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SPIRITAN NEWS

Nov.-Dec. 1986

No. 64

CONGREGAZIONE DELLO SPIRITO SANTO - CLIVO DI CINNA, 195 - 00136 ROMA

The new General Council

The new General Council has settled down to work, but has not had an easy beginning, with the death of both the General Secretary and the Superior General's father.

The members of both the new General Council and the old were at the Generalate by 15 September, and they met together for a week to ensure a smooth handover. The new Council then continued to meet on their own to get to know each other and to attend to immediate business. On 6 October they went to Ariccia, near Rome, for the annual retreat, but on the following day Fr. Haas received news of his father's death and had to leave for France. On the morning of the 9th, the General Secretary, Fr. Bert Noonan, who had been doing the retreat with the Council, was found dead in bed from a heart attack during his sleep. That was the end of the retreat as such, as part of the Council returned to Rome for the funeral arrangements.

The funeral Mass was held in the Generalate chapel on the evening of the 10th, with the First Assistant, Fr. Michael Doyle, presiding, in the absence of Fr. Haas, who was presiding at his father's funeral in France on the same day. Thirty priests concelebrated, including those from the French Seminary, and many Sisters from nearby convents were present, as well as lay people. The homily was given by Fr. Joseph de Boer, as a member of the previous Council, with whom Fr. Noonan had worked so closely. Prayers were also offered for Fr. General's father and for Brother Pantaleon Deneke, who had died in Germany on the same day as Fr. Noonan and who had worked for 58 years at the French Seminary in Rome. Fr. Noonan's body was later flown to England, where he was buried near Bickley on 21 October, with Fr. Denis Wiehe representing the Generalate and presiding at the Mass. Bert's 80-year-old mother, Mrs. Lucy Noonan, was present and did one of the readings at the Mass the evening before, presided over by the Provincial, Fr. Tom Friery.

Fr. de Boer reappointed General Bursar

The eighth member of the General Council, the General Bursar, is not elected by the General Chapter but by the Council, in consultation with the Major Superiors. The Major Superiors who were at the Chapter were consulted then, and the others have since given their opinion by letter. There was almost unanimous support for the outgoing General Bursar, Fr. Joseph de Boer, whose financial report was much appreciated by the capitulants, and he was reappointed for a further six years by the Council on 25 November.



Fr. Joseph de Boer

Fr. de Boer, 59, who has two brothers also in the Congregation, was born on 12 August 1927 at Haarlemmermeer, Holland, was professed on 5 Sept. 1949 at Gennep, and was



The new General Council at Chevilly: (from left) Frs. Nicolas, Wiehe, Okoye, Haas, Doyle, Gonçalves, Marzinkowski.

ordained on 18 July 1954 at Gemert. He went first to Angola, where he did parish work at Libolo (1955-60), and was then transferred to Bagamoyo, Tanzania, where he worked at Lukange (1961-63) and Msongozi (1963-70), before being named District Superior. After nine years as District Superior, he came to the Generalate in 1979 as financial officer for the Foundations, and on 1 October 1980 he was named General Bursar.

Responsibilities of the General Assistants

The following are the responsibilities that have been assigned to each of the General Assistants. Those in italics are the responsibilities within the Council, and the others are the areas for which each will be the correspondent:

Fr. Michael Doyle:

Research and Planning; New Forms of Membership; Ireland; USA/E, USA/W, Trans-Canada, Puerto Rico, Trinidad; Australia, Papua New Guinea.

Fr. James Okoye:

Formation; Foundations; Nigeria, Makurdi, Kwara-Benue; Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Ghana, WAF; Kenya, Kili-manjaro, Bagamoyo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, EAF.

Fr. Manuel Gonçalves:

Organization and Administration; Constitutions; Religious Life; Portugal, Spain; Angola, Cape Verde. With Fr. Marzinkowski: Brazil (apart from Tefé) and Paraguay.

Fr. Denis Wiehe:

Foundations; Letters to Major Superiors; Missionary Animation; England; Canada; Pakistan; Madagascar, Reunion, Mauritius, IOF.



Fr. Herbert Noonan

Death of General Secretary

Fr. Herbert Noonan, who died on 9 October while on retreat with the General Council, was born at Burnley, Lancashire, England, on 14 Oct. 1931, and so was five days short of his 55th birthday. He did his novitiate in France, making his profession at Cellule on 8 Sept. 1950, and was ordained at Upton Hall on 30 Oct. 1955. After obtaining an M.A. in French at Glasgow University, he went out to Makurdi Diocese, Nigeria, in 1962 and worked at Adikpo, becoming principal of St. Andrew's secondary school there in 1967. In 1970 he was recalled to England, where he became director and then superior at the junior scholasticate at Castlehead. In 1981-82 he worked as assistant novice master at the WAF novitiate at Bwiam, in the Gambia, and from 1982-85 he was superior of Helmshore and director of the vocations team in England. In Sept. 1985 he arrived in Rome to take over as General Secretary from Fr. Ted Holmes. Bert will be sorely missed at the Generalate as, apart from his efficiency, he was a very likeable confrere. As Fr. de Boer said in his homily at the funeral Mass in Rome, "Dear Bert, it was a pleasure to know you, to be with you, to work with you. . . We treasure in our hearts the memory of your kindness, your warm personality and religious example".

Fr. François Nicolas:

Formation; Constitutions; Religious Life; France, Switzerland, Poland, French Seminary; Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana; Algeria, Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea.

Fr. Peter Marzinkowski:

Justice and Peace; Information and Documentation; Missionary Animation; Germany; Congo, Bangui, Yaoundé, East Cameroon, Gabon, Zaire, CAF. With Fr. Gonçalves: Brazil (apart from Tefé) and Paraguay.

Fr. Joseph de Boer:

Relations with the Generalate Community; Holland, Belgium; Southern Africa; Tefé.

Visits

The following are the visits being made by the Generalate Team up to the end of February:

Fr. Haas will be away from 1 Dec. to 15 Jan., studying English in the United States. Towards the end of the period he will pay a visit to Haiti.

Fr. Doyle was away from 13-29 Oct., attending the USA/West Chapter and visiting informally the three Irish groups in the United States. He will spend the month of January in Paris, studying French.

Fr. Okoye and Marzinkowski were in Cameroon from 2-18 Nov. for the meeting of Major Superiors of Central Africa in Bertoua (10-14 Nov.). Fr. Okoye will spend the month of December in Paris, studying French, while Fr. Marzinkowski will study Portuguese in Brazil during the same period.

Fr. Gonçalves will be in Portugal for the second half of December, for the meeting of European Formators (15-20 Dec.).

Fr. Nicolas will be in Ireland for January to study English, and will then attend the District Chapter of Guadeloupe (1-7 Feb.) before making a short visit to French Guiana.

Fr. Wiehe was in England from 14-22 Oct. for the funeral of Fr. Noonan, and will spend the month of January in East Africa, where he will attend the first Chapter of the East African Foundation in Tanzania.

After their meetings in Sept.-Oct., the whole Council will be in Rome for meetings from 18-22 Nov., 23 Feb.-7 March, and 1 May-10 June.

At Notre-Dame du Gard



A selection of photos from the General Chapter was given in our last issue. Two of them were taken at La Neuville, where Fr. Libermann and his first missionaries lived from 1841-47. On the same day the group went on to Notre-Dame du Gard, 18 kms. west of Amiens, which was a house of studies of the Congregation from 1846-56. Fr. Libermann himself lived there from April to November 1848,

when he moved to Rue Lhomond after the merger with the Spiritans. He continued to visit the community regularly, and it was in the grounds of Notre-Dame du Gard that he was buried (until 1865, when his remains were transferred to Chevilly, and then in 1977 to Rue Lhomond). The house was originally a 12th-century Cistercian abbey, until the French Revolution, and after that it was occupied successively by Trappists, Fr. Libermann's missionaries and Cistercian nuns. It is now the mother house of the Auxiliary Brothers of the Clergy.



25th anniversary of Kongolo massacre

1st January 1987 will be the 25th anniversary of the massacre of 20 Spiritans at Kongolo, Zaïre, in 1962. The five years that followed the independence of Zaïre on 30 June 1960 were years of turmoil and civil strife in which 179 Catholic and 30 Protestant missionaries lost their lives. The Spiritans were killed by Gizengist soldiers who entered Kongolo after the withdrawal of troops loyal to Moïse Tshombe of Katanga. They were imprisoned for a night, taken out and flogged the following morning (1 Jan. 1962) in front of the junior seminarians, and then gunned down in a matter of seconds. Their bodies were thrown into the Lualaba River. A French doctor and a 70-year-old Belgian layman were killed along with them. Only one of the group escaped: Fr. Jules Darmont, who was pushed back into his cell by a sympathetic soldier. Of the Spiritans, the oldest was 61-year-old Brother Bernolophus Heemskerck, and the others were all priests, mostly in their 30's and 40's. (An account of the incident may be read in Fr. Koren's book *To the Ends of the Earth*, pp. 421-425, and Fr. Darmont's own 25-page report in the General Bulletin No. 701, 9 Feb. 1962.)

The small Belgian Province (85 members today) has never fully recovered from the loss of so many of its young missionaries at one blow. Volunteers from other Provinces came to its help in the District of Kongolo, and of the 32 Spiritans there today, 22 are Belgian, 3 French, 3 Dutch, 1 Swiss, 1 Canadian and 2 from the East African Foundation. Fr. Jules Darmont, now 60, is still there himself, looking after some 50 communities from his parish centre at Katea. A promising development is the start of a Zaïrean Foundation, which was officially recognized by the General Council on 7 April this year and has a dozen members doing their first cycle. In Belgium, the Spiritan missionaries who fell are commemorated (along with the others) at the Kongolo Memorial chapel in the grounds of our community at Gentinnes. This draws many visitors each year and is a centre for missionary animation in the country.



The 20 Spiritan missionaries killed at Kongolo on 1 Jan. 1962 (with their age and years of service in Zaïre).

News Items

Decisions of the General Council

The General Council

- on 20 Sept., approved that Fr. Eugene UZUKWU, hitherto First Assistant of **Nigeria**, should replace Fr. James OKOYE (now on the General Council) as Provincial until the Province's Chapter in 1987;
- on 20 Sept., approved the election of Fr. Jacobus GORDIJN as Provincial of **Holland** for a three-year term beginning on 20 Sept. (Fr. Siebren de LANGE had had to resign because of ill health, after four years as Provincial and seven on the Provincial Team. The Team now comprises Frs. Jacobus GORDIJN, Johannes HOGEMA, Clemens van KUIJK and Frans WIJNEN);
- on 24 Sept., extended the mandate of Fr. Albert CLAUS as Provincial of **Germany** from 7 February 1987 until the Provincial Chapter in June;
- on 31 Oct., confirmed the election of Fr. Clement F. LACHOWSKY as Provincial of **USA West** for a three-year term, as from 23 October;
- on 31 Oct., confirmed the election of Fr. Eamonn MANSFIELD as District Superior of **Mauritius** for a three-year term beginning on 31 October. (He was previously District Superior from 1978-84).

Fr. Timmermans named refugee coordinator

Fr. Frans Timmermans, Superior General for the past 12 years, has been appointed Refugee Pastoral Coordinator for the Southern African region, but will take up the appointment only next July, at the end of his year of study at Nijme-

gen. The appointment was made in October by IMBISA, the Inter-regional Meeting of Bishops of Southern Africa, which comprises nine countries, including South Africa, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The IMBISA General Secretariat is in Harare, Zimbabwe, and it is from here that the Refugee Office will operate, under the responsibility of the four Bishops who make up the IMBISA Refugee Commission. There are many refugees in the region because of guerrilla wars like those in Angola, Namibia and Mozambique, and the task of the Pastoral Coordinator will be a difficult one. He will have to try to recruit personnel as well as seek financial aid, and so would welcome volunteers for refugee work with him.

African Foundations meeting in Saverne

An important meeting, bringing together the superiors and formators of the African Provinces and Foundations, was held in Saverne from 25-28 June. Eleven of the 18 participants also attended the General Chapter, which began a few days later. Those taking part were Frs. Vincent Ezeonyia (Generalate), James Okoye, Eugene Uzukwu and Francis Akwue (Nigeria), Bernard Duchêne and Benedito Roberto (Angola), Daniel Macha, Tom McDonald and Damas Mfoi (EAF), Joseph Wollenschneider, René Tabard, Ferdinand Azegue and Benoît Diémé (CAF), John Hogan and Declan Dorr (WAF), Heinrich Kuckertz (SAF), Staf Leemans (Zaïre), Patrick Hollande (Senegal) and Fernando Coté (Kwara-Benué). All five novice masters were present, and four of the five were African. The main themes discussed were vocations, formation, mission, cooperation and inculturation, and some practical decisions were arrived at. Senegal, which formerly belonged to the WAF, will from now on belong to the CAF, with linguistic ties prevailing over geography. There will be three centres for theology - in Enugu, Brazza-

ville and Nairobi. It was requested that one member of the General Council be specifically responsible for African affairs. A research team on inculturation was set up, comprising Frs. Damas Mfoi, René Tabard, Eugene Uzukwu and James Flynn, and during the General Chapter these circulated their first questionnaire – on Poverty, Family and Community in an African context.

Kilimanjaro: Bishop Durning in plane crash

Bishop Dennis Durning of Arusha, three other Holy Ghost Fathers and a Sister escaped serious injury when their light aircraft crashed shortly after take-off on 10 August from a dirt strip at the Kijungu Mission on the Maasai Steppes in northern Tanzania. As the plane tried to gain altitude, it encountered a strong downdraft coming from the hill ahead, which it had always cleared easily. To attempt a turn would have proved fatal. As the plane was forced downward, the tops of the trees in the forest began brushing its undercarriage and its tail section was ripped off. Fr. Pat Patten, the pilot, turned the ignition off to avoid fire and almost certain explosion. The plane settled on the tree tops and then crashed to the ground on the end of one wing.

Bishop Durning sustained a cracked rib, and Fr. Colman Watkins, who was 50 years ordained in September, suffered a cracked collar bone. The Sister-Doctor aboard the plane, Sr. Genevieve, MMM, escaped unharmed and administered first-aid. Fr. Patten and Fr. Egbert Durkin, a former missionary in Arusha and later Provincial Superior of England, also suffered no apparent injuries. The villagers who saw the plane crash rushed to the scene, cutting a path through the forest, and helped the missionaries back to Kijungu on foot. It was not until three days later that they were able to receive hospital attention at Arusha, 240 kms. away. The mission plane was completely destroyed in the crash. This is a tremendous loss to the sick in more than 20 diocesan medical facilities scattered over 50,000 sq. kms. in the Arusha Diocese. The plane had been used to fly doctors and urgent medical supplies to these medical facilities and to bring serious cases to the hospital. It is not known how or when the plane will be replaced.

Switzerland

The new Provincial Council comprises: Frs. Claude Etienne (Provincial), Lucien Pochon (assistant, missionary animation), Charles Berclaz (bursar), Paul Reymond (secretary, formation) and Philippe Buttet (representative of Bouveret). In accordance with a decision of the Provincial Chapter in April, Bouveret is being phased out as a school and will become a centre for missionary animation. This year there are only two classes continuing their studies, and no new students will be taken. It is exactly 50 years (1936) since Bouveret was opened as a junior scholasticate, but, as in several other Provinces, a heavy investment of personnel in schools seems less attractive today, and vocations are sought rather at a later stage. Bouveret will continue its work for vocations, but in a different way.

The Swiss Province, and indeed the Congregation as a whole, lost an important benefactor with the death, on 20 October, of Dr. Edgar Schorer, who all his life devoted his many talents to the cause of the missions and their financial support. (His brother, Mgr. Lujo Schorer, of Propaganda Fide, is buried in the Spiritan plot in Rome.)

Historical background to the Constitutions

One of the more difficult votes at the General Chapter concerned the question of a historical introduction to the Constitutions. It was felt that history is always written from a certain point of view and that the point of view of the 'southern hemisphere' is not necessarily that of the 'north'. While an introduction to *The Spiritan Rule of Life* was accepted, it was decided, in a very close vote, that this should not be a historical introduction. An earlier proposal by Fr.

John Daly to print extracts from the 1734 Rule and Libermann's 1849 *Règlements* as an introduction had also been rejected. However, the Congregation does have a history and these two Rules are part of it.

The lack of a historical introduction to the new Constitutions or *Spiritan Rule of Life* is compensated for by a new edition of these two earlier Rules, with an account of their evolution by the editor, Fr. John Daly, and a commentary on Libermann's Rule by Fr. François Nicolas. It is entitled *Spiritan Wellsprings* and is published by the Paraclete Press. For all those about to study the new Constitutions it will prove invaluable as a background, and Fr. Timmermans has said of it: "I hope it will be widely spread in the Congregation. I recommend it warmly to all Spiritans." Copies may be ordered from Fr. Brian Gogan, Paraclete Press, 169 Booterstown Avenue, Co. Dublin, Ireland. The price is Irish £ 12.50, plus postage, but there is a 20% discount for orders of more than 20 copies.

Germany

Fr. Josef Theodor Rath, of Knechtsteden, has brought out the fifth and final volume of his history of the Congregation. Born in 1900 and now 86 years old, Fr. Rath has had a productive 'retirement', publishing the first volume in 1972 and the subsequent ones in 1974, 1980, 1982 and 1986. The five volumes together run to 2,076 pages. In the first two volumes he gave the early history of the Spiritans, from 1703 to 1800, and then the revival after the French Revolution until the merger with Libermann's Congregation in 1848. Volume III was devoted entirely to Libermann, his life and his work, and Volume IV carried forward the story until 1896. The fifth volume covers the present century, up to 1980, though the years since 1968 are not treated in great detail. This important history of the Congregation, in German, takes its place beside Fr. Henry Koren's *To the Ends of the Earth*, which is available both in English and in French.

Jubilarians

65 Years of Profession:

25 Mar. : Fr. Heinrich POHLEN (Alto Juruá).

60 Years of Profession:

15 Mar. : Br. Samuel DORSSERS (Holland).

60 Years of Priesthood:

12 Mar. : Fr. Jean HIRLEMANN (France).

50 Years of Profession:

19 Mar. : Brs. Inacio CAVALHEIRO (Portugal), Tomasz NARLOCH (Poland), Eligius van DORST and Maximus SCHLAGHECKE (Holland).

50 Years of Priesthood:

24 Jan. : Frs. Emile HAAS (Yaoundé) and Emmanuel MERCIER (Martinique).

2 Feb. : Fr. Joseph P. LUCEY (USA/E).

27 Mar. : Fr. José FONSECA LOPES (Portugal).

Our Dead

9 Oct. : Fr. Herbert NOONAN (Generalate), 55.
 9 Oct. : Br. Pantaleon DENEKE (Germany), 89.
 9 Oct. : Fr. Adolphe ALTENBACH (France), 82.
 15 Oct. : Fr. Theodor BANGE (Brazil S.), 70.
 17 Oct. : Fr. Serge VERRETTE (Canada), 44.
 31 Oct. : Fr. Edward F. DOOLEY (USA/E), 76.
 1 Nov. : Fr. Joseph SÜTTER (France), 89.
 13 Nov. : Fr. William P. O'CONNOR (Kenya), 61.
 15 Nov. : Fr. Thomas ROONEY (Makurdi), 62.
 17 Nov. : Fr. James J. BEAGAN (USA/E), 67.