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# SPIRITAN NEWS

May/June 1999

N° 127

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

## NEWS FROM CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

### SPIRITANS IN AUSTRALIA

The Spiritan Region of Oceania comprises the Spiritan Groups of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Venerable Francis Libermann himself sent the first missionary band to Australia - three Fathers and two Brothers landing in Perth in January 1846. One of them, Fr. Maurice Bouchet, died a saintly death shortly after arrival, the first priest to give his life in Western Australia. The others endured heroic privations and sufferings for nearly two years. Eventually, Frs Thevaux and Thierse with Br. Vincent went to Mauritius to work there with Blessed Jacques Laval. "The mission of King George (Albany W.A.) perished because of hunger and want, due to the carelessness of the bishop."

The sacrifice and suffering of our Spiritan forebears here in Western Australia was not without fruit - as the sesquicentennial celebration of the Mission of Sainte Marie at Lake Mollyalup showed. The mission site was excavated some years earlier to yield the Rosary beads of the Fathers, their cooking pots, etc. Their memory, at the celebration liturgy (attended by the local bishop, clergy and people, the superior general, provincials and all the confreres from Australia and Papua New Guinea), had a powerful effect on all present. The call of the Aboriginal people to us to come back was heard clearly in the beautiful poem read by Maxine Fumagalli.



*April 1997 Celebration of 150th Anniversary at Lake Mollyalup, W.A. of Ste. Marie Mission*

After nearly fifty years a team of Spiritans came from Ireland to Ballarat, in Victoria, to found a Catholic college. This proved to be another venture successful in itself but not

for the Spiritans as we departed after a couple of years, once again leaving our dead behind.

Third time lucky! - after more than half a century, Spiritans expelled from Biafra came to Papua New Guinea and Australia in the early seventies. Two decades later these mission groups are still thriving.

Originally a community group of Irish Spiritans, Australia is now an international group with a confrere from England and one from Canada. One Australian, professed into the Irish Province is on mission in Kenya while another who is in second cycle formation Dublin is about to go to Kenya for Overseas Training Programme. An East African confrere, Fr. Rogasian Msami, has joined the group for sabbatical studies in Melbourne this year. The first aspirant from Papua New Guinea is doing his novitiate in Trinidad at present.

All the confreres presently working in Australia have been redeployed here after previous missionary experience in Africa and Papua New Guinea. Our Australian lay associate, Kevin Conway, has a rich missionary experience in Papua New Guinea.

Since the beginnings of the Spiritan groups in Australia and Papua New Guinea back in the early seventies there has been a solid tradition of close collaboration and support between the two groups with sharing and rotation of personnel and financial and technical support given by Australia to Spiritan missions in PNG. This collaboration continues with close contact maintained through attendance of the superior or representative of the other group at the annual meetings of each group. At the combined assembly of both groups in Western Australia in 1997 there was discussion on the possibilities of a combined administration structure for the region.

Spiritan Mission in Australia includes first evangelisation - in particular among asylum seekers who are detained, often for lengthy periods, at a centre in the parish of Port Hedland, Western Australia. Ministry to these asylum seekers and follow up of those fortunate enough to be accepted as migrants is a Spiritan commitment endorsed by the local Bishops. Ministry to Aboriginal groups is another focus of Spiritan ministry, very much in conformity with the guidelines and traditions of Spiritan Mission. Our parish commitments involve school chaplaincy, commitment to youth work, seafarers, hospital chaplaincy and the marginalised.

Efforts at Vocation Ministry have been rewarded by the profession of two young Australians into the Congregation. These efforts are continuing despite the difficulties and disappointments.

The Spiritan contribution to the local church with our closeness to the people and our missionary outreach seems to be highly appreciated. Staffing the parishes we have assigned to us is an ideal opportunity for older Spiritans seeking redeployment. There are many requests from other dioceses for Spiritan priests. The apostolate to the Aboriginal people perfectly fulfils our ideals and links us with our first mission to Western Australia, 1846-1848, and the heroism of those early confreres.

Financial solidarity among the confreres has enabled us to acquire two community residences, fund formation and academic education for aspirants and first cycle candidates - and also to support the Papua New Guinea Mission as needs arise. Generous contributions were sent to Aitape at the time of the tidal wave disaster.

Fr Jean Claude from Madagascar had a very positive experience during his language course in Brisbane and Sydney. There are opportunities for confreres from the newer provinces and if our Spiritan presence is to continue in Australia, young Spiritans from other provinces and foundations are called for. Sabbatical and language study are proving to be good opportunities for inserting such confreres.



*Chinese Boat People - proud of their dignity as Children of God - Christian initiation at St Cecilia's church, Port Hedland*

Australia, on the Pacific Rim looks towards Asia politically and economically. The Asia component of the country's multicultural society is growing as are all the Asian contributions to the Church in Australia. Already the refugee ministry has led to valuable contacts with the Church in Hong Kong and South China. It is hoped that we could forge an appropriate relationship with our new Spiritan neighbours in Taiwan and the Philippines.

*Fr Walter McNamara, CSSp*

## Final Profession in the South Central African Foundation

At its inception the South Central African Region was made up of the circumscriptions of Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It was enlarged to include Mozambique when on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1995, the General Council established a Spiritan International Group to work in Mozambique.

On 30<sup>th</sup> November 1994 the General Council formally erected the Foundation of South Central Africa (SCAF). Fr James Devine, who was already Superior of the District of South Africa, was then appointed Superior of the new Foundation. In 1997 he was nominated for a second mandate. The Superiors of the founding circumscriptions of Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe continue to exercise a collegial responsibility for SCAF in their capacity as members of the Council of the Foundation.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February, the Feast of the Presentation and also of the anniversary of the death of Fr Francis Libermann, there was rejoicing and happiness in Glen Ash, Bethlehem, when two young Spiritans, John Dimba and Sylvester Kansimbi, made their final profession. These were the first Final professions to be made in the South Central African Foundation. Present at the ceremony, along with a large number of Spiritans, were the Bishop of Bethlehem, Mgr Hubert Bucher, diocesan priests, sisters and a large circle of their

friends, especially the youth from the parishes where they work.

John and Sylvester come from Mozambique and Malawi respectively. Both are presently completing their pastoral experience in Natal, South Africa, and they will shortly resume their theological studies in Nairobi.



*L to R: John Dimba (Mozambique) Helmut Gerads (was their Novice Master) and Sylvester Kansimbi (Malawi)*

After completion of their studies and ordination, they will be available for appointment to Spiritan missions in any one of the five continents.

## NEWS ITEMS

### Meeting of Major Superiors in Rome

Ten Major Superiors, most of them recently confirmed or appointed, met at the Generalate in Rome from 14-20 March to get to know each other and the Generalate Team.

Those taking part were 6 District Superiors: Frs Alain Durand (Réunion), Gérard Meyer (Sénégal), Iede de Lange (Ethiopia/Borana), John McFadden (Makurdi), Leonard Ekeanyanwu (Zimbabwe), and Myles Fay (Gambia); 1 Group Superior: Fr Walter McNamara (Australia); 1 Foundation Superior: Fr Denis Wiehe (F.O.I) and 2 Provincial Vicar Superiors: Frs Gabriel Myotte-Duquet and Etienne Osty (France).

In the meetings with the General Council each Superior gave a presentation on his Province, District or Foundation, and Fr General outlined the Council's thinking. Some points emerging from these presentations were then selected for discussion, e.g Maynooth Chapter, Solidarity, First Appointments, Formation (Initial and Ongoing), Organisation, Lay Associates and Collaboration, History and planning for our Anniversaries. The Superiors also had the opportunity to visit



*From L to R: Alain Durand, Walter McNamara, John McFadden, Iede de Lange, Leonard Ekeanyanwu, Denis Wiehe, Gabriel Myotte-Duquet, Gérard Meyer, Etienne Osty, Myles Fay*

the various departments of the General Administration.

### Decisions of the General Council

The General Council nominates **Fr Edward Chinua OKEKE** as Superior of the International Group of Papua New Guinea, for a period of three years, with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1999;

**Fr Julio-Cesar VIDAL FERNÁNDEZ** as Provincial Superior of the Province of Spain, for a second mandate of three years, with effect from 11<sup>th</sup> September 1999;

**Fr Gérard MEYER**, as Superior of the North-West African Foundation (FANO) from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1999 until 14<sup>th</sup> September 2000;

**Fr Rhéaume SAINT-LOUIS** as Superior of the Generalate Community, for a period of three years, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 1999.

#### New Foundation of North-West Africa

Following the policy decision taken by the District Chapter of Senegal (at Sindone) in January 1997, the guidelines of the meeting of the Superiors of Central Africa (at Kribi) in February 1997, the consultation of each confrere of FAC on the future of their Foundation in 1998, and the individual consultation of the members of FAC by origin regarding their own future allegiance:

- 1 The Superior General, with the agreement of his Council, has decided that the District of Senegal will cease to exist as from May 23, 1999 (the Feast of Pentecost) to give place to a new circumscription, the Foundation of North-West Africa.
- 2 All confreres appointed to the District of Senegal at that date will be thenceforth considered as appointed to the new Foundation.
- 3 The ten Senegalese and Guinean confreres, who up till now belonged to the FAC but have now chosen to join the new Foundation, will become members by origin of the same Foundation. Their names are Jean-Pierre Bonamou,

Moïse Camara, Sylvain Coly, Pierre-Moundor Diaffate, Jean-Pascal Diame, Moïse-Lalty Diatta, Nazaire Diatta, Thomas Diouf, Henri-Joseph Dramou et Lucius Sagna.

#### Superior of the Foundation of North-West Africa

The General Council nominates **Fr. Gérard MEYER** as Superior of the North-West African Foundation from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1999 until 14<sup>th</sup> September 2000.

#### Change of Circumscription

At the request of the confreres concerned and with the agreement of the Superiors of the Central African Foundation and the Foundation of Congo-Kinshasa,

The Superior General, with the agreement of his Council, authorises Innocent Nzemba, Jean-Baptiste Mungwele and Roger Mvitu Mvitu to change their Province of origin: from May 23, 1999, they will belong by origin to the Foundation of Congo-Kinshasa.

#### Personnel for the Generalate - Rome Parish

The General Council nominates Fr Jean-Jacques BÉGLIN, of the General Administration, to the pastoral team responsible for the parish in Rome to be confided to us by the Cardinal Vicar, for a mandate of three years as from 01 September 1999;

Fr Peter KESSY KILASARA, of the Province of East Africa, to the pastoral team responsible for the parish in Rome, for a mandate of three years, as from 01 September 1999;

Fr Maciej SIERZPUTOWSKI of the Province of Poland to the pastoral team responsible for the parish in Rome, for a mandate of three years, as from 01 September 1999;

Fr Jean-Jacques BÉGLIN, of the General Administration, as Superior of the Community attached to our parish in Rome, for a mandate of three years, as from 01 September 1999.

## FIRST APPOINTMENTS

<i>NAME</i>	<i>FROM</i>	<i>TO</i>
ADENIYI Sylvester	Nigeria	Zimbabwe
ADINDU Fabian	Nigeria	Nigeria
ADZOGBA Benedict	WAF	WAF (Ghana)
AKORSOU-AYITTEY Ernest	WAF	Makurdi
ALABI Lawrence	Nigeria	South Africa
ANOMAH Anthony Kofi	WAF	WAF (Ghana)
ANYANWU Raymond	Nigeria	Senegal
ANYIGBO Chike	Nigeria	Nigeria
AWANGE Richard Terfa	WAF	WAF (Ghana)
CHERFILY Pierre	Haiti	Haiti
CONWAY David	Ireland	Kenya
DEPKA Miroslaw	Poland	Germany (Croatia)
DUKIYA Jerome	Nigeria	Senegal
EDUME Jean Gary	Haiti	Guadeloupe
EHINMIRO Peter	Nigeria	Nigeria
HERNANDEZ FLORES Juventino	Mexico	Mexico - S. Domingo
IBEARUGBULAM Paulinus	Nigeria	Zimbabwe
INDYER Emmanuel Kuha	WAF	WAF (Ghana)
IWUEKE Mark	Nigeria	Zimbabwe
KORSAH Francis Kingsley	WAF	Senegal
MARTINEZ MARTINEZ Victor	Mexico	Amazonia

<i>NAME</i>	<i>FROM</i>	<i>TO</i>
MENDOGO-MBAZOA Joseph-Marie	FAC	PAC
MSILANGA Vedastus	EAP	EAP
MULWA Joseph Mutuku	EAP	France
MVITU MVITU Roger	FAC	Congo Kinshasa
NGOY Eric	Co-Kinshasa	Mozambique
NWAIGWE Stanley	Nigeria	Ethiopia/Borana
OBIOMA Paschal	Nigeria	Nigeria
OGADA Charles	Nigeria	Nigeria
OKAFOR Joseph	Nigeria	Nigeria
OKOLI Kenneth	Nigeria	Ethiopia/Borana
OPARA Herbert	Nigeria	Nigeria
OSEI-YAW John	WAF	WAF
RAMAHAVONJY Etienne Paul	FOI	Philippines-Taiwan
RZAD Jan	Poland	PAC (Cameroon)
SANDY John	WAF	Sierra Leone
SIDOT Philippe	France	Ethiopia/Gamu Gofa
SIERZPUTOWSKI Maciej	Poland	Gen. Adm. - Rome Parish
SODJE Peter	Nigeria	South Africa
TARIMO Justi	EAP	FOI
UDUMKA Kenny	Nigeria	Nigeria
UGBUDU Mark Tiza	WAF	Makurdi
WARCHOLIK Zbigniew	Poland	South Africa
AGBUIZI Michael	WAF	Sierra Leone

## Spiritan History crosses the Alps

Early on March 24, 1999, one ton of spiritan archives left the Generalate by road for Chevilly. Next morning, came the tragic news of the fire in Mt. Blanc tunnel with a great loss of life. While praying for the victims, we also reminded the Lord that 30 years of our history was due to cross the Alps around that time. On March 29, a fax arrived from Chevilly to say that the 78 boxes had arrived safely and we were able to breathe again.

After the transfer of the Generalate from Paris to Rome in 1966, the initial plan was to have the General Archive also in Rome. Ten years later, and after a great deal of discussion, the General Council finally took the decision (May 5, 1976) to leave the Archive in Paris. (In 1981, it was moved from rue Lhomond to its present location at Chevilly). Henceforth, archives would be classified and prepared in Rome and subsequently transferred to Chevilly.

Our archives are classified according to the mandates of Superiors General. In 1966, the General Council brought to Rome not only the documents of their own administration, but also many from earlier periods which they felt might be needed. Hence the recent perilous journey was undertaken not only by all the documents of the periods of Mgr. Lefebvre, Joseph Lécuyer and the first administration of Frans Timmermans, but also the General Chapters and

Enlarged General Councils between 1906 and 1980, as well as the personal dossiers of confreres who died between 1980 and 1989. So the nervousness experienced at the Generalate during the transfer was understandable!

The Chevilly Archive has now disappeared under a mountain of new material! Obviously, much of it is far too recent to be open for research, but at least it is now in the right place. And who can doubt that this period of our history - which includes the immediate aftermath of Vatican II, the Lefebvre saga, the independence of so many colonies in Africa and the beginnings of many of our Foundations - will be of great interest to historians in the future. Hopefully, future transfers will be more frequent and thus smaller in bulk, less trying on the nerves and kinder to our long-suffering General Archivist at Chevilly!

A computer programme has been set up for the catalogues of the Chevilly Archive and the long process of transfer of the data from the present files has begun. The same programme will henceforth be used in our archive office in Rome, which until now has had its own system of classification. Once the work is completed, it should be possible to make copies of the catalogues available to other archives and interested bodies.

## Journals for the General Archives

As a general principle, journals should only be retained in their original circumscriptions if there are proper conditions for storing and preserving them. If such obtain, then at least a copy should be sent to the General Archives in Chevilly.

In some places journals are partly Spiritan and partly local church property. Dialogue is encouraged to ensure proper ownership and an agreement should be reached on their destination.

## Official Directory - 1999 Edition

In accordance with the wishes of the General Council and to meet the expectations of many confreres, edition no. 38 of the *Official Directory* was published this March. We have tried to make maximum use of the possibilities offered by computerisation, so perhaps you will find it a little strange at first glance.

The *Official Directory* is the result of the collaboration of many confreres. The work of the Secretariat was preceded by that of the Major Superiors and/or their Secretaries, who have the task of keeping us up to date. The introductions to some of the former editions of this publication referred to a certain lack of zeal in communicating the desired information. I could easily add one or two of my own verses to this lament, but I will limit myself to thanking, most sincerely, all those who have helped to produce this update of information which is as accurate as we can get it. And I must also express my gratitude to the confreres of the Generalate staff who have given of their time to read and correct the original drafts.

Increasingly, circumscriptions are producing their own local *Directories* each year. This is an excellent initiative because at that level, it is easier to produce a publication that is more detailed and up-to-date. But this does not subtract from the need for a work of reference that covers the whole Congre-

gation. And in no way can these local *Directories* be used to replace the documents which must be sent to inform the Generalate of professions, ordinations, changes, appointments, departures and deaths (each one to be sent on a separate form). The *Guide for Administrative Relations with the Generalate* is clear on this subject; it simply needs to be read and applied.

Some of you have already received the new *Directory*; for others, it will be arriving shortly. By the time you receive it, several of the entries will already be out of date. Life does not come to a halt just to suit us. Increasingly, the state of war in several countries where we are working has been responsible for considerable changes, and nobody can tell how long they will last. So this publication does not include these changes; indeed, in certain cases, it is very difficult to come by such information.

However, our hope is that this work will give an overall picture of the people and works of the Congregation, and that future historians will find it a useful source of reliable information.

Jean-Jacques Boeglin  
Assistant General Secretary

## The present state of Spiritan Causes

**Francis Libermann:** The official process of beatification was introduced on June 1, 1876, twenty four years after his death. The apostolic process of 1881 refers to 34 cures of nervous diseases, to which can be added another 13 over the last few years. But they are not accepted because they concern sicknesses of a nervous origin. The heroicity of his virtues was proclaimed on February



19, 1910, hence he is officially referred to as "Venerable". All the others (10) who were proclaimed "Venerable" in that year have already been beatified or canonized. As the founder of a religious order, only one miracle is necessary for beatification and another for canonization. In 1982, Frans Timmermans wrote to the Pope, suggesting that his conversion, spirituality and the work of the Congregation could be regarded as sufficient. The Pope replied: *"I am sure the Spiritans, by their fervent prayers, will be able to obtain the one miracle necessary"*. When the Pope was writing the encyclical *"Redemptor Hominis"*, he chose the spirituality of Libermann (which had been given to him) for the chapter concerning the spirituality of the missionary: read it again: you will be surprised! So there is no obstacle on the side of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and the Pope himself would be delighted if the indispensable miracle came about. Francis Libermann would be beatified very quickly once a miraculous cure is recognized.

**Daniel Brottier:** He was beatified on November 25, 1984. An unsuccessful effort was made to have the continuing daily inflow of financial support to the Oeuvre d'Auteuil, clearly prophesied by Brottier himself, recognized as an extraordinary phenomenon. He needs one miraculous cure for his canonization. Several have been sent to me, but I could



not present them because of a lack of serious medical proof. He likewise would be canonized at once in the case of a proved miracle.

**Jacques-Desiré Laval:** He was beatified on April 29, 1979 by Pope John Paul II. The beatification had been fixed for October 22, 1978, but did not take place because of the death of Paul VI. (The book by Père Michel on Jacques Laval was found on his bedside table). Since then, accounts of several miraculous events have been sent to Rome, but they were not accepted. One authentic miracle through his intercession would suffice for his immediate canonization.



**Joseph Shanahan:** The Holy Rosary Sisters have launched the process of beatification of their founder. As postulator for this cause, I attended the inauguration of the archdiocesan tribunal in Onitsha cathedral on November 15, 1997, in the presence of an enormous crowd of people. Enquiries are proceeding very well in Ireland, Kenya and Nigeria (nearly 100 testimonies in all).



**Claude François Poullart des Places:** The process of beatification of M. Claude François Poullart des Places was opened in Paris by the Province of France around fifteen years ago. The process is going on.



*Alphonse Gilbert*

## OUR DEAD

21 Mar. : Fr Auguste JAOUEN	(France), 84	12 Apr. : Fr James Gerard KAVANAGH	(Ireland), 87
23 Mar. : Fr Antonius MELIS	(N/Lands), 88	12 Apr. : Fr Martin F. BRENNAN	(T/Canada), 83
05 Apr. : Fr Gérard TURBÉ	(France), 90	20 Apr. : Fr Manuel David de SOUSA	(Portugal), 66
08 Apr. : Fr Georges-Henri THIBAUT	(France), 73	20 Apr. : Br Yvon DIQUELOU	(France), 82
10 Apr. : Fr Edmund Joseph RYAN	(Ireland), 93	25 Apr. : Fr Robertus HAFFMANS	(N/Lands), 76
10 Apr. : Fr Marcellus DIERIKX	(N/Lands), 81		