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# SPIRITAN NEWS

May-July 1987

No. 67

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

## The West African Foundation

In the last two issues of *Spiritán News* we gave reports on the Central and East African Foundations, whose first novitiates began, respectively, in 1977 and 1973. In this issue we give a brief survey of the West African Foundation, whose first novitiate opened in 1980. The Foundation now counts 30 professed members, 6 novices and numerous aspirants. There have been no ordinations to the priesthood yet, but four are due next year. Two of the professed members are Brothers. Of the 30 professed members, 20 are from Ghana, 5 from Makurdi, 4 from Sierra Leone, and one from Kwara-Benue. The first Gambian is doing his novitiate this year.

After the successful launching of the East and Central African Foundations, the Major Superiors of West Africa, at their first annual meeting, in Dakar, from 25-27 April 1979 (with Frs. Gross and Daly representing the Generalate), decided that the time had come for a similar Foundation in the West. There were already some candidates available, and the Foundation was set up with six member Districts: Senegal, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Kwara-Benue and Makurdi. Senegal had previously been linked with what is now the Central African Foundation (CAF), but decided to join the new West African Foundation (WAF), which would thus be bilingual. Bilingualism in the novitiate did not survive the first two years, and Senegal reverted to training its candidates in the CAF. Its relation to the WAF in the post-formation period is now under discussion, in dialogue with the General Council.

The membership of the two Nigerian Districts of Kwara-Benue and Makurdi was also problematic, for there was already the Province of Nigeria East, as it was then called. After a meeting of the West African Superiors at the Generalate in September 1983, the name of the Province was changed to Nigeria, but it was left to the candidates themselves from Kwara-Benue and Makurdi to opt for membership in the Province or in the WAF. For the past two years Kwara-Benue's novices (five this year) have gone to the Nigerian Province.

At the beginning, Fr. John Hogan, District Superior of the Gambia, acted as Director of the Foundation, assisted by Fr. Jean Daviet, District Superior of Senegal. On 8 Feb. 1982, the General Council appointed Fr. Peter Newman, from Sierra Leone, as Director. A year later he was called to serve on the Irish Provincial Council, and since 11 Feb. 1983 the Director has been Fr. John Hogan, who by then was no longer District Superior of the Gambia.

### The novitiate (Bwiam)

The Foundation's first novitiate opened on 15 August 1980 at Bwiam, some 100 kms. (62 miles) south-east of Banjul, in the Gambia. The buildings, formerly a convent and parish house, were placed at the disposal of the Foundation by Bishop Michael Moloney of Banjul, and the arrangement was confirmed the following year by his successor, Bishop Michael Cleary. The novice Master, Fr. Hugh Davoren, of the English Province, was assisted by the late Fr. Joseph de Robillard, a Mauritanian who had been working in Mauritania. Both of them spoke English and French, and the novices were also expected to be bilingual. With this in view, the five English-speaking novices had done a preparatory year in Cameroon. The first six novices (four from Ghana, one from Makurdi and one from Senegal) took the habit on 9 September, the feast of Blessed Jacques Laval, and four of them made their profession on 15 August 1981.



The first four to be professed at Bwiam, 15 Aug. 1981: Francis Hammond, Matthew Amoako-Attah, Fidelis Faerenga and John Kwofie, with the late Fr. Noonan (left) and Fr. Davoren. All four are due to be ordained soon.

For the second year there were some staff changes: Fr. Bert Noonan (who died in October 1986 while General Secretary) replaced Fr. de Robillard as assistant novice master from June to December 1981. Although there was no novice from Senegal, it was hoped that the bilingualism would be maintained, and Fr. André Héroux, who had supervised the pre-novitiate WAF students in Cameroon for the two previous years, replaced Fr. Noonan in December. The team was joined in January by Fr. Benjamin Dara, of the Nigerian Province, as parish priest of Bwiam and novitiate confessor. At the end of the year, four from Ghana and two from Makurdi made their profession.

For the third year, as French was discontinued, Fr. Héroux went to Basse as parish priest and Fr. Dara became assistant novice master. In 1983 Fr. Declan Dorr, who had been vocations director in Ghana, replaced Fr. Davoren as novice master, and in 1984 Brother Conleth Tyrell, from Sierra Leone, became assistant novice master and bursar, replacing Fr. Dara. The novitiate will continue at Bwiam until 1989, when it will move to Ghana. A 123-acre plot of land has been acquired at Ejisu, 15 kms. from Kumasi on the road to Accra and, beginning in September this year, two Dutch Spiritans, Brothers Klaas Hettinga and Jan van Schaijk, with Brother Joseph Mbah of the Nigerian Province, will build a novitiate capable of accommodating 20 novices, and a house of philosophy for 40 students. The three Brothers are at present putting the finishing touches to the buildings for the Spiritan theologate at Enugu, Nigeria.

### Philosophy (Isienu)

Philosophy, after the novitiate, has been studied so far at the Nigerian Province's house of philosophy at Isienu, near



*The Nigerian house of philosophy at Isieniu.*

Nsukka, and will continue there until the new WAF house of philosophy at Ejisu is ready, probably in 1989. At present there are 12 WAF students at Isieniu.

After the two years of philosophy there is a year's missionary experience in a pastoral situation, before going on to theology. Seven students are doing this year at present: two in the Gambia, two in Yola Diocese (Nigeria), two in Ghana and one in Canada. Four of the seven are outside their own country, including the member from Kwara-Benue, who is doing missionary animation at the house of In'Afu in Canada.

### Theology (Gbarnga)

The first three WAF theologians began their studies in 1984 at St. Paul's major seminary, Gbarnga, in the Archdiocese of Monrovia, Liberia, where there were two Spiritans on the staff: Fr. James Peters, who was teaching theology at St. Paul's since it opened in 1974, and Fr. Michael Cahill, professor of Scripture and now rector. The WAF students live in their own residence about a mile from the seminary. For the first year Fr. John Hogan lived with them as director, and he was replaced the following year by Fr. James Dunne, who joined the staff of the seminary as professor of Church History. At present there are nine WAF theologians. These will complete their studies at Gbarnga, but from now on the theologians will study at the Spiritan International School of Theology (SIST), which is due to open at Attakwu, near Enugu, Nigeria, in September this year, with Fr. Eugene Uzukwu as rector.



*The major seminary at Gbarnga, Liberia.*

### Pre-novitiate

The District that has produced most candidates for the WAF so far has been Ghana, where some Spiritans who had been expelled from Nigeria after the civil war took up work in the Diocese of Kumasi in 1971. Before there was any talk of the WAF, Bishop Sarpong encouraged them to accept Spiritan vocations, and Fr. Declan Dorr was appointed director of vocations in 1975. Contact is maintained for three or

four years with secondary school students who express interest, and they are brought together for retreats twice a year. Since 1983 there has been a one-year residential pre-novitiate program, under Fr. Brian O'Mahony, at the Spiritan house built by Fr. William Butler in Bantama parish, Kumasi. There are eight postulants there at present. Other members of the community this year are the two Ghanaian Brothers who were professed last year and two WAF students doing their year of missionary experience.

In the District of Makurdi, where Fr. Henry Pass is director of vocations, postulants are sent for a final year to St. Peter's junior seminary, run by the De la Salle Brothers in the town of Yola. Eight postulants started the current year, and five the previous year. Two WAF students doing their missionary experience are on the staff of the seminary and live in community with Fr. Eamon McAteer in St. Mary's parish, Yola. In Sierra Leone and the Gambia there is no residential pre-novitiate at present, but Fr. Noel Murphy in Sierra Leone and Fr. Peter Conaty in the Gambia are vocations directors and maintain contact with prospective candidates.



*Ghanaian aspirants in 1982, with Frs. O'Mahony and Dorr.*

### West African Superiors' meeting

The annual meeting of the West African major superiors was held in Kumasi, Ghana, this year, from 5-7 May. Taking part were Frs. James Okoye (Generalate), Christopher O'Brien (Ghana), Robert Ellison (Gambia), Henry Pass (representing Fr. Griffin, Makurdi), Roderick Curran (representing Fr. Kearins, Sierra Leone), John Hogan (Director of the WAF), and Declan Dorr, James Dunne and Brian O'Mahony, of the WAF formation team. The main matters discussed were connected with the WAF: plans for the novitiate and house of philosophy at Ejisu; the year of missionary experience; the position of Senegal and Kwara-Benue; and, with the first ordinations coming next year, possible areas for first appointments.



*Participants in the recent West African meeting: (from left) Frs. Hogan, Curran, Dorr, Ellison, O'Mahony, Okoye, Dunne, O'Brien, Pass.*

## News Items

### Decisions of the General Council

The General Council

- on 10 April, confirmed the election of Fr. Fernando COTÉ as District Superior of **Kwara-Benué** for a second three-year term, beginning on 10 April;
- on 5 May, made the following **First Appointments** from the Province of Portugal: Fr. Manuel DE SA PAULA to Guinea-Bissau; Fr. Mário FARIA SILVA to Cape Verde; Fr. José Carlos DA CONCEIÇÃO COUTINHO to Angola;
- on 5 May, confirmed the election of Fr. Joseph HERZSTEIN as District Superior of **Kilimanjaro** for a second three-year term, beginning on 5 May;
- on 19 May, made the following **First Appointments** from the Indian Ocean Foundation: Frs. Wenceslas RABÉ, Jocelyn GRÉGOIRE and Placide MALO to Papua New Guinea;
- on 19 May, made the following **First Appointments** from the Province of Nigeria: Fr. Sebastian EHUJUO to Nigeria; Fr. Nicolas NNABUAKU to Zambia; Frs. Anthony AMADI and Venantius UMUNNAKWE to Zimbabwe;
- on 22 May, appointed Francis NAUGHTON as leader of the **Pakistan** group for a three-year term, as from 10 April;
- on 27 May, appointed Fr. Clement TEMBA (EAF) as Superior of the **Zambia** Group for a three-year term, beginning on 22 June;
- on 27 May, confirmed the election of Fr. Patrick J.T. LEONARD as District Superior of **Kenya** for a three-year term, beginning on 27 May.

### Haiti: North American Superiors' meeting

The North American superiors held their annual meeting in Haiti this year (16-19 March) to express support for the relaunching of Spiritan work there, after a 17-year absence caused by Dr. François Duvalier's expulsion of Haitian Spiritans in 1969. The meeting was held at Furcy, in a holiday house still owned by the Congregation in the mountains, an hour and a half's drive from Port-au-Prince. The house had been unoccupied for the past 17 years, but was repaired and repainted in time for the meeting, in which the following major superiors took part: Frs. Doyle (General Council), Adrien (Haiti), Bevan (USA/E), Gobeil (Canada), Kelly (Trans-Canada), Kichak (Mexico), Lachowski (USA/W), McQuillan (Puerto Rico), de Verteuil (Trinidad) and Woulfe (USA/Irish).

Each superior gave a report on his circumscription, and several issues were discussed, particularly formation and Justice and Peace. It was decided that a common, bilingual (English and French) novitiate would continue at Farnham, near Montreal, until at least 1993. It has not been held this year, as the minimum of five novices was not attained, but seven or eight are expected to start their novitiate on 1 August, in addition to possibly one from England and one from Australia. The formation program in Mexico is developing, with five Amerindian aspirants at the moment and four more expected in August. The meeting decided to recommend that Mexico become a full District, with special links to the Province of USA-West. On Justice and Peace, the meeting focussed especially on the issues concerning Haiti. It was urged that the Spiritan Washington Office on Haiti, under Fr. James Healy, should continue its work. One practical project adopted concerned the problems connected with the importation of rice to Haiti and especially its impact on the Artibonite Valley, where Spiritans will be working.

After the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier on 7 February 1986, the Congregation was invited to return to Haiti (cf. *Spiritan News* No. 62), and five Spiritans (two of them Hai-

tians) have already done so, under their superior, Fr. Antoine Adrien. The Superior General, Fr. Pierre Haas, visited the country for ten days in January to meet the bishops and discuss future Spiritan engagement. Fr. René Soler is engaged full-time in the Church's 'Mission Alpha', which is aimed at making three million people literate (in the local Creole language) in three years. The illiteracy of more than half the country's population of five million is seen as a major handicap to the development of democracy, after 29 years of dictatorial rule. The Congregation is taking up work in the Diocese of Gonaïves, as this seems to be the one most in need of pastoral personnel. A community will be based here at Pont-Sondé, with the pastoral care of some 100,000 people. A Spiritan house is to be built in Port-au-Prince for pre-novitiate students, and the meeting voted to help finance this with a loan at a modest rate of interest. Several aspirants have already presented themselves.

### Poland

Fr. Leon Zaremba, Provincial of Poland, died on 17 April, at the age of 69. He had been Provincial from 1965 to 1970, and again from 1985 until his death. Born in 1917, he went to do his novitiate in France in 1937 and was in France throughout the War, being ordained at Chevilly in 1943. He returned to Poland in 1948 and was teaching at Puszczykowko when he was imprisoned from November 1949 to March 1951. He subsequently served as superior in several of the Province's houses apart from his two periods as Provincial.

### Ireland

Fr. Michael Doheny suffered a stroke in mid-March in Cleveland, U.S.A., and his brother, Fr. Kevin, who arrived from Ethiopia to visit him in hospital, had himself to undergo an urgent operation for appendicitis in the same hospital. They both travelled back to Ireland on 30 April, but Fr. Michael is still paralysed and unable to speak. For the past twenty years, both have been deeply involved in relief work in various countries. Fr. Michael, 72, worked in Nigeria from 1945 to 1958, was director of theologians in Kimmage in the 1960's, and since 1968 has worked for 'Concern', a relief organization founded by Fr. Raymond Kennedy as 'Africa Concern' during the Biafra War. After the war it dropped the 'Africa' from its title, and Fr. Michael has worked mainly in Bangladesh. He set up 'Concern' projects in various other countries and also became an expert cameraman, making films that have brought the needs of refugees and the famine-stricken to the notice of viewers in Europe and America. Fr. Kevin, 62, also worked in Nigeria (1955-70), helped organize the airlift of food during the civil war, did relief work in Ethiopia (1972-79) and Zambia (1980-82), and since 1982 he has been the coordinator for Cheshire Homes for the handicapped in Africa.

### Trans-Canada: Lay Spiritans

In all the General Chapters since 1968 there has been mention of Spiritan Associates or Lay Spiritans, and the new Rule of Life also speaks about them, though rather briefly. They are in fact a new phenomenon in the Congregation, and relatively few Provinces have experimented with an Associate program. One of the first in the field was Trans-Canada, where the Superior, Fr. Michael Doyle (now First Assistant of the Congregation), on Pentecost Sunday 1974, invited Dr. Dermot McLoughlin and his wife Deirdre to consider joining the Spiritans as lay associates. Dr. McLoughlin had been educated by Spiritans at Rockwell College, Ireland, and had served as a doctor in Nigeria; Deirdre, a physiotherapist, had also worked in Nigeria and her brothers had been educated at Blackrock College. They had both been looking for a deeper form of religious and social commitment, and welcomed the idea of a link with the Spiritans. They were formally accepted as lay Spiritans in early 1975, after getting permission from their four sons, whose lives were also go-



*Dr. Dermot McLoughlin and his wife Deirdre at the Generalate with Fr. Haas (right) and Fr. Doyle.*

ing to be affected. Their home (Ashling House) in Toronto became a centre for lay involvement. Margaret Laffey moved in with them in 1977, and these were the only three till 1982.

Five others are also now lay Spiritans: George and Judi Webster (four children), Frank and Ann O'Neill (three children) and Candida Igreja. These live in their own homes, not far away. They meet for community prayer every night at 10.00 p.m., and there is a three-hour community meeting every Thursday evening. There is no communal ownership, but rather mutual sharing, and help for those in need, within the community or outside. People in need are often given hospitality for shorter or longer periods. Social involvement is mainly among the poor, the unemployed, immigrants and drug addicts, and among the Cree and Ojibway Indians in the far north. Dr. McLoughlin spends several periods each year on the Indian reservations, and in the summer months he is joined by others of the group. There is also active involvement in anti-nuclear and peace issues. Dermot and Deirdre McLoughlin were in Rome in March this year to speak at a SEDOS seminar, and they have had several other such engagements, e.g. a five-day workshop on 'Spirituality for Activists' that they led in Kimmage, Ireland, in July 1985.

## Canada

This year the Spiritans' 'Collège Saint-Alexandre', near Ottawa, has been celebrating its 75th anniversary. It was on 1 January 1912 that it opened as a secondary school, with an orientation towards missionary vocations. For the previous seven years, however, it had already functioned as an agricultural school, after Fr. Limbour, encouraged by the Superior General, Mgr. Alexandre Le Roy, had bought the property in 1905, to establish the Congregation in Canada. About 60 students attended it during those seven years, and it developed rapidly after becoming a full secondary school. From 1915 to 1971 it was affiliated to the Faculty of Arts of Laval University, Quebec, and its successful students earned a baccalaureate in arts. In 1971 it ceased taking boarders, and today it caters for some 700 day students. From 1933 to 1963, part of the College functioned as a junior scholasticate, giving 46 Spiritans in 30 years. From a College staffed wholly by Spiritans, it is now staffed mainly by lay teachers, and there are at present only four Spiritans on the staff (two Fathers and two Brothers), with 33 lay teachers. The Spiritans continue to provide the pastoral care and religious animation. There have been several functions to mark the 75th anniversary, including two talks by an eminent past student and well-known theologian, Fr. Roger Tillard, O.P.

On 2 February, in the College's chapel, the Province accepted five new lay Associates: Denise and Raymond Labelle, Claire and Jean-Paul Tremblay, and Donna Pittner. The two first Associates, Maria and Conrad Voisard, spoke on what Libermann has meant to them since they became Associates in 1977.

At a general assembly on 6 February, the Province voted to enlarge the buildings of In'Afu ('Holy Spirit' in the Nigerian Igala language) at Saint-Esprit, some 60 kms. north of Montreal. The original farm buildings here were bought in 1972, and have since been used as a meeting place for groups of young people. Over the years the numbers coming for weekend spiritual sessions have increased, and the added accommodation will allow for further development. Three Spiritan Sisters help the four Spiritan confreres here in the animation of these groups.

## Jubilarians

### 65 Years of Profession:

- 3 Oct. : Frs. Louis-Marie GUILLEMIN (France) and Marcel COULIER (Belgium).
- 10 Oct. : Frs. Michael COMERFORD and Eugene GRAHAM (Ireland).
- 19 Oct. : Bishop Richard ACKERMANN (USA/E).
- 1 Nov. : Frs. Georges LE FAUCHEUR and François LE ROUX (France).

### 65 Years of Priesthood:

- 23 Sept. : Bishop François de LANGAVANT (France).
- 8 Oct. : Fr. Daniel MURPHY (Ireland).

### 60 Years of Profession:

- 8 Sept. : Frs. Gabriel BERTHAUD, Paul BREUVART, Louis PALUSSIÈRE (France), Frans MERTENS, Alphonse VERBIST (Belgium), Claude CAROFF, Raoul HOARAU (Reunion), Yves BARBOTIN (French Guiana), Achille ROBIN (Martinique) and Maurice SEYSSENS (Kongolo).
- 10 Sept. : Fr. Cristobal VALDEZ (Trinidad).
- 29 Oct. : Brs. Didacus BOTERMANS, Rufus TOURNÉ (Holland) and Nereus MEYER (Guadeloupe).
- 8 Nov. : Fr. Ernest IZARD (France).
- 19 Nov. : Fr. Louis DIDAILLER (France).

### 60 Years of Priesthood:

- 28 Oct. : Frs. Georges LE FAUCHEUR (France), Christianus SPAANS (Holland) and Louis LE CHEVALIER (Reunion).

### 50 Years of Priesthood:

- 8 Sept. : Frs. Charles CONNORS (Puerto Rico), Richard F. WERSING (USA/E), George A. HARCAR, Edmond J. LEONARD and Kenneth F. MILFORD (USA/W).
- 26 Sept. : Frs. Jacques BERTRAND (France), António Joaquim SILVA (Angola), José FELICIO and António GALHANO (Portugal).
- 3 Oct. : Frs. Auguste DURAND, Emir GAULARD, Henri GEISS, Joseph KIENNER, Louis LE HUNSEC, Joseph MAHÉ, Jean PICHON, François VALLÉRY-RADOT (France), Antoine GRUBER, Jean-Baptiste SCHMITT, Léon THEILLER (Yaoundé), Antonio MASSÉ, Fernando MICHAUD (Canada), John BANKS (England), Jérôme DIETERLEN (French Guiana) and René TRICLOT (Martinique).

## Our Dead

- 9 April : Fr. Gerardus SCHRAMA (Holland), 78.
- 17 April : Fr. Leon ZAREMBA (Provincial of Poland), 69.
- 20 April : Fr. René LANNUZEL (Senegal), 47.
- 1 May : Fr. Egbert DURKIN (England), 74.
- 5 May : Fr. Egon OFER (Brazil Central), 50.
- 10 May : Br. Stephen BORES (USA/E), 83.
- 13 May : Fr. Alfons KELLER (Germany), 74.
- 21 May : Fr. Gildas LE DROGO (France), 65.
- 23 May : Fr. Joseph P. MORONEY (USA/E), 74.
- 25 May : Fr. Michel TRICLOT (Martinique), 82.
- 30 May : Br. Matthew MOLLOY (USA/E), 81.