age of 66. He had been professed for 41 years.

+++++R. I. P.+++++

continued from p.11

"One of the points on which co-operation between the local churches and the missionaries becomes difficult seems to be this. The most subtle form of imperialism is when the foreigners desire to plan and execute the pastoral practice of the local church instead of leaving all this to the legitimate responsibility of the Africans themselves.

"The Africans are hoping for helpers who will remain at their posts, who will teach the people to love and not to uselessly oppose the responsible African clergy, who will be prepared to adapt the theological trends of their country of origin and who will humbly devote themselves to seeking a theological approach, a catechism, and a liturgy appropriate to Africa.

"Today, the religious institutions are renewing themselves by a return to their sources - the Spirit of their Founders and the Gospel. This should help to open them up also to the new attitudes they should adopt today in relation to the coming-of-age of the local churches. This is the most important way in which their communion with the local church can be realised."

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Mission in the context of Religions & Secularisation

The following passage is reproduced from an address given by the missionary-anthropologist W. REYBURN at the Driebergen Conference (Aug 19-23):-

"Missionaries have taken pains to establish the fact that they are not attempting to impart their national backgrounds be these British, American, Belgian etc. However, is it really relevant any longer? If all Westerners live largely under the presuppositions of the technological society and the world market economy, what difference does it make if the brand is British, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Chinese or American? Is it at all realistic that missionaries from the West could convince Hindus in India that they are in India to bring a spiritual way of life? Not according to many Hindus. Does the personal devotional life of the average Christian churchman or missionary impress people in the East? It is most doubtful. Do most Christians concerned with the communication of God's love in Christ whether in the West or the East share their faith with non-Christian friends at the request of the latter? I doubt it very much. Do foreign missionaries in Africa, or Latin America live in such a style of life that nationals in those continents could gain from them only spiritual advantages? I don't see much evidence for this. The advantages are nearly always opportunities to join the technological society or to win some used products of the market economy."....