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SPIRITAN NEWS

January - February 1994

N° 100

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

Editorial

Communications.

We have arrived at the hundredth edition of our SPIRITAN NEWS. Congratulations ! A hundred editions filled with news about our Spiritan Life. Editions about fantastic achievements by confreres. Spiritan News has brought good news. Many thanks to those who started it, worked on it, collaborated with it.

But the question now is, how are we going to continue ? Communication techniques are developing quickly. Confreres are asking to be more rapidly informed. The people we are working with expect of us that we adapt to new circumstances. There are many possibilities available to adapt more to the modern situation. I had the opportunity to visit Duquesne University and was introduced to the different departments of communications. I was dazzled.

Is it enough to have the modern means ? No! From contacts with confreres living difficult situations, there is the discovery that through the Massmedia we are often given only a part of the truth. We have to go after the whole truth. That may ask of us that we have to develop our contacts outside the Congregation.

But whatever we do, we have to keep in mind what our Superior General said in his introduction to the New Major Superiors' Meeting: "... We are now a Congregation where we can communicate more easily. However we must deepen this communication and put it into action. It becomes a part of our life and of the life of the Church we are working in. Through communications we deepen our fraternal solidarity. We learn to respect each other and to respect each other's views. This demands a certain purification. By communication we are also called upon to analyze what we are experiencing. It is important that we profit more from the immense treasure of the knowledge we gained over the years. We must become more and more aware of the fact that the Gospel needs to be communicated, and this communication is no longer done by the spoken or written word, but above all by the quality, the truth and the witness of our personal life."

New developments in Communications still depend on the authenticity of personal witness. We shouldn't be afraid of them. They are required of us as missionaries committed to proclaiming the Kingdom of God.

Father Frans WIJNEN, General Councillor

The "Daniel Brottier" Communication Center

On June 26 1993 Mgr Pierre Sagna the Spiritan Bishop of Saint-Louis in Senegal, accompanied by many dignitaries, opened a Catholic Communication Center built where Father Brottier lived from 1903 to 1911. As a young missionary he did pioneering work in the media, launching at Saint-Louis the paper l'"Echo de Saint-Louis" and founding an organization with concert hall and its own band.



Opening the Center, Fr Vast and Mgr Sagna (on the right)

Father Jean Vast, a Spiritan who came to this north Senegalese town in 1950, true to the same tradition, has built up cultural activities particularly in the field of cinema. He is the founder of a film club, of the "Unir-Cinéma" review and a member of the managing committee of OCIC. He has always worked to promote the African cinema, taking part in major film festivals at Ouagadougou, Carthage and Dakar.

The Saint-Louis center, besides documentation, has film, video and radio studios and facilities for film-editing where Fathers Joseph Lambrecht and Armel Duteil work. They have produced video-cassettes to promote development and to combat AIDS. In June 1993 Father Vast received the "Légion d'Honneur". Father Lambrecht, in December last, carried off first prize from Multimedia, Rome, for two video-cassettes he had made.

So this multi-media center with print, film, sound, audio-visual and video has grown into a research and training center, leading in its field, greatly appreciated by the Senegalese government and other African countries because it integrates the media into the culture and supports the production of African works. The Center serves the dioceses also, mainly in catechetics.

Records of our Congregation

The Historic Archives of the Congregation owe their origin to the insistence of Fr Schwindenhammer, Fr Libermann's successor, that every community should send reports regularly to the Mother House and write up a daily diary. The result of this is that over the years a considerable deposit of written material is now preserved in the Archives.

When the General Administration moved in 1965 to Rome, it was decided, as most of the papers were written in French and Paris was more accessible, to keep the Archive in rue Lhomond. In 1981 they moved to more spacious quarters in Chevilly.

Any account of the Archives must mention Fr Adolphe Cabon, General Secretary 1919 - 1950, author of the "Notes and Documents" on Fr Libermann, and Fr Bernard Noël who worked for over twenty years up to 1987 classifying the documents of the Archives.

The core then of the Archive's present collection is the correspondence and reports and diaries mentioned above. There are, in addition, personal papers from members who were in responsible posts or were men of erudition. Such papers contain valuable material on different epochs and countries.

The Archives hold source materials that are important for the history and development of local churches in places where Spiritans worked. The oldest extant writings on some African peoples and regions are in reports and correspondence from Spiritans. For our own Provinces and Districts there is much information on their origin and growth. Do many of us, for example, know Spiritans once worked in Peru?

Retired confreres and those on leave come to work in the Archive, for example, for the centennial of a local African church. The number of researchers increases as interest grows in the history of the Congregation, or of one or other Province. Historians and history students come from universities in France and other European countries, the U.S.A., Canada and Brazil. Students from Africa, studying in Europe, come to work there.

Up-to-date techniques are beginning to be used to ensure the conservation of documents and under Fr Carrard the use of computerised methods is being initiated. It is a painstaking and immense undertaking, but vital to keep the history of the Congregation intact.

After 1962 the papers of the General Administration have been collected in Rome, the Generalate correspondence and the proceedings of General Chapters. There is also a collection of Newsletters and Bulletins of circumscriptions. Fr Vincent O'Grady works in this Service.



Fr Carrard at the General Archives, Chevilly

A reflection on the Archives

Why keep old records? To preserve our past, of course. Another reason is that the past prepares the present and the future. Those who neglect the past are apt to repeat its mistakes or at least to waste much time to re-invent the wheel because they forgot that the wheel was already in the store house.

Let me give a few examples of such wasted efforts. The 1968-69 General Chapter was held at a time when it was expected that a married clergy would be allowed in the Latin Rite Church. So the Chapter deliberated whether it could make room in the Congregation for married men as associate members. No one appeared to have recalled that this question had already been officially resolved by the Generalate in the 1980's when it admitted married men to such membership. And even before that in 1885 young African laymen were granted associate membership in East Africa. They were explicitly called a Third Order...

Archives are needed to make us aware of who we are and who we are going to be, because the course of the future lies to a large extent in the past. And archives should not only preserve our glories as shown in press releases, but also our faults and failures. One can often learn more from failures than from successes, for failures teach us what to avoid. For example, the contemporaries of the Blessed Fr Laval were kind of shocked when they saw him use despised and illiterate laymen and laywomen to teach the faith to others. That's why they were replaced as quickly as possible by Fathers and Sisters. They did not realize that they abolished a record of lay apostolate that sounds strangely modern.

Such example indicates that our archives need your old papers, no matter how valueless they may seem in your eyes. We can learn from your failures, too, and are not only interested in your successes.

Don't throw away all the old "rubbish" left behind when a Father or Brother dies or enters a nursing home.

Even if you don't find any money, please send the papers to the archives!

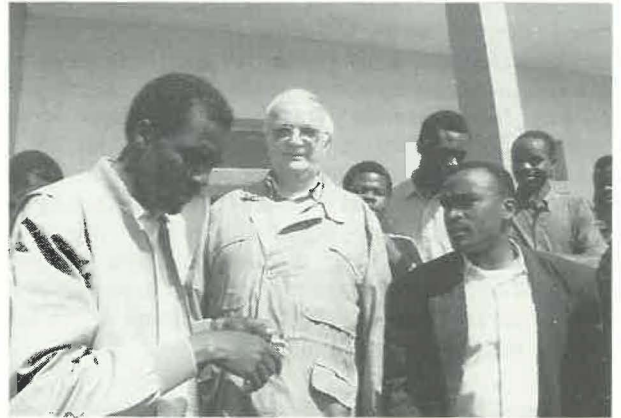
Fr Henry J. Koren, CSSp
(Spiritan Newsletter, USAW, Sept. Oct. 1993)

Solidarity Visits

Last December Father Schouver visited our confreres in Algeria and in Angola, where they live under stressful conditions. By this he wanted to let them see the entire Congregation's solidarity with them.

In Algeria six confreres are in one diocese at Oran, Sidi-Bel-Abbès and Mascara. They work in a chaplaincy for African students, pastoral ministry and social work: a Documentation Center, language teaching and, with religious Sisters, in a womens' training center. They have decided to stay on together with the priests, religious and Sisters who despite the threats of the fundamentalist Armed Islamic Group (GIA), support the little Christian communities and give an example of solidarity with the many equally threatened Algerians who keep up the work for democracy and the dawning of a different model of society. Our confreres have many friends who are Algerian Muslims. One Algerian mother of a family said she knew why she wished the Fathers and the Sisters to remain. It was from them she was able to get the advice and support her conscience looked for and which she felt she needed.

In Angola Father Schouver managed to visit Luanda, Huambo and Malanje, with Fr Cahinga, the Provincial and Fr Ducrot and met many confreres. He saw for himself the effects on the people of the UNITA - MPLA civil war: air raids, displaced persons, malnutrition. The impression remains with him of the sufferings of the people but also their positive response in struggling to survive, to look to the future, to shelter those in danger; the extraordinary organization of aid. At Malanje, Caritas Angola is feeding 28,500 children and 1,850 old people every day. Like the clergy, the religious and the Sisters, our confreres remain on, working courageously, although they suffer both in mind and body from the unending crisis. Father Schouver was able to meet bishops, seminarians and young Spiritans in training. Seeing the reality of things on the ground enabled him to appreciate the extent to which a kind of "disinformation" is propagated by international press agencies. Our Congregation, in unison with other interested Institutes, has intervened on several occasions, on behalf of humanitarian aid and peace talks.



*Frs G.Mbilingi, P.Schouver and M.Teixera,
Huambo Spiritan Seminary*

News Items

Decisions of the General Council

- December 15, nominated Fr Raymond GONNET Superior of the **Algeria Group** for a second mandate of three years with effect from December 1, 1993.
- January 14, confirmed the election of Fr Augustine MURPHY as Principal Superior of the District of **Ghana** for a second mandate of three years with effect from January 3, 1994.
- January 14, nominated Fr Raymond BARRY of the Province of Ireland, as **Information Officer** at the Generalate, for a mandate of three years with effect from September 1, 1994.

General Council Diary

General Council in session, Rome:

March 1-15 and May 1 - June 15 1994.

Fr Schouver: Algeria, Angola, Dec.'93; France, Nigeria and Makurdi, Jan.- Feb.'94; April 10 - May 8, Synod for Africa.

Fr Kelly: U.S.(W), U.S. Irish, Dec.'93; I.O.F., Mauritius, Jan. - Feb.'94, Ireland, Apl '94, Education meeting.

Fr Odigbo: Zambia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Kogi, Sierra

Leone, Dec.'93 - Feb.'94; Synod for Africa (April - May '94).

Fr Wijnen: U.S.(E), Canada, U.S.(W), Nov.- Dec.'93; France, Jan. - Feb.'94; Poland, April '94.

Fr Castriani: France, IOF, Jan.- Feb.'94; Brazil, Mar.- Apl '94.

Fr Bongo: Angola, Jan.; Portugal, Mar.'94.

Fr Jolibois: France, Jan.- Feb. '94.

Fr Dias: Fribourg, Jan.'94; Provincial Bursars of Europe, Dublin, Apl.'94.

The Generalate

On February 2nd our House Bursar for more than four and a half years, Fr Antoine SCHMITT, 72 years young, leaves us for Saverne. The Community and the General Council unite in expressing warmest thanks to Père Antoine. Ever sensitive to the individual and unflinchingly kind, he was a real father in our home, ensuring that no one lacked what he needed or felt forgotten. Brother Paul Mary HEINZ, already one of us, takes up the House Bursar's tasks on February 1st. Brother Paul VERGNAUD (France) recently joined us from the Congo Republic to look after maintenance in the Community. Our best wishes are with all three, in their new postings.

Meeting of Provincial Superiors of Europe

This took place at the Generalate November 22 - 27. Taking part for the first time were the recently appointed Provincials of Germany, Poland, Spain and Switzerland. Work sessions were based on reports from meetings of those responsible in each Province for the various sectors: training, the Spiritan Month, Spiritan magazines and publications, bursars, and the co-ordinators of J&P and those who work on vocations and animation. Certain orientations have been taken and decisions made. Spiritans doing studies at 3rd level or studying languages (particularly those from "the South") are welcomed. At Easter 96, there is to be a meeting of those in training. A pilgrimage on foot from Rome to Loreto is planned "in Libermann's tracks" for candidates to our Congregation in September 94. Meetings - for Spiritans who work in our schools, around Easter 94, for those working in the media and audio-visual, in May 95. The next Spiritan Month, "new formula" (three weeks, second week a Spiritan Retreat) is at Gentinnes in August 95. The meeting reaffirmed commitment to the undertaking in Rostock, in former East Germany. Two German and two Irish Province confreres are already appointed. Choosing the Generalate for their meeting gave the Provincials plenty of opportunity to consult and exchange ideas with the General Council. The next meeting is to be in Poland in November 1994.



The Provincials at the Generalate

Our Jubilarians

65 Years of Profession

- 05 April :Fr Wilhelm HAHN (Germany)
05 April :Fr Heinrich LEMMENS (USA/E)

60 Years of Profession

- 11 April :Fr Hugo BOSSONG (Germany)
20 May :Br Georges STARK (France)
09 June :Br Gordianus ROOSEN (Nederland)
09 June :Br Remaclus WOUTERS (Nederland)

50 Years of Profession

- 09 April :Fr René CALLAC (Gabon)

65 Years of Priesthood

- 16 June :Bishop Thomas BROSNAHAN (Ireland)

60 Years of Priesthood

- 08 April :Fr Wilhelm HAHN (Germany)
08 April :Fr Heinrich LEMMENS (USA/E)
17 June :Fr Jean-Claude CAROFF (France)
24 June :Fr Thomas F. CLERKIN (USA/Ir.)
24 June :Fr Frederick G. FULLEN (Ireland)
24 June :Fr Bernard KEANE (Ireland)
24 June :Fr Brendan T. TIMON (USA/Ir.)
29 June :Bishop Raymond de la MOUREYRE (France)

50 Years of Priesthood

- 04 June :Fr Arthur BOHN (France)
04 June :Fr Victor BOUTEILLER (France)
04 June :Fr Ferdinand COUPPY (Réunion)
04 June :Fr Robert DITSCH (France)
04 June :Fr Antony F. FROMMHOLTZ (USA/W)
04 June :Fr Charles GALIEGUE (France)
04 June :Fr Joseph GOETZ (France)
04 June :Fr Antoni KLICHE (USA/E)
04 June :Fr René LEUCK (Belgique)
04 June :Fr Trudo MAENEN (Zaire)
04 June :Fr Etienne MAISONGROSSE (Madagascar)
04 June :Fr Albert PERON (France)
04 June :Fr Yves TROADEC (France)
16 June :Fr Roy A. BURKHART (USA/W)
16 June :Fr Francis P. MEENAN (USA/E)
16 June :Fr James F. PERGI (USA/E)
16 June :Fr Cornelius C. WOULFE (USA/Ir.)
17 June :Fr Vincent MONTES de OCA (Ireland)
18 June :Fr Fernand COSTE (France)
18 June :Fr Louis GASPARD (Cameroon)
18 June :Fr Henri NICOLAY (France)
18 June :Fr Désirée NOBLET (France)
18 June :Fr Paul REPOND (Switzerland)

30 Years a Bishop

- 11 May :Bishop Antoine MAANICUS (Nederland)

Our Dead

- 06 Nov. :Fr James J. SHERIDAN (USA/E), 84.
12 Nov. :Fr Francisco José VALENTE (Portugal), 81.
13 Nov. :Fr Henk MIJNDERS (Nederland), 68.
15 Nov. :Fr Grégoire MANTECK A MANTECK (FAC), 38.
18 Nov. :Fr René DEFONTAINE (France), 64.
19 Nov. :Fr René DEVANTHERY (Switzerland), 66.
07 Dec. :Br Gondulphus JANSEN (Nederland), 84.
07 Dec. :Br Abel ROME (Guyana), 74.
12 Dec. :Fr Yves BARBOTIN (France), 84.
28 Dec. :Fr Arnold HUMPERT (Puerto Rico), 82.
03 Jan. :Fr John C. RYAN (Ireland), 82 ans.
16 Jan. :Fr Franz MULLER (Germany), 80.
17 Jan. :Fr Michel GIRARDOT (Senegal), 65.

On January 1st 1994 our Congregation numbered a total of 3223 confreres, including:
31 bishops, 2,535 priests, 315 Brothers,
342 professed scholastics.