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# SPIRITAN NEWS

Jan.- Feb.1993

N° 95

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

## Editorial

### *JUSTICE and PEACE (Yesterday, today and forever)*

*Itaici 92 has stamped its mark on the whole Congregation and on every member. No more is it a mere placename, it is an obligatory point of departure for the renewing of our evangelisation, in keeping with our own special Spiritan way.*

*Along the road Poullart des Places and Libermann, our Founders, have mapped for us the "significant experiences" stand as an insistent call to us to be true to our charism, a summons to answer to the challenge, the pressing crises of our time.*

*Over the globe, in every place where by word and action the Spiritan witnesses to the love of Christ, the "significant experience" of Poullart des Places at Paris with students of the eighteenth century, that of Libermann protesting for the poor black of Africa is living still. But the blacks of our day have many names and are not just encountered in Africa. It does not matter where a Spiritan may work, his call is to take his place as a brother in real earnest in what every person is living - to experience what it is to be a human person. There are no bounds to Libermann's "make yourselves Africans with the Africans".*

*The call then to JUSTICE and PEACE is for yesterday, today and tomorrow. It asks constant renewal of effort from each one, it asks for community and personal up-dating after the headline set by Itaici.*

*When we focus on the cry of the peoples in today's world, Africa draws our special attention, asking us to be inventive, to look again at how we think, at how we act.*

*There is happening in Angola, in Zaïre, in Liberia, in South-Africa, in Ethiopia, in others too - all places where Spiritans actually are working, the struggle of Calvary - bonfires ablaze with hate, with violence - leaving behind them famine, death, corruption.*

*Father Bernardo BONGO, General Councillor,  
"Justice and Peace" Service.*

## Europe: Youth - A "New Continent"

With the first day of 1993 comes a new stage in the creation of the new, united Europe. We link this historical development with the discussion on the role of Spiritans in the new Europe which took place at the recent meeting of European Provincials and Formators. This is a suitable occasion to recount the experience of our confrere Eamon Mulcahy in working with young people. Eamonn presented this account as one of the "significant experiences" on behalf of the English Province at the General Chapter in Itaici.



*Fr Eamon Mulcahy with a young Brazilian*

Everything I say is limited to the context of the situation in Britain in the 1990s - a context which is secularised, materialist, consumerist and individualistic, not to mention Post-Christian and Post-Modern.

We have found that in our first contacts with young people it is our Community Life-Style and our personal witness to faith which has attracted them to take an interest in us, rather than the explicit missionary commitment of Spiritans "ad extra" overseas. It is no longer appropriate to present the idea of missionary vocations overseas directly to young people because the Church has, to a great extent, become irrelevant to their lives. It's very clear that many young people in Britain have become disenchanted and have distanced themselves from the Church...

### A new approach

While the Spiritan Rule of Life 18.1 which speaks of the

importance of "youth apostolate", is appropriate to our situation the reasons it gives are not. It simply says "... because the present situation of young people is crying out more than ever for social-educational works." Our approach to youth would be a missionary outreach to a marginalised group who are largely unevangelised, and, in some cases, it is certainly a question of First Evangelisation. So for us, Spiritans, Missionary Animation has become intrinsically linked with a growing awareness of youth as Mission.

### Genuine inculturation

Today, we talk of "Mission in six continents". Youth are like a seventh, unexplored continent, and just as if we were appointed to a Mission in Africa or Latin America or Asia, we would take time and effort to learn the language and culture of the local people, so too, Spiritans in youth ministry have to take seriously the need to learn the language of young people and understand their questions, their symbols and customs and traditions. There is a massively complex youth-culture and sub-culture that has to be studied and a whole process of inculturation to be undergone. That is why Youth Ministry in Europe cannot be simply equated with our works of education and our running of schools and colleges. It is much more specialised. Youth Ministry aims to lead the young person in a holistic and integral way to a personal relationship with Christ in the communion of the People of God. Youth Ministry is for young people, to young people, with young people and by young people.

### Our youth initiatives

Well aware that youth have moved from a "culture of obedience" to a "culture of experience", we try to help them experience the meaning of faith-in-action by personally involving them in a whole series of events and activities that continue throughout the year: "100 mile walks", residential retreats, workshops, Taizé events, Lourdes Pilgrimages, talks, Pentecost Youth weekends and fortnightly Youth Group Meetings. Our aim is to build up their faith, helping young people to become leaders themselves



*A European Pilgrimage-Walk*

and empowering them to minister to other young people.

Both in Scotland and in Manchester the stress on accompaniment and simply "being with" these young adults means that we also spend a lot of social time with them: going to the cinema together or a football match, going on an outing or some sport or just going for a pizza together has proved invaluable. Friendship has played a big part and a really great emphasis is placed on making our two vocation communities open and welcoming as a faith-center for young people who are searching for meaning in their lives. I can't stress enough that I think this openness and availability and warmth of welcome in the key, the secret of our work. Young people are thirsting for community and acceptance. They have an in-built radar system which detects instinctively when they are welcome and wanted and when they are not. Opening our houses so extensively to young people in Manchester and Glasgow may have let our privacy be invaded and our comfortable routine be disturbed but it has allowed us to be questioned and challenged by young people and to be renewed and rejuvenated by them! More than anything, for me this is a sign of life and hope for the future.

#### A Message From the European Provincials

"We have emphasized the necessity for a new evangelisation in Europe. In most of our countries we see that a significant number of people, especially of the young, are alienated from the Church. We do not believe that this new evangelisation can be effected simply by revitalising old structures or by bringing back old forms of Christianity. Evangelisation in the Europe of today means: listening patiently, observing sympathetically, offering the authentic message of Christ, allowing oneself to be evangelised by a diversity of peoples and communities.

We can play our part in this new Evangelisation by putting ourselves at the disposition of local Churches. To them we can bring the example of the dynamism of the Church in the third world. Our main resource in the difficult task of evangelising European society will be the renewal of our own Spiritan communities and the deepening of our own spirituality.

We are unanimously agreed that our involvement in European evangelisation should focus particularly on the following groups: young people, the "poor" in our society and foreigners, especially immigrants."

Gemert, November 1992

# S e d o s

Under the auspices of SEDOS, a seminar given by the Peruvian theologian Fr Gustavo Gutierrez and a Brazilian lay theologian, Mrs Maria-Clara Bingmer, was held at the Villa Cavaletti, Rome, from May 19th to 23rd 1993. 130 people attended. The occasion was the celebration of the 5th centenary of the evangelisation of Latin America and the Assembly of Bishops in San Domingo. The seminar consisted of a reassessment of the history of the former event and a theological interpretation of both, designed to throw light on contemporary challenges.

The Centre for Documentation and Research (known by the initials of the equivalent French title, SEDOS,) began as a result of informal meetings between seven Missionary Institutes during the Second Vatican Council. Today it comprises eighty Missionary Societies and Congregations, of men and women.

A permanent Secretariat was set up in 1964. Spiritans have helped greatly in the development of the organisation through our Irish confrere, Fr William Jenkinson, who became Executive Director of SEDOS in 1980. He has just completed a twelve-year term of office and leaves with the warmest appreciation of all who benefitted from his work there.

Fr Jenkinson has made a significant contribution, with the help of many collaborators, towards establishing SEDOS as a research and information agency. It has also been known as a place of great freedom of expression and one where a hearty welcome was always to be found. We can follow the evolution of missionary theology and practice since the Council in the pages of SEDOS publications: there is a monthly bulletin and many conferences and seminars whose proceedings have been collected and published in "Mission In Dialogue" (Orbis 1981) and "Trends In Mission" (Orbis 1991). The International Bulletin of Missionary Research named "Trends In Mission" as the most significant book in the field of missiology in 1991. Women now share equal responsibility with men on the executive committee of the organisation and alternate with men every three years as President.

Fr Jenkinson will be remaining in residence in Rome where he will take up his new duties on April 1st next as Superior of the Generalate Community.



*Fr.W.Jenkinson and Mrs Bingemer*

## News Items

### Decisions of the General Council

The General Council

- on 21 December confirmed the election of Eamon McCANN as leader of the International Group in Pakistan, for a term of office of three years, from 1st January 1993.

- on 8 January confirmed the election of Fr Augustine SHAO as Provincial of the Province of East Africa, for a second term of office of three years, from 11th January 1993.

- The next meeting of newly-appointed Major Superiors will take place at the Generalate from September 19th to 25th, 1993.

- The General Secretariat has published the official texts of the Itaici General Chapter. New editions of the Administrative Guide and of the Official Directory are being printed.

### General Council Calendar (supplement to no.94)

Frs Bongo, Castriani and Wijnen:  
Language courses in January

Fr Schouwer: Visit to Ethiopia, February 3rd to 20th.

Fr Kelly: USA, February 8th to 27th.

Fr Odigbo: EAP Chapter, January

Fr Jolibois: Visitation: Guyana, Haiti and Guadeloupe (Chapter), 10th January to 12th February.

Fr Dias: Fribourg, January.

### Meeting of Formators in Carcavelos, Portugal

There are about 70 students in formation in the European Provinces: Portugal: 20; Ireland: 18; France: 17; Germany-Croatia: 9; Switzerland: 3; England: 2; Spain and Belgium: 1. There are 8 students from other circumscriptions: WAF, FAC and Nigeria. The international Novitiate in Dublin has begun with 5 Novices: 1 German, 2 French, 1 Irish. Apart from the various items concerning formation, a number of issues regarding youth and laity were discussed: the "Youth and Mission" teams at Chevilly and Strasbourg; missionary laity in Spain; mission co-operation in Swiss Romande; educational trips to the third world and the "Medstanders" project in Holland. Mission in Europe was also discussed and certain priorities

established: Eastern Europe; Youth; Immigrants and Refugees; Drug Addicts; help for the Polish Province. A meeting at Chevilly for students in formation is planned for Easter. This is intended to foster mutual acquaintance and to strengthen common Spiritan identity in the light of the Pascal mystery.

### Meeting at Blantyre (Malawi)



*The 4 countries of the Region*

A meeting was held at Blantyre from

November 16th to 19th 1992 of the leaders of the Zambia international group (12 Spiritans), and of the groups in Malawi (6 Spiritans), Zimbabwe (12 Spiritans) and the District of Southern Africa (27 Spiritans).



Attending the meeting: from left to right: Frs C.Kennedy, J.Hogan, J.Foley, D.Thornon, B.Wiederkehr, J.Devine, H.Kukertz, D.O'Connor, C.Temba, J.Murphy, G.Odigbo (Généralat).

Following that of December 1992, the purpose of this meeting was to promote regionalisation and to strengthen the collaboration now made possible by improved communication and by the new relationship of the other countries to South Africa. The practical consequence of this move towards greater co-operation was the setting up of formation procedures to deal with the increasing number of Spiritan candidates. A construction project is planned at Balaka, 120 km. from Blantyre, close to the location of a Consortium of religious congregations. This will house the first cycle of formation. A study has been conducted of the available resources in personnel and finances.

These efforts and commitments have led to the creation of a new Foundation known as SCAF (South-Central African Foundation) which is under the joint direction of the Superiors of the circumscriptions involved. In this Region the contributions of confreres from WAF (Malawi), Nigeria (Zimbabwe) and EAP (Zambia) are of note.

### Central African Republic

The festivities which will mark the centenary of the Church in Central Africa (Epiphany 1994 to Epiphany 1995) began in January at Bangui. Thousands of the faithful came together on the banks of the OuBangui on Wednesday, January 13th to welcome the Gospel as it arrived by river. It was on the 13th of January 1893 that Mgr Augouard arrived by pirogue from the Congo, accompanied by Fr Remy. One hundred years later, it was the parish priest of St Paul of the Rapids, Fr Piet Van Horne, who conveyed the Gospel, to the accompaniment of songs specially composed for the Centenary and of a message transmitted by the bush telegraph tom-toms. A large crowd gathered in front of the new church which will remain as a memorial to this anniversary.

Number of Spiritans  
on January 1st 1993: 3270

## Our Jubilarians

### 70 Years of Profession

11 April :Fr.Joseph-Theodor RATH (Germany)  
21 June :Br.Leutfried ROEBEN (Canada)

### 65 Years of Profession

19 March :Br.Gondulphus JANSEN (Nederland)  
19 March :Br.Pamphilus MAAS (Nederland)  
09 April :Fr.Josef STOCKER (Germany)

### 60 Years of Profession

09 April :Fr.Friedrich GILB (Germany)  
09 April :Fr.Friedrich WEBER (Germany)  
09 April :Fr.Josef WIPPER (Germany)  
10 April :Fr.Arnold HUMPERT (Puerto-Rico)  
10 April :Fr.Gerhard SEIFRIED (Puerto-Rico)  
21 June :Br.Lutwinus STRICK (Germany)  
29 June :Br.Hermus Van EKERT (Nederland)

### 50 Years of Profession

13 June :Br.Raymond CHRETIEN (Canada)

### 60 Years of Priesthood

23 April :Fr.Josef STOCKER (Germany)  
25 June :Fr.Michael COMERFORD sen.(Ireland)

### 50 Years of Priesthood

10 April :Fr.Auguste RAIMBAULT (Cameroun)  
25 April :Fr.Alfons VERMEIREN (Belgique)  
04 May :Fr.Emile DISS (France)  
04 May :Fr.Aloyse HUTH (France)  
04 May :Fr.Jacques LACROIX (France)  
04 May :Fr.Léon LEDIT (France)  
04 May :Fr.Aloyse NOTHEISEN (Guadeloupe)  
04 May :Fr.Aloyse OBERLE (Réunion)  
04 May :Fr.Charles STOERKEL (France)  
04 May :Fr.Georges WACKER (France)  
09 May :Fr.Henricus BROUWER (Nederland)  
13 May :Fr.Cidalino Ferreira MELO (Angola)  
04 June :Fr.Yves TROADEC (France)  
19 June :Fr.Henry C. SCHOMING (USA/E)  
19 June :Fr.William J.McELROY (USA/W)  
26 June :Fr.Louis de COURCY (France)  
26 June :Fr.Christian FAVEREAU (France)  
26 June :Fr.Bernard GANDNER (France)  
29 June :Fr.Marcel BOETSH (France)  
29 June :Fr.Eugène COUDRAIS (Martinique)  
29 June :Fr.Albert KIM (France)  
29 June :Fr.Michel L'HOSTIS (Martinique)  
29 June :Fr.Marcel MECKLER (France)  
29 June :Fr.Jean MORIZUR (Congo)  
29 June :Fr.Emmanuel OLIGO (France)  
29 June :Fr.Julian WROBEL (USA/W)

### 30 Years a Bishop

28 May :Bish. Dennis Vincent DURNING  
(Kilimandjaro)

## Our Dead

04 Dec. :Fr.Lucien OSTERTAG (Madagascar), 59.  
25 Dec. :Br.Ignacio CAVALHEIRO (Portugal), 81.  
02 Jan. :Bishop Michel BERNARD (France), 81.