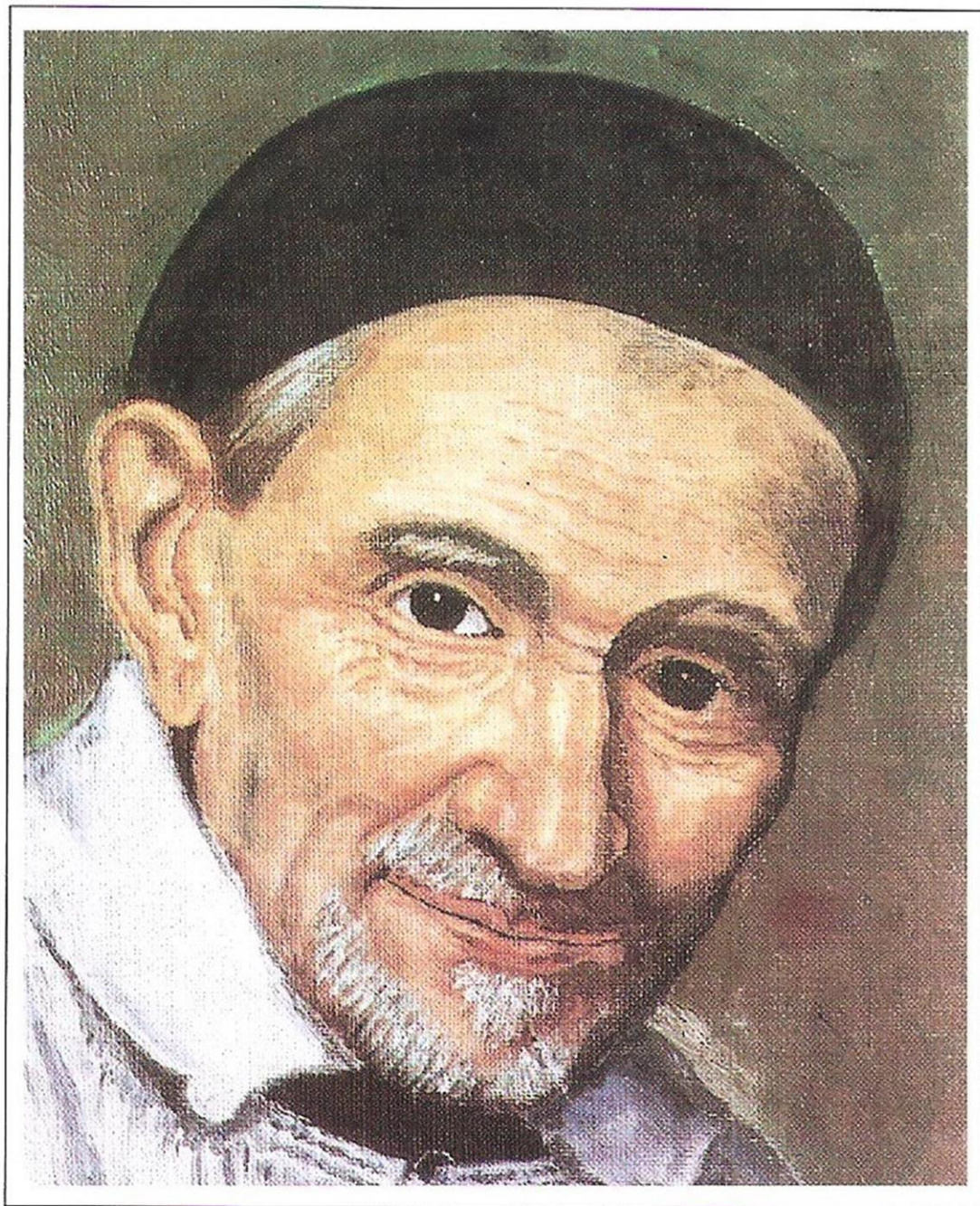


# VINCENTIANA

48<sup>th</sup> YEAR - N. 6

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2004



## *Some "Lesser-Known" Confreres* (I)

CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

GENERAL CURIA

# HOLY SEE

**Appointment.** The Holy Father accepted the resignation which Cardinal **Eduardo Martínez Somalo** presented as *Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*, in accord with canon 345 of the Code of Canon Law and on February 11, 2004, nominated at Msgr. **Franc Rodé, C.M.**, until now the Archbishop of Ljubljana (Slovenia) as *Prefect* of that dicastery. (Cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, February 12, 2004, p. 1)

**Appointment.** In a letter dated the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004, Cardinal **José Saravia Martins**, the *Prefect for the Congregation for the Causes of Saints*, informed the Superior General that the Holy Father nominated Fr. **Luigi Nuovo, C.M.**, of the Province of Turin (Italy), *Consultor* of that same Congregation for a period of five years.

**Appointment.** On September 21, 2004, Fr. **Jean Landousies, C.M.** (Province of Province), the outgoing Superior of the Maison-Mere, arrived in Rome to be part of the *Secretary of State of the Vatican*, where he was called again to provide his services in the area of French language. In fact, during the past years, Fr. Landousies already worked in this important office of the “foreign affairs” of the Holy See. He also provided significant collaboration on the Editorial Board of *Vincentiana* magazine.

# GENERAL CURIA

**Circular no. 1**

Rome, September 11, 2004  
Feast of St. John Gabriel Perboyre

*To the members of the Congregation of the Mission*

Dear brothers,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your heart now and forever!

Greetings to all of you. First of all, I want to take this opportunity at the beginning of my mandate to thank many of you for the offerings of prayers and support that you have given me through letters, e-mails and the like. I only regret not being able to respond personally to each and every one of the messages that I received. In these first few days here in the Curia I spent a great number of hours reading correspondence from around the world. It is truly a humbling experience and, at the same time, an inspiration for me to take more deeply to heart my responsibility as animator of the Congregation.

I would like to share with you a little bit of what I have done since I began my mandate. The first thing was to get some rest. I visited with my family. We spent time together at the beach.

The following week I spent in a special way and decided to do so after having been elected Superior General. I did a three-day tour with my Dad. We visited the Provincial House of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission, my province of origin, in Germantown, Philadelphia. I had the privilege of being able to celebrate the Eucharist with our confreres there in the infirmary and then afterwards a luncheon with the confreres of the Provincial House and those who attend the different parishes and apostolates in the area. It truly was a wonderful experience to be able to see once again many of the confreres with whom I have lived and/or shared ministry.

The following day I went with my Dad to the Community cemetery of the Eastern Province in Plainsboro, New Jersey. I went there first of all to say hello to the confreres of that local community who welcomed



us warmly and had a luncheon for my Dad and me. One of my main objectives was to be able to spend some time praying at the tombs of special confreres in my life, the first being my great-uncle, Rev. Elbert Gay, a former Subdirector of the Daughters of Charity and also a missionary in Panama. It was in and through my uncle, as I have stated at other moments, that I was inspired to be a missionary in the Congregation of the Mission. I also prayed at the tombs of a number of other confreres who had inspired me. One in particular, who I knew when I was in the Internal Seminary, was our former Superior General, Fr. William Slattery. We happen to be from the same area of the United States, from the city of Baltimore, Maryland. My Dad seems to think that we may even have been relatives, because my Dad's grandmother was a Slattery. I felt that praying at the tombs of these confreres was an opportunity to ask for the Lord's guidance, inspiration and wisdom in and through those who have gone before us. I learned from my short time in Guatemala of the great respect that the Indian culture has for its ancestors, living and deceased, and that the deceased continue to accompany us in our mission of bringing about fuller life to all those whom we meet.

The third day I rode over to Emmitsburg, Maryland with my Dad, where there is the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. It is also the Provincial House for the Daughters of Charity of the Southeast Province of the United States. As a young priest, only six months ordained, I served as a temporary chaplain to the retired and infirm Daughters there. I had the experience of being their chaplain together with an older confrere (86 years old, Fr. Jim Twomey), who since has died, but we developed between ourselves a very beautiful friendship and he helped me learn to love the Community in a very special way. He also showed me how to be a gentle, loving servant, which I personally witnessed in his service of the sick sisters. I celebrated the Eucharist in the Basilica of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton and in the homily I highlighted how certain members of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity had touched my life and continue to be a part of who I am today, through their example of love of the Community and the poor.

After my two-week home visit I returned to Guatemala on August 15<sup>th</sup>, where I was warmly received by the confreres, a great number of Daughters of Charity and even our confrere-bishop, Msgr. Ríos Mont, at the airport in Guatemala. It was quite a humbling experience. We went to the Provincial House in Guatemala and had an opening prayer service in our local chapel and then a meal shared by all with music, laughing and celebrating. It was truly a wonderful time.

The next day I left for our mission in Panama where I visited with our confreres, Daughters and members of the Vincentian Family. I participated in the ordination of one of our young confreres for the

Central American Province. I had the privilege to celebrate with him his first Mass and he asked me to preach the homily. The first reading from Isaiah spoke about being sent to be a messenger of the Lord and being willing to go far lengths to let God's name be known among all nations. Very appropriate words for a newly ordained missionary!

I returned to Guatemala where the local superior had arranged a number of activities for the confreres, the Daughters of Charity, and the Vincentian Family. I had the opportunity to share the Eucharist, meals and dialogue with each of these groups. It was certainly edifying for me and at the same time difficult. In the five years that I have been Visitor of the Central American Province I have come to know and to love many of the confreres, Daughters, and members of the Vincentian Family. There was parting with tears but at the same time hope that they will continue working together as a Family in the evangelization of the poor.

Since I have returned to the Curia, I have had the opportunity to do some reflecting and goal-setting for myself. What I would like to share in this circular, first of all, is that I want to take seriously my responsibility as animator of the Vincentian charism. I hope to be able to visit confreres, Daughters of Charity, and the Vincentian Family throughout the world. I want to spend time with the young people of the different branches of the Vincentian Family. I hope to see the works that the Family has with the poorest of the poor. They are our pride and joy, "a treasure hidden in a field," where we truly come to live more deeply our charism, being faithful in following Jesus Christ, evangelizing the poor.

In my visits I will not want to say a whole lot. I want to listen to what you have to say. I consider one of the greatest challenges facing us is learning to work together as a Family for the good of the poor, for their evangelization. While respecting the autonomy of each and every one of the branches of the Family, we should never lose sight of the fact that we are born of the same charism. That same love of God that inspired St. Vincent to serve the poor has been entrusted to us all. To live faithfully our charism, we are called to be missionaries, which means we know no frontiers, whether they be geographical, nationalistic, or even family related.

If we are people of faith and followers of Jesus Christ, we know that it is important that where barriers exist, where wounds have been created, we are called to heal those wounds, to reconcile the differences that keep us apart and to put our energy into serving the poor.

Another challenge I see facing us has to do with creativity in reorganization. In some parts of the world today, we are experiencing a reduction in vocations and an aging of the provinces. This has resulted in provinces that are getting smaller with less confreres in

full-time active ministry. These signs of the times challenge us to seek creative ways to invite others to share our charism and reduce the number of confreres working in full-time administration so that our ministry to serve the poor is not adversely affected. In some cases this may mean a consolidation of provinces. Therefore we have to be able to get beyond situations that have kept some of us apart for years.

Though the Congregation has made great strides in following more closely our particular charism, I think that we need to continue to reevaluate our works that are not directed in some way to the service of the poor. Some provinces are dependent on certain apostolic works for economic income to support their apostolic works with the poor. And yet we cannot allow these commitments to constrict us so as to impede new initiatives and ministries in response to the needs of the poor. I think it important that we look for innovative ways to financially fund our works. I also would like to see more and more confreres working in the service of the poor. That is being faithful to our heritage. It is where we come to experience true freedom, personal and communal liberation as sons of St. Vincent.

In our *Final Document* from the General Assembly, in section III, "A Hopeful Look Toward the Future," we made the following recommendations as an Assembly that are in line with some of the recommendations that I have made here. I would like to single out just a few of them. To be more faithful to our vocation, we are urged in the coming years to use criteria established in Constitutions 2 and 12 to revise the works that we have, initiate other works, and even abandon works that no longer respond to these criteria, giving new vigor to the actual Vincentian ministries that we have. We also need to promote interprovincial collaboration so that our apostolic activities for the evangelization of the poor can be more efficacious. Also, we state in our *Final Document* the need to develop, articulate and apply criteria that accentuate the prophetic and missionary character of our charism.

Another continuing challenge for all of us is the formation of the laity, the need to continue this prophetic vision of St. Vincent de Paul in organizing, forming and helping the laity to be faithful to their baptismal promises within the Christian community, serving their brothers and sisters in some type of experience of mission.

I realize that a number of the recommendations or challenges that I have mentioned here for the Congregation of the Mission are in line with our apostolic activity only. That is not, in any way whatsoever, to neglect the prayer dimension or the community dimension of our life as a Congregation. I thoroughly believe that if we are faithful to our apostolic commitment to be evangelizers of the poor, our hearts will want to dialogue with the Lord about what is happening in our experience with the poor and, at the same time, there will come from

within a desire to want to share and reflect on that in our own community experience, so that truly we come to live community for the mission. Our apostolic activity, when it is authentically lived out, will help us to deepen our own prayer life, our community bonds and will give us greater clarity in our identity as members of the Congregation of the Mission.

Later on I will be getting out a circular to the Visitors of the Congregation and to the young confreres of each of our provinces, but I would like to mention at this moment that I have already initiated a process, with the help of the young confreres who were delegates at our General Assembly, to establish a network of communication among those 15 years and under and myself. Steps for creating a website have already been taken.

Some practical points regarding my visits:

1. I am not a conference-giving person. My style is different. I hope that my presence could be less “academic” and with more dialogue, more of an opportunity to share, to listen, to express opinions. One of the things that I have learned after 19 years of ministry in Latin America is that as Church we are called to live our faith based on a model of “communion and participation.” That is more my style. When I come to you, it is not so much what I want to say to you, but rather what we can share together — our experiences of Jesus in the poor. In our dialogue with one another we can strengthen our efforts in their service.
2. I hope to be able to share the Eucharist wherever I go. I have a certain particularity about this point. I prefer to celebrate the Word of God that the Universal Church puts forth on any particular day. We are called to live out fully our being part of the Universal Church. St. Vincent wants us to be a people committed to the Church, working to bring about the Kingdom of God. When we celebrate the Eucharist, the highlight of our faith, we listen to God’s Word, the Word that the entire Church is listening to. We are in harmony with the entire Church and together as Church we allow the Word to revitalize our lives, helping us to bring about our personal and communal conversion and the conversion of the world in which we live.
3. One other practical point that I would like to mention before I conclude has to do with gift-giving. I imagine that in my visits there will be a desire to give me a gift as a remembrance of my presence. I certainly appreciate the thought but, as a symbolic gesture or remembrance of my visit, rather than a material object that at times could be costly, I would encourage you to give a monetary donation for the needs of the poor. If I am visiting someplace that is unable to give any kind of economic donation as a gift, the greatest remembrance would be the continuing desire

on the part of the confreres to give of themselves in service — and more concretely — to make themselves a gift of service to one of the missions where there is a need for personnel. I ask you to consider either financial help in and through donations for the poor or the donation of personnel so that we might be able to continue to give life to those most abandoned in our world.

I'd like to conclude this circular by reiterating who I am: "A missionary." I was inspired to be so by a missionary. I thank God for having had the opportunity to serve as a missionary. As Superior General, I will continue to be a missionary. I want to invite all of you to bring alive your missionary spirit so that together we may continue to serve the Lord, evangelizing the poor.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
*Superior General*



**Circular no. 2**

Rome, September 27, 2004  
Feast of St. Vincent de Paul

*To the members of the Congregation of the Mission*

Dear Confreres,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill our hearts now and forever!

In our first *tempo forte* council meeting, it was decided that, in addition to the general report given in *Nuntia* about matters covered in the *tempo forte*, the Superior General would prepare a circular in which he would share in greater detail certain matters discussed at that meeting. So, my brothers, I would like to share with you some of the points we dealt with in our first *tempo forte* which was held from 13-17 September.

1. The naming of the **Assistant General for the Missions**. I, with my council, have named **José Antonio Ubillús** to this role.
2. The distribution among the Superior General and his Assistants of the **visits to the provinces and missions**. I am attaching a list of who will make the visit to each of the various provinces and missions. I ask that the Visitors help the Assistant who will be visiting your province by sending him Provincial Plans, Provincial Norms and other provincial activities that might be helpful. It would also be good if you would send him the provincial bulletin.
3. We determined the **different services** the Assistants and others at the Curia will cover **in the name of the Superior General**. These are:

<i>Service</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>
a) CIF	José Antonio Ubillús
b) Leonine College (students/scholarships)	Józef Kapuściak
c) SIEV	Juan Carlos Cerquera (Secretary General)
d) Vincentian Solidarity Office	Elmer Bauer (Treasurer General)
e) Website	Alfredo Becerra (Director of Vincentian publications)
f) NGO at UN	Gérard Du

- g) Visitors' Conferences
  - i. APVC Gérard Du
  - ii. CEVIM José María Nieto
  - iii. CLAPVI José Antonio Ubillús
  - iv. COVIAM Gregory Gay
  - v. NCV Józef Kapuściak
- h) Young confreres \*
- i) Financial Commission  
for the Curia Elmer Bauer

\* Will be further developed and explained in a later circular.

4. We have named **Juan Carlos Cerquera** from the Province of Colombia as the new **Secretary General**. Juan Carlos was the assistant to the Secretary of the General Assembly in July.
5. I, with my council, have appointed **Manuel Ginete** from the Philippines, to serve as **the Delegate of the Superior General to the Vincentian Family**. He was the facilitator during the 2004 General Assembly. We named Manuel after having accepted a request from Benjamín Romo to leave that office. I want to publicly thank Benjamín for all the good work realized for the Vincentian Family in these years that he has been assigned to this delicate responsibility. He started the office from scratch and it has grown tremendously in its structure, in the unification of the Vincentian Family, in the creation of projects on the part of the Vincentian Family for the good of the poor. I thank him for his very close collaboration with the Vincentian Family in the name of Fr. Maloney over the past six years.
6. Orlando Escobar who has been **in charge of the Vincentian publications, *Vincentiana* and *Nuntia***, has also asked to leave this duty. That request has been accepted by myself and the council. I also want to thank Orlando for his outstanding contribution not only to the Vincentian Publications, but for other duties asked of him in his time here at the Curia. In his place, we have named **Alfredo Becerra** from the Province of Mexico.
7. Also in this first *tempo forte* meeting we had some preliminary discussion with regard to the **2004 General Assembly**. We looked at the evaluation and at the decrees approved by the Assembly. These latter will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Vincentiana*. We also considered the postulata which will be discussed at length in our next *tempo forte*. We will study at greater length the *Final Document* of the Assembly in order to hear the voice of the confreres. As members of the General Council, we

wish to discern and obey the direction the Spirit wants to give the Congregation in these next six years. We are going to begin our next *tempo forte* in the context of prayer over the *Final Document*, sharing with one another the fruits of our reflection.

8. We also spoke about the new **international missions**. The good news we want to announce is that Victor Bieler will be going to the Solomon Islands. We thank Victor for this fine example that he is giving to the whole Congregation. Even though he was the oldest confrere in the Curia and the oldest confrere at the General Assembly, he has graciously volunteered to take up this new mission with the rest of the confreres in the Solomon Islands. Thank you, Victor, for witnessing to your missionary spirit. Two other confreres for the international missions are Ivica Gregurec from the Province of Slovenia (Solomon Islands) and Diego Plá from the Province of Madrid (El Alto, Bolivia). Let us pray for their perseverance!

Those were the major points of interest that we discussed in our *tempo forte* council meeting. I hope, at the end of each session, to publish a circular which shares some detail about certain issues discussed.

That is all for now. I continue to count on your prayers in these first months of my mandate and that of the new General Council.

Your brother in St. Vincent,



G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
*Superior General*

**VISITS TO PROVINCES AND MISSIONS**  
(General Council, *Tempo Forte*, September 2004)

**I. AFRICA**

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Madagascar      | Gérard Du            |
| 2. Ethiopia        | Józef Kapuściak      |
| 3. Congo (Belgium) | Gérard Du            |
| 4. Eritrea         | Józef Kapuściak      |
| 5. Mozambique      | José María Nieto     |
| 6. Nigeria         | José Antonio Ubillús |

**II. AMERICA**

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Ecuador  | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 2. Central America (Guatemala,<br>El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama) | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 3. Argentina<br>(Slovenian community in Argentina)                | José María Nieto     |
| 4. Rio de Janeiro   | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 5. Curitiba   | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 6. Fortaleza  | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 7. Chile  | José María Nieto     |
| 8. Colombia (Rwanda, Burundi)                                     | José María Nieto     |
| 9. Costa Rica   | José María Nieto     |
| 10. Cuba  | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 11. Mexico<br>(Mozambique, not Los Angeles)                       | José María Nieto     |
| 12. Peru  | José María Nieto     |
| 13. Puerto Rico<br>(Dominican Republic, Haiti)                    | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 14. Midwest USA (Kenya)   | Józef Kapuściak      |
| 15. Eastern USA (Panama)  | Józef Kapuściak      |
| 16. New England USA   | Józef Kapuściak      |
| 17. Southern USA  | José María Nieto     |
| 18. Western USA<br>(and Los Angeles, Talpa [Mexico])              | Gérard Du            |
| 19. Venezuela   | José María Nieto     |

**III. ASIA**

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. South India (Tanzania) | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 2. North India            | José Antonio Ubillús |

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 3. Indonesia                              | Gérard Du |
| 4. Orient (Lebanon, Egypt, Israel, Syria) | Gérard Du |
| 5. Philippines (South Korea, Thailand)    | Gérard Du |
| 6. China                                  | Gérard Du |

#### IV. EUROPE

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Austria   | Gérard Du   |
| 2. Sts. Cyril & Methodius<br>(Ukraine, Belarus, Russia)          | Józef Kapuściak                                   |
| 3. Paris<br>(Algeria, Greece, Cameroon, Vietnam)                 | Gérard Du / Józef Kapuściak                       |
| 4. Toulouse (Iran)   | Gérard Du   |
| 5. Germany   | Gérard Du   |
| 6. Ireland (England, Scotland)                                   | Józef Kapuściak                                   |
| 7. Barcelona (USA, Honduras)                                     | José María Nieto                                  |
| 8. Zaragoza (Honduras)   | José María Nieto                                  |
| 9. Madrid  | Gregory Gay                                       |
| 10. Salamanca (England, Mozambique)                              | José María Nieto                                  |
| 11. Holland (Denmark)  | Gérard Du   |
| 12. Hungary  | Gregory Gay                                       |
| 13. Naples (Albania)   | José María Nieto                                  |
| 14. Rome   | José Antonio Ubillús                              |
| 15. Turin  | Józef Kapuściak                                   |
| 16. Portugal   | José María Nieto                                  |
| 17. Poland (Austria, France, Belgium)                            | Gérard Du / Józef Kapuściak<br>+ another confrere |
| 18. Slovakia   | Józef Kapuściak                                   |
| 19. Slovenia (Argentina, Canada, Croatia,<br>Serbia, Montenegro) | Józef Kapuściak                                   |

#### V. OCEANIA

- |                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. Australia (Fiji) | Gérard Du |
|---------------------|-----------|

#### VI. INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Bolivia, El Alto | José María Nieto     |
| 2. Solomon Islands  | José Antonio Ubillús |
| 3. Papua New Guinea | José Antonio Ubillús |



Vincentiana, November-December 2004

## **Mission Appeal 2004**

Rome, October 18, 2004  
Feast of St. Luke

### *To all the missionaries of the Congregation*

Dear Brothers in St. Vincent,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your heart now and forever!

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).*

The Lord calls us to respond in faithfulness to our charism in the light of what Jesus says to us above. The month of October is traditionally known as the month of missions. We began the month by celebrating the feast of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus who is the patron of the missions. The celebration of mission month should animate each of us who are members of the Congregation of the Mission to deepen our own sense of being a missionary.

I would like to make four points in this Mission Appeal.

### ***Evaluation of the international missions***

First of all, the General Council hopes, in the next *tempo forte* session, to evaluate the international missions that the General Curia has initiated in recent years in order to improve our service of the poor and the clergy in these and other missions in the future. We want to do this evaluation in and through a questionnaire which will be sent to all the confreres who have been or are members of the international missions.

### ***Prayer for the missions***

One of the most important things we can do for the mission as members of the Congregation is to pray. Pray for our own mission and pray for the missions of the Church so that we might be able to bring about, with the grace of God, a change in this world in which we live, fortifying the process of evangelization. In particular, I think of the elderly confreres of our different provinces. There may be times when it is difficult for a missionary to have to curtail his

activities because of age or health, but I would like to encourage and remind all confreres that we never stop being missionaries. Perhaps one of the most efficacious ways that we can live out our missionary identity is in and through our offering of prayers and our own suffering as a support for the missionary efforts of the Congregation throughout the world. Several provinces have a very good practice. Each of the elderly confreres in the infirmary is given a mission to pray for, usually one of the apostolates of the province itself. I recommend that all our elderly and sick confreres throughout the world be assigned a mission, whether it be an apostolate of their province, or one of the international missions, or one of the provinces that is young and growing and needs to be fortified by prayer on the part of our older missionaries.

#### ***Financial support for the missions***

Another point that I would like to make in this Mission Appeal Letter is the financial support that each of us can give to help continue our missionary efforts. In reviewing the different mission funds that we have, one of the things that struck me is how confreres, on a regular basis, have responded generously to the different mission appeals. In particular, there is one confrere who, on a regular monthly basis, gives a contribution of \$ 20. For some confreres that might not be much, for other confreres that might be a great deal. The amount is not important to me. If each of us could contribute on a regular basis to the mission fund as a way of tithing, this would be very helpful. I invite every confrere to examine his situation to see if he is doing what he can do financially to help the missions.

There is also the possibility that a local community, in its community project, might think of different ways that it could tithe and make sacrifices in order to contribute to the needs of the missions.

I am also deeply edified by the provinces that are blessed economically and which use their resources generously for the needs of developing provinces throughout the world. I encourage those provinces to continue to be faithful to our Constitutions in showing this generosity. Other provinces, that perhaps are not as well off economically, might be able to respond to needs especially in emergency situations. Again, it is not the amount that is important, but the sense of solidarity, recognizing that we are all one Congregation and can show that by helping one another financially when necessary.

Part of my orientation to the finances of the Congregation was a review of the mission funds, IMF 2000 and IMF 2004, that have been set up to help the work of our poorer provinces and missions. I

would like to share with you the progress of these funds and make a simple appeal for a new fund that has been created.

The International Mission Fund 2000 (IMF 2000) began in 1995 and continued receiving donations until the end of 1999. In that time it received a little over \$ 6 million USD in contributions. In 2000, while always maintaining the capital of the fund, we began to distribute annually the income generated by the fund in the June Mission Fund Distribution. In the past four years, this fund has provided more than \$ 1.5 million for over 30 missions and provinces.

After the great success of the IMF 2000 and encouraged by the generous donations of so many provinces and confreres, another fund, the International Mission Fund 2004 (IMF 2004), was created in 2000 with the same purpose as the IMF 2000. At the end of this year this fund will finish receiving donations and begin distribution from its income in 2005. By the end of the year this fund should have around \$ 5 million in donations.

I would like to thank all the provinces, confreres, and foundations who have contributed to these mission funds. Together these funds provide a solid foundation for the continued sustenance of our missionary efforts around the world. We will continue to maintain the capital of both these funds and use their income to support our ministries with the poor, our formation programs, and the care of our sick and infirm confreres in those provinces and missions that do not have adequate financial resources. At the same time I encourage developing provinces to continue to find creative ways of becoming financially independent.

### ***A New Appeal***

A more recent effort to support the work of our missionary provinces has been the creation of the Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO). This office assists poorer provinces and missions with writing grant proposals to funding organizations for their works and needs. The VSO is helping provinces find money for construction projects and creative works with the poor, often projects which require greater financial assistance than can be provided for them in the Mission Fund Distribution.

In general, grant proposals have a greater chance of acceptance if they can provide "matching" funds. That is to say, one approaches the funding agency asking for only a part of the funding of the project, instead of complete funding, having secured some financing for the project from one's own resources or other means. To increase the possibility of receiving funding from aid agencies, the Superior General with his council established the Vincentian Solidarity Fund (VSF). The initial money for the VSF was provided from the funds of

the General Curia and has been used to secure financing from aid agencies for projects and then has been used directly in the completion of those projects. As more and more provinces and missions write to the VSO asking for assistance to find financing to fund their projects, the growth of this fund is necessary to increase their chance of success.

The Vincentian Solidarity Fund is fairly new and we are continuing to seek creative uses for these funds. Currently, the VSO is studying the possibility of funding "microprojects" (projects of \$ 5000 or less) directly from the funds of the VSF for imaginative works with the poor.

It is never easy asking for financial contributions, but seeing how generously the Congregation has responded in the past I ask you, with all simplicity, to reflect on whether individually, or as a local community, or as a province you can make a contribution, small or large, to the Vincentian Solidarity Fund. I am enclosing a sheet that will provide you with the instructions as to how this can be done.

#### ***Volunteers for the missions***

The fourth and final part of my Mission Appeal is a request for volunteers. The number of volunteers to the Mission Appeals has dropped off drastically in recent years. I simply ask confreres to consider the possibility of giving themselves in one way or another to the missions, whether to the international missions or to provinces which are in need of personnel. When Fr. Maloney first began these Mission Appeals 12 years ago, I was struck by the confreres who chose to leave behind traditional works in which they had served for a long time and start a completely new life in some kind of mission experience. That took a great deal of courage. The example of such missionaries has edified me. They themselves speak of how volunteering, leaving behind something known to which they had become accustomed, brought about a complete change in their lives, a change they will never forget, a change which has had a positive impact on helping them deepen their own identity as Vincentian missionaries. So I encourage confreres who have been a long time in a particular work, who feel that there is nothing else they are able to do or who feel very comfortable in what they are doing, to consider this as a call to break away from "the known experience," to leave it behind and move on to something new, giving yourself the opportunity to be completely free, without limits and open to the experience of God's grace in your life as you volunteer for a new mission.

I would like to recall the letter that the Holy Father addressed to me and wrote to us during our General Assembly 2004. He reminded

us to renew our own missionary spirit and at the same time encouraged us to remember our roots as formators and the great need that continues to exist in the Church throughout the world for priestly formation, by which we would be ever faithful to our Constitutions. “Many generations of priests have reason to thank your Congregation for the formation they have received at your hands. The importance of this apostolate cannot be overstated. Consequently it is essential to assign exemplary priests to this work: priests of human and spiritual maturity, pastoral experience, professional competence, capable of working with others (cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 66). Many Vincentians with these very qualities nobly dedicated themselves to priestly formation in the past. I encourage you to continue this vital mission in the years to come.”

Concretely we need volunteers in the following areas:

### **1. Solomon Islands**

This mission needs English-speaking formators. The bishops have asked us to broaden our presence there in order to have a complete major seminary, adding the three years of theology to the already existing philosophy program. As you know, Fr. Victor Bieler is going there and Fr. Ivica Gregurec from Slovenia just arrived, but there are still not enough formators to serve the seminary adequately.

### **2. Ecuador**

We have received a request from a bishop there to work in a missionary parish in the Vicariate Apostolic of Esmeraldas. This parish includes some 60 far-flung communities, which are not receiving sufficient pastoral attention for lack of personnel. In general, the bishops of Ecuador are still very desirous of the Vincentian presence in the formation of the clergy in their country. The language needed is Spanish.

### **3. Equatorial Guinea**

The Bishop of Ebeyin hopes we can provide a missionary to give continuity to the work that our retired Guatemalan bishop-confrere, Msgr. Jorge Ávila del Águila, gave himself to so generously until he became sick. He made a great impression on the people during the short time he was there and the bishop would like to have the same spirit continued with the help of volunteers. We have the possibility of one volunteer for this country but only if we can come up with two or more others for that mission. The language is Spanish.



#### **4. Moskitia, Honduras**

In this area of Central America, the Congregation of the Mission has the strongest Church presence along with the Daughters of Charity. But there is always a need for more volunteers to help support the missionary process that is going on there. There is the possibility that it could be extended beyond the Honduras border to the area of Moskitia in Nicaragua, which is a vast missionary territory.

#### **5. Cuba**

Our confreres in Cuba continue to work in difficult circumstances. Because of small numbers, the confreres are spread out much too thin. Some live alone for long periods of time. Some are overworked. Some have become sick. I would like to be able to send more confreres to Cuba in the coming year.

#### **6. El Alto, Bolivia**

I would like to be able to send at least two more confreres to El Alto in the coming year. The languages on the mission are Spanish and Aymara. The living conditions are rugged because of the high altitude.

#### **7. Istanbul, Turkey**

The Austrian Province has conducted a mission in Istanbul for 120 years. The Visitor is looking for a confrere who would be willing to undertake a two-year educational program in Islamic studies: one year studying the Turkish language and culture in Istanbul and one year studying Islamic theology at the PISAI in Rome (where courses are given in either English or French). The language at our school is German.

#### **8. Sts. Cyril and Methodius**

The Vice-Province was formed in 2001 by joining five separate missions in the territory of the former Soviet Union. It still very much depends on the generosity of volunteer confreres from various provinces. The most recent prospect is that we may recover the community house and church in Vilnius, Lithuania, which were confiscated over 50 years ago by the Communist regime. But this will not be possible without new volunteers. Volunteers to the Vice-Province may be asked to go to Vilnius, or to work elsewhere in the Vice-Province, and so release someone else for Lithuania. The official language of the Vice-Province is Russian.

\* \* \* \* \*

A Reminder: In the Final Document of the General Assembly, the different Conferences of Visitors and/or Provinces made concrete commitments. Please keep in mind those related to apostolate-mission.

I conclude my Mission Appeal by reminding us all to reflect seriously on our own identity as missionaries. May St. Vincent be able to say to each of us what he wrote in 1656 to a Priest of the Mission in Agen: "I thank God for the zeal he gives you for the missions. This attraction, coming from him, can only be very helpful to the people, so long as you are faithful to following it, and this fidelity can only be very advantageous for you, since, by working for the salvation of the poor, you assure your own. I ask Our Lord, who took the trouble to evangelize them himself and the care to call you to the same ministry, to animate you with his Spirit, so that you may acquit yourself of it in his sight and in the way he did" (SV V, 608).

Your brother in St. Vincent,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M.".

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
*Superior General*

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## VINCENTIAN SOLIDARITY FUND

### Methods for Making a Contribution

#### Provincial Contributions

1. Checks made payable to: "Congregazione della Missione" and with "Deposit Only" written on the back. These should be sent to:  
Elmer Bauer III, C.M.  
Treasurer General  
Via dei Capasso, 30  
00164 Roma  
Italy
2. For Italy and France, the CCP account can be used following exactly the information in the General Catalogue, page 1.
3. Other possibilities for bank transfers can be discussed with the Treasurer General.

#### Individual and Local Community Contributions

1. Checks made payable to: "Congregazione della Missione" and with "Deposit Only" written on the back, sent to the address above.
2. Other arrangements can be made via the Provincial Treasurer, who will be acquainted with various methods of transfer.

#### In every case

1. All gifts received will be acknowledged.
2. If your contribution is not acknowledged in a reasonable time, please contact us for clarification.
3. Please inform us if you are making any transfer of money, as described above.

### **Some Information and Criteria for Those Who Write**

1. If you should wish to volunteer, please send your letter in time to arrive in Rome by December 15, 2004.
2. So that I might read the letters all at once and so that they might be carefully organized, would you please address the envelopes as follows:

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
MISSIONS  
Congregazione della Missione  
Via dei Capasso, 30  
00164 ROMA  
ITALY

3. It is, of course, helpful to know the language beforehand, but it is not absolutely necessary. A period of cultural and language training will be provided for the missionaries. Details will vary according to the particular place to which a confrere is sent.
4. While we have decided that no automatic age cutoff would be established, it is surely necessary that the missionary have reasonably good health and the flexibility needed for inculturation.
5. Confreres who volunteer, by sending a letter to the Superior General, should inform the Visitor that they have done so. I will always dialogue with the Visitor about the matter.
6. Your letter should give some background about your person, your ministerial experience, your languages, and your training. It should also express any particular interests that you have, such as what mission you would like to take part in.
7. Even if you have already written in the past, please contact me again. Experience has demonstrated that confreres who are available at one moment might not be available at another, and vice-versa.

*To the members of the Congregation of the Mission:  
Messengers of Hope*

Dear Brothers,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

In this, my first Advent letter, I would like to share with you three reflections and offer a practical application for our life as followers of Jesus Christ, evangelizer of the poor.

**Three reflections**

The core of this Advent letter is taken from comments I received in reference to my circular of 11 September.

1. A person gave a beautiful reflection concerning what I wrote about “gift-giving” and giving ourselves as gift, saying: if all of us who are called to be faithful to St. Vincent’s spirit could see ourselves as gift to those whom we serve, whether that be in missions *ad gentes*, popular missions, parish work, administration, hospitals, or teaching, what a wonderful thing that would be. Ask yourselves, my brothers, “Do I see myself as gift?” Christmas, for which Advent is a preparation, is traditionally a time of gift-giving. **Let us reflect on our own giftedness and our giving of ourselves as gift to those whom we serve this Advent season.**
2. Another person posed a question raised by my reminder that St. Vincent calls us to be a part of the Universal Church. It was asked what we should do in situations where the people with whom we work and share our ministry are in conflict with the teachings of the official Church. What is our stand before them? My response to this person is my response to each of us who desires to live the Gospels in a radical way. We are called to be compassionate to all. In our relationships we see first the person, as Jesus did, and we share from our hearts the love he has for him or her. When I was in the seminary someone once made a comment about the “uniqueness” of our Vincentian formation. We are taught first to see and love the person as person and later help that person come to understand what the Church’s doctrine is with regard to his or her own situation. During Advent we are to deepen our reflection on the Incarnation of God’s Word: “And



the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). The Gospels reveal with clarity that the greatest expression of God's love for humanity is in God's becoming one like us. We are called to reflect God's love to humanity in and through our signs of compassion, our passion for and with those who suffer. **Let this time of Advent be a time of reflecting on the quality of our compassion, especially to the most abandoned.**

3. In another note, someone commented on my letter and our call to conform our lives more radically to the lives of the poor, allowing the poor to be our teachers. My reflection was taken a step further saying that our formation ought to be carried out in the context of direct experience with the poor. This Advent, when we are invited to love more deeply the Lord who chose to show his love by being born poor, let us liken ourselves to Jesus and liken ourselves to the poor, doing so in and through our closeness to them. I recommend that our programs of initial formation, and even our programs of ongoing formation, provide ample opportunities for contact with the poor, not necessarily putting an emphasis on what "we can do for them," but rather on what "we can be with them," so that we might come to know and love more deeply the Lord Jesus who will speak to us through them. **Let this Advent be a time of recommitment in our walking more faithfully with the Lord and hence walking more faithfully with the poor.**

### ***A practical application***

During Advent, I invite you, my brothers, to be more in tune with the Word of God that the Church presents us on a daily basis. We all know that in this special time of the year there is a richness in the Word of God that calls us all to personal and communal conversion, giving us at the same time the grace to edify those with whom we live and inviting us to be instruments in the transformation of our world.

**I encourage everyone to reflect on God's Word daily.** The experience of *lectio divina* is an easy practice that we all know and use. We can do it very simply, perhaps before retiring in the evening, by reading over God's Word and seeing what common theme exists between the first reading and the Gospel. Reflecting on that Word before sleeping each night and again in the morning when we awake, we could ask ourselves the question: "What does God's Word say to me in my actual living situation?" Our personal reflections can be enriched by scriptural commentaries like the Vincentian Family website's "daily commentary" — the SSVP website is doing a similar reflection on the Word during this season.

**In community, I encourage you to share the Word of God during Advent.** Perhaps the most edifying way would be to share

with one another the Sunday readings. A good practice could be to gather for an hour to listen to the Word of God for the following Sunday and then share that Word, asking what it says to us individually, what it says to us as a community. After spending an hour or so sharing the Word, we could spend some time exchanging experiences that occurred during the week. Let us laugh and just enjoy one another's company. It is a real way of deepening our communal reflection on the Word of God and living out that Word in community.

**I would also like to encourage you, my brothers, to come together during Advent with the people with whom you share the apostolate, or gather with other groups of the Vincentian Family, to reflect together on some theme that the Word of God highlights during Advent.** I am amazed by the way people can easily relate the Word to their own life situations. It is a beautiful faith experience that certainly edifies me and can help to challenge us all. What does the Word of God say in terms of our own reality? In terms of our family situations? In terms of life in our neighborhood, our country, or in the world in which we are living? What is God's Word saying? To what is God's Word calling us individually, or as a faith community, or as members of the Vincentian Family? As we all know too well, more often than not, we are evangelized by those whom we are called to evangelize. Let us reflect on God's Word so that it challenges us, as Family, to be a prophetic voice to the poor.

These are some suggestions I offer you, my brothers, this Advent season. The Word of God is rich in itself. Let the Spirit speak to you and lead you, individually, communally, together with the people with whom you share your ministry, together as the Vincentian Family.

May Mary, ever attentive to the Word of God, help us to be docile to the voice of the Spirit. Through her intercession, I ask the Lord to bless you and fill each of you with all the joy and peace that he comes to bring us at Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
*Superior General*

*Vincentiana*, November-December 2004

## Appointments and Confirmations by the Superior General

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<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>PROVINCE</b>
17-06-2004	FERNÁNDEZ RIOL José	Director DC	Pamplona
09-09-2004	RAMOS CÁRCAMO José F.	Visitor	Central America
18-09-2004	CERQUERA T. Juan Carlos	Secretary General	General Curia
20-09-2004	BECERRA VÁZQUEZ Alfredo	Director Publications	General Curia
20-09-2004	GINETE Manuel	Del. SG Vincentian Family	General Curia
16-10-2004	DE PAULA Agnaldo Aparecido	Visitor	Rio de Janeiro
21-10-2004	VARGAS Frank	Superior	Solomon Islands
22-10-2004	BALOI Armindo Alfredo	Director DC	Mozambique
08-11-2004	ALVES José Augusto	Visitor	Portugal
08-11-2004	OTERO FROUFE Antonio	Visitor	Salamanca
17-11-2004	MULET COLL José	Director DC	Barcelona
20-11-2004	GALVIS NIETO Arturo	Director DC	Chile
22-11-2004	BORLIK DANIEL	Visitor	USA South

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# FEATURE:

## Some “Lesser-Known” Confreres (I)

### Words of Life, Not a Life of Words

by Luigi Mezzadri, C.M.  
*Province of Rome*

“So, Brothers, have a look at your life and ask yourselves whether you are God’s workmen. Let each one put his activity under scrutiny and check whether he is working in God’s vineyard. You see, anyone who in this present life is watching out for his own interests has not gone into the Lord’s vineyard. On the other hand, the man whose efforts are directed towards God’s glory rather than to his own interest, who is tired out through charitable work and time given to God, whose commitment is to the good of souls and who wants to bring others to eternal life along with himself, is working for the Lord” (St. Gregory the Great [604]: *Homilies XIX*, 1-3).

There are lives which are lived out in the shadows, lives of humble people. There are lives of which nothing survives except the shadows. There are people whom it is better to forget. There are lives which we are duty bound to draw out from the shadows because, even though their lives are over, they continue to challenge and teach us.

This is the feeling we get when we read these notices. The “notices” are neither necrologies nor panegyrics. They are sort of journey notes of persons, whom we knew (as some were privileged to do) or would like to have known, who have been brought back into view as a stimulating ideal of Vincentian life.

The confreres in question had varied experiences. They belong to different countries. Three are Europeans transplanted into

America. Three were bishops. Three, again, are of the 19<sup>th</sup> century while another three lived in the light of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Four are recalled because of their pastoral work, while the work of two others was at a high cultural level.

There is also another aspect to this. During the first hundred years of its life there developed within the Congregation of the Mission varying Vincentian ways and styles of doing things. The Congregation in France was basically a community of seminaries and parishes, very much tied to the government and with a pro-Gallican ecclesiology. In the Italian states, on the other hand, the missionaries have been more open to the clergy and to missions, and have been closely linked with the Papacy.

It would have been a miracle if such different starting points had not produced disagreements. **Bishop Giuseppe Rosati (1789-1843)** springs from a disunited Community. At that time, in fact, the Congregation was split into two stumps, with a vicar general resident in Rome, who had jurisdiction over the entire Congregation, and a vicar general resident in Paris whose jurisdiction extended only to France and the Daughters of Charity. In spite of this the Community was able to work out its own way of operating. Rosati was a member of the Province of Rome, born in Sora. Along with Felice De Andreis (1778-1820) he was one of the founders of the American Province. He established the Congregation in the United States and was chosen by the Sulpician Msgr. Du Bourg, Bishop of Louisiana, as his coadjutor. When Du Bourg resigned, the Holy See split the diocese in two (1826) and entrusted the new diocese of Saint Louis to Rosati. This was an enormous territory which would eventually comprise at least 46 different dioceses. He constructed many churches but more importantly he built up the spiritual Church. He helped the Congregation to consolidate itself in the United States, but favoured the reunification of the Vincentian Family in Europe. He was a great bishop because he was a holy bishop.

The same can be said of **Bishop Peter Schumacher (1839-1902)**, the cause of whose canonization is approaching the end of its procedural journey. He was born in the Prussian Rhineland. In that area, Wilhelm Ketteler (1811-1877) was Archbishop of Mainz, a man open to social awareness. Schumacher entered the seminary in Paris and was ordained in 1862. After an initial missionary experience of six years in Chile (1863-1869) he was one of the founders of the Ecuador Province, where he spent 12 years in clergy formation and direction. In 1884 he was appointed Bishop of Portoviejo. In his pastoral ministry he was always a Vincentian bishop. He established the seminary, invited other congregations and orders to evangelize his diocese and organised charitable projects. In 1895 he was forced out of his diocese. He did not, however, live on with the sadness of an exile but with the hope of a saint.

The third sketch from the 1800s presented in this list is that of the Frenchman **Georges-Marie Salvaire (1847-1899)**. He was 24 years of age in 1871, a sad time in his native land. He was a missionary in Argentina, working among the indigenous peoples. He was a Marian apostle, on the model of Grignon de Monfort. It was he who was behind the building of the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin in Luján, the national shrine.

The new century began with a holy missionary, **José María Alcácer (1899-1994)**, a Spaniard, who got to its heart by the spoken word clothed with music. He was a precocious composer, and his vocation all through life was to listen to a “a music never heard.” It is a pity that such music has been little known outside Spain.

A Colombian, **Tulio Botero Salazar (1904-1981)** was Bishop of Zipaquirá (1952-1957) and later of Medellín (1957-1979). He would have been merely a name on a list of bishops if the hurricane of Vatican II had not struck him. As for many other bishops the Council was a new Pentecost for him. It was like a rebirth. He put into practice St. Augustine’s statement: “I am a Christian like you, but a bishop for you.” Medellín used to be just an episcopal city. It became a name and a symbol.

This panoramic viewing of significant figures closes with **Aleksander Usowicz (1912-2002)** from Poland. He was a man of wide culture, a philosopher and theologian. He knew, however, how to combine fidelity to classical scholastic thinking with an obligation to rethink the value of human dignity, of human rights, of freedom, of justice and of peace.

St. Gregory of Nyssa wrote a life of his sister St. Macrina, and composed the following as a summing-up of her prayer life: “Eternal God, on whom I have been focussed from my mother’s womb, whom my soul loved with all its strength, to whom I dedicated my body and my mind from my childhood up to now, you put beside me an angel of light who took me by the hand to the place of refuge where the water of repose was to be found, alongside the heart of the holy patriarchs” (GREGORY OF NYSSA, *The Life of St. Macrina*, 24).

The sketches given above are of “angels of light” for us, who can guide us along the road of the Third Millennium. Each of their lives was not a life of words, because each of them is a word for us.

(THOMAS DAVITT, C.M., translator)

## Joseph Rosati, C.M. (1789-1843)

Pioneer American Bishop<sup>1</sup>

by John E. Rybolt, C.M.

*Province of USA-Midwest*

“Accordingly, on the day devoted to commemorate the Lord’s Incarnation, [25 March 1823] in the Church of the Ascension at Donaldsonville, amidst a great concourse of people, the following pastors and members of the clergy of the Diocese being present.... I was anointed and consecrated by the Right Rev. Louis William DuBourg.”<sup>2</sup>

With these unadorned words, Joseph Rosati, described how he became the first Vincentian bishop in the United States, as well as the first Italian ordained a bishop in the New World. Who was this confrere raised to the episcopacy far from his homeland, and what is his story?

Born in Sora, a small town then in the kingdom of Naples, on 12 January 1789, he was baptized the next day with the mellifluous names Pietro Luigi Giuseppe Raffaele. Revolution and revolutionary ideas were the order of the day in the closing years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but young Giuseppe turned his thoughts to the Church. At the

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE: The writer has drawn on several sources for this notice on Joseph Rosati. Besides the bishop’s own correspondence and biographical notes, copies of which are in the DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, (DRMA) DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, the most significant works are: FREDERICK JOHN EASTERLY, C.M., *The Life of Rt. Rev. Joseph Rosati, C.M.* (Washington, 1942), the basic work; ROSSANA ANNA MARIA CAVACECE, *Il sorano Giuseppe Rosati e il cammino della Chiesa cattolica negli Stati Uniti d’America* (Naples, 1999), for some details of his childhood; GIUSEPPE GUERRA, C.M. - MARIO GUERRA, *Storia dei Missionari Vincenziani nell’Italia Meridionale* (Rome, 2003), and EDWARD R. UDOVIC, C.M., *Jean-Baptiste Étienne and the Vincentian Revival* ([Chicago], 2001), for details on the French-Italian conflicts of the 1840s; WILLIAM BARNABY FAHERTY, S.J., “In the Footsteps of Bishop Joseph Rosati. A Review Essay,” *Italian Americana* 1:2 (1975), 280-292; ANNABELLE M. MELVILLE, *Louis William DuBourg*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> (CHARLES L. SOUVAY, C.M.), “Documents from our Archives, Diary of Bishop Rosati,” *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review* 3:4 (October 1921) 320-321.

astonishing age of 12 he received the tonsure, and then began his philosophy studies. His providential participation in a mission preached in Sora by a Vincentian led him to apply for entrance into the Congregation. He began his novitiate in Rome 23 June 1807, and made his vows barely nine months later, 1 April 1808. He and his fellow novices had received a special papal dispensation in view of the occupation of Rome by French troops, and the attendant difficulty of continuing in the Eternal City.

After a visit to his ailing father in Sora, Giuseppe Rosati, C.M., returned to Rome in November to begin his theology at the already ancient house of Montecitorio. His professor of dogmatic theology would have a decisive impact on the rest of his life: Felix DeAndreis (1778-1820), later his superior in the foundation of the American mission. Because of Giuseppe's young age at entry, he finished his theological studies early and was ordained to the priesthood in the Montecitorio chapel, 10 February 1811, at age 22, again with a papal dispensation.

His life as a missionary then began in earnest, despite the presence of occupation troops. For example, he records in his meticulous diary the following for 23 April of the next year: "On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, we left Ponticelli for Poggio Mojano. Just before arriving there, I and my horse fell down a precipice but, thank the Lord, I was uninjured. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, the Mission began. I gave the talks and the fervorino [admonition]."<sup>3</sup> Three weeks later he nearly had a similar fall from his horse. His robust constitution and good health would serve him well in the wilds of America five years later.

During the next three years, he was occupied in preaching in Naples and then in other missions in the country areas, a task he often shared with his former professor, DeAndreis. Their frequent contact accounts for a letter that reached Giuseppe, preaching a mission at La Scarpa in mid-September. In it, DeAndreis "told me about the mission of Louisiana in North America, and that, knowing my dispositions, he had included me among the number, but that I had time to withdraw if I wished, and that I should answer him simply yes or no."<sup>4</sup> The generous young missionary — he was 26 — took counsel, prayed, and gave his simple yes, provided his superiors would agree.

Felix DeAndreis must certainly have reported that Louis William Dubourg, a Sulpician recently named Bishop of Louisiana, and now in Rome, was unwilling to be ordained without guarantees of some priests for his vast diocese, as large as the whole of western Europe.

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<sup>3</sup> "Memoria," entry for 23 April 1812.

<sup>4</sup> "Memoria," entry for 5 September 1815.



By God's providence, Dubourg, lodging at Montecitorio, had been captivated by the preaching and reputation of DeAndreis. Despite the reluctance of the Roman Province to lose one of its leading confreres to a new and distant mission, the bishop-elect secured their support, not without significant pressure from Vatican authorities, including Pius VII.

Rosati bade his farewells and with several other candidates left by sea from Rome to Genoa, and then to France where they spent several weeks in Bordeaux in final preparations for the Atlantic crossing. DeAndreis and the others left Rome two months later, traveling overland. The pioneer Vincentians left Bordeaux together on 13 June 1816, survived a hurricane and the danger of being becalmed, and arrived in Baltimore on 26 July. From there they went by coach or on foot to Pittsburgh, and then down the Ohio River to Louisville and Bardstown, where they were to spend nearly two years in pastoral preparation. During this time, Joseph (he regularly used this form of his name once he arrived in America), experienced firsthand ministry among both immigrants and the native Indians. DeAndreis described him as making good progress in English.

Since their superior was already in Missouri, it was Rosati who led the rest of the confreres and seminarians by boat down the Ohio River to the Mississippi, entering his future diocese for the first time on 27 September 1818. He reached the Barrens settlement, later called Perryville, 2 October, there to continue building St. Mary's Seminary, the motherhouse of the Congregation in North America. Winters were harsh for the Italian members, as was the lack of their traditional food and drink, but they gradually grew accustomed to the uncivilized frontier.

His surviving correspondence from this period gives us a detailed insight into his busy life: teaching, building, preaching, ministering to the parishioners and celebrating the sacraments. The greatest crisis of his young life was the death of his superior, Felix DeAndreis. He had seen his friend only occasionally during their Missouri years, and was absent when he died in St. Louis, 15 October 1820. One can only imagine the emotion as he welcomed his remains at the Barrens a few days later. He wrote his brother Nicola: "You cannot appreciate how afflicted we are by this dreadful event. It was not so for him since he was a saint, and lived and died as a saint. The span of his apostolic life was brief, especially in these lands, but full of blessings nonetheless. The bishop, the diocese, and our Congregation have lost a great support."<sup>5</sup> As a dutiful disciple, Rosati gathered what

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph Rosati to Nicola Rosati, from the Barrens, 15 (?) October 1820; original in Archives of the Procurator General, Rome. Typescript in DRMA.

testimony he could and wrote the first biography of his companion, later published in several languages.

With the loss of Fr. DeAndreis, Joseph Rosati became the superior of the American Vincentian mission, still part of the Roman Province. Between the years 1820 and 1823, he continued the task of building up the Church and the Congregation of the Mission throughout the diocese. He lamented the fact that several of his confreres were living alone in small parishes and hoped that, with the arrival of new vocations either from St. Mary's Seminary or directly from Europe, the Vincentians would once again resume community life.

Bishop Dubourg came to rely more and more heavily on "my dear superior" as he occasionally called him, and, as DeAndreis had predicted, he proposed Joseph Rosati for the episcopacy. He did so on the heels of an appointment in 1822 as vicar apostolic of the territories of Mississippi and Alabama, a post that both Rosati and the bishop declined. The following year, Dubourg proposed him as his coadjutor, while allowing him to remain superior of the Vincentians. In recognition of difficult communications with his provincial superiors in Rome, he was granted the faculties of a Visitor, although the American Province had not yet been established.

Since the Holy See made it clear that it would not allow a second refusal, the bishop-elect proceeded with plans for his ordination. He decided on the Church of the Ascension in Donaldsonville, because of its more convenient location between the two population centers of New Orleans to the south and St. Louis to the north.

After the ceremonies there, he visited parishes and communities in lower Louisiana before returning to his work at the Barrens. He resumed his classes as before, but found his workload increasing. To share the burden, he began to rely on two future confrere bishops, Leo Raymond de Neckere and John Mary Odin. The growth of the population in the new territories was explosive, and Bishops Dubourg and Rosati found it impossible to satisfy the demands for clergy and religious, despite their best efforts.

Another concern was the division of the diocese. Distances were enormous and it was next to impossible to travel during certain seasons, although most of the new settlements were on or near the Mississippi or one of its tributaries. The coadjutor had to travel often, more so during Dubourg's absences. To Rosati's surprise, the bishop resigned his see during a visit to Rome, thereby making Rosati the ordinary. In addition, Pope Gregory XVI decreed the division of the diocese, 14 July 1826. To add to his surprise, Rosati discovered that he would eventually be Bishop of New Orleans instead of St. Louis. But he proposed several reasons for reversing

this arrangement, which the Holy See soon accepted, not the least of which would have been his physical separation from the Congregation of the Mission. By a papal brief of 20 March 1827, he was therefore appointed the first Bishop of St. Louis, Missouri.

The influx of population in the many states and territories constituting his diocese brought with it pressing demands for the two traditional resources: men and money. The only seminary in both the new dioceses, New Orleans and St. Louis, was St. Mary's of the Barrens. To help maintain it, Rosati had sought help from Italy. One luckless confrere, Angelo Boccardo, arrived in the port of New Orleans with a bag of money and documents from Italy which he accidentally dropped into the swirling waters. Boccardo became so distressed that he returned at once to Italy, and the disappointed bishop continued the search for funds. Among other things, the seminarians at the Barrens were required either to teach in the lower classes, today's secondary school courses, or to help with other chores. One great undertaking there was the construction of the parish Church of the Assumption. Undoubtedly to the bishop's satisfaction, since he had been ordained a priest there, it was modeled on the Montecitorio house chapel, a plan employed by others for the chapels of the Spanish houses of Barcelona and Palma de Mallorca. The energetic young bishop also had to undertake the construction of a proper cathedral for his see city. This new cathedral, completed in 1834, replaced a ramshackle wooden structure — he described it as “a sort of hay barn”<sup>6</sup> — that had served Dubourg and his vicar-general, DeAndreis. Both of these Rosati buildings exist today as monuments to his leadership.

He invited Jesuits to undertake new ministries in his diocese, and was responsible for their outreach to the Native American populations farther to the west. He invited the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to begin a hospital in St. Louis, the first Catholic hospital of the west. It opened in 1828. Sisters of St. Joseph came from France to begin a work with the deaf. They arrived in 1837. He continued to support the work of the Sisters of Loretto, whom he had known at the Barrens. He relied on the charity of local Catholics to secure land for the many new parishes he founded, and made numerous appeals to charitable societies in Europe for funds to support his works.

Despite his attachment to the Congregation, his forced absence provoked unrest among the confreres, as is revealed in letters they wrote to their provincial superiors in Italy. At length, John Baptist Tornatore, Rosati's senior by six years, arrived to assume the superiorship of the sole house of the American mission. This left the

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<sup>6</sup> EASTERLY, *Life*, p. 128.

bishop free, at last, to devote himself more completely to his diocese and to the wider American church. One of his concerns was to suggest bishop candidates for new dioceses, a responsibility he took very seriously. During his career, in fact, he was the principal consecrator of six of them, including his confrere, the unfortunate de Neckere, who, already weakened with tuberculosis, would die of yellow fever a scant three years into his ministry as bishop of New Orleans.

Joseph Rosati also took part in the first four Provincial Councils of the Church in America. These predecessors of the meetings of today's National Conference of Catholic Bishops began in October 1829. The bishop profited from the first Council to visit along the way Bishop Joseph Flaget, who had welcomed DeAndreis and himself with their band of seminarians to Bardstown 13 years before. Because of his gift for languages, the other Council fathers deputed him to write the official letter in Latin to Pius VIII. This significant letter summarizes the accomplishments of all the bishops, including Rosati. "Six ecclesiastical seminaries, the hope of our churches, have already been established, and are governed in holy discipline by pious and learned priests; nine colleges under ecclesiastical control, the glory of the Catholic name, have been erected in different States to train boys and young men in piety, arts and the higher branches of science; three of these have been chartered as universities by the legislatures; 33 monasteries and houses of religious women... houses of religious of the Order of Preachers and the Society of Jesus, of secular priests of the Congregation of the Mission, and of St. Sulpice, from which, as centers, priests are sent out to missions...."<sup>7</sup>

A second Provincial Council took place, likewise in Baltimore, the first American see, in 1833, at which the Fathers named Bishops Rosati and Fenwick of Boston to prepare a complete edition of the *Rituale* for use in the United States. This work would continue through many editions, and it demonstrates Rosati's attention to detail.

In 1835, the General Assembly of the Congregation, meeting in Paris, determined to erect the American Province, the first such outside Europe in the history of the Community. John Mary Odin attended this Assembly as a representative of the Americans and discussed with the newly elected Superior General, Jean-Baptiste Nozo, the situation of St. Mary's of the Barrens, the American *berceau*. Because it was both a secular college and a theological seminary, Nozo's council decreed the suppression of the college. Since he had not been consulted in advance, Rosati was surprised but not defeated. He wrote to John Timon, the newly named

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

American provincial: "I shall make my observations to the Superior General on the decrees, communicate them to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda and to our Holy Father the Pope himself; and rather than place myself in a state of war against those who ought to be my first helpers for more lawful combats, I shall ask our Holy Father to accept my resignation and grant me the grace of spending the rest of my life in retirement to prepare for death."<sup>8</sup> (The bishop, it should not be forgotten, was only 46 years old.) He did as he determined, and at length Nozo rescinded the suppression of this important apostolate.

This college for young men at the Barrens was joined by another for young women, under the direction of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Under the leadership of Philippine Duchesne, to be canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1988, the school began with orphan girls and gradually grew in importance. The Jesuits had their college in the see city. The bishop invited the Sisters of the Visitation from Baltimore to enter his diocese, which they did in 1833, to provide an education for girls. Continuing in the same vein, he would encourage the founder of the Brothers of St. Francis Xavier (the Xaverian Brothers) in his ministry. He would send the Brothers to the diocese after the bishop's departure. Rosati likewise encouraged the Viatorian Brothers to come to the diocese. They did so, however, only in 1842. In these and other ways, this frontier bishop encouraged Catholic education and left behind him an education system second only to that of Baltimore.

When Rosati left for the Fourth Provincial Council of Baltimore, scheduled for 1840, he could not have known that he was leaving his diocese for the last time. Before departing, he held a diocesan synod, the first for St. Louis, which helped to regulate ecclesiastical discipline in his vast territory. Among the concerns reflected in the decrees were those governing the liturgy. He then turned his attention to the Provincial Council and to a business trip to Europe. On this his first return since leaving in 1816, he was planning to recruit men and raise money, as well as to handle other administrative matters involving the Holy See.

He enjoyed for the first time the hospitality of the new Maison-Mère in Paris, just in time for the feast of St. Vincent, 19 July. He discussed with the Superior General, Jean-Baptiste Nozo, a possible union of the American Sisters of Charity with the Daughters of Charity; this would take place ten years later. Little did Rosati realize that in a few years' time, he would be negotiating with the same Nozo about a much more sensitive topic, the latter's resignation as Superior General.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

The bishop's travels took him to Lyons, where he made financial appeals, and then at last to his native Italy. He received an unusually warm welcome from the Pope. "As soon as [the Pope] saw me, he got up and came toward me and, not giving me the time to make the usual triple genuflections, he embraced me and kept me long between his arms and addressed to me the most affectionate words."<sup>9</sup> Later, he visited his surviving family in Sora, particularly his brother Nicola, who, like his distinguished brother, preserved their extensive correspondence. With characteristic humility, Giuseppe closed the description of his hometown reception: "In the evening, the street on which my house is located was lighted, there was a volley of cannon shot, musicians played, etc. All this for a poor American bishop."<sup>10</sup>

Another mission then presented itself for this American bishop, now 51 years old and apparently in his prime. The Holy See had been negotiating for years with the government of Haiti to reestablish the hierarchy there. An American bishop, John England, had negotiated for the Holy See with the president of the republic, which extended over both Santo Domingo and Haiti, but by 1836 these came to nothing. President Boyer requested new talks, and Gregory XVI appointed Rosati Apostolic Delegate for this task.<sup>11</sup> He left in 1841 and landed in Philadelphia to ordain to the episcopacy his coadjutor and eventual successor, Peter Richard Kenrick. Arriving in Port-au-Prince a few weeks later, he set to work with great speed. Three main meetings were held to draw up a concordat, signed on 17 February 1842. The details of this document differ greatly from modern ecclesiastical government, but the Apostolic Delegate believed he was getting the best arrangement he could in the face of the disastrous condition of the Haitian Church. Since Haiti had lacked effective Church organization for decades, the civil government had moved into the vacuum and was naturally reluctant to cede any power back to the Church.

Rosati returned to Rome by April of that year, concordat in hand, but the document aroused so much discussion that the Holy See determined to send him back for further negotiations. In any case, Jean-Paul Boyer was overthrown early in 1843, thus putting an end for a time to the bishop's labors. Rosati's concordat, based on that of England, would be ratified only in 1860.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>11</sup> This was not his first such commission. In 1829-1830, because of persecutions in Mexico, no bishop was able to ordain. The Holy See asked Rosati, the closest resident bishop, to help. Despite lengthy preparations, the mission came to nothing. He did, however, consecrate the holy oils for Mexico during Holy Week of 1829, while pontificating in New Orleans.

As if the bishop did not have enough concerns, the Congregation of the Mission and the Holy See next called on his expertise during these final months of his life to solve major issues confronting the Vincentians. The fundamental issue stemmed from the perceptions of the Italian confreres that the French were dominating the government of the Congregation through a large number of small French or French-directed provinces, and with the seat of government in Paris. Several Italians suggested that the French domination could be overcome by moving the center of the Congregation to Rome and by making the General Assemblies and the General Council more internationally representative. The occasion for opening this discussion, which had been carried on intermittently since the middle of the previous century, was the leave of absence that Jean-Baptiste Nozo had taken, the result of which was an irregular situation for the Congregation. The Holy See asked Rosati to intervene with Nozo, and the two of them met in Rome with a cardinal to look for a solution.

The Holy See then delegated Rosati to chair a meeting between French and Italian Vincentians to try to negotiate a solution to the pressing problems. A solution was reached, generally favoring the French positions, and it was approved by a committee of cardinals. Shortly afterwards, the bishop prepared to leave to return to Haiti, with a stop in Baltimore for another Provincial Council. He got as far as Paris by the beginning of April 1843, where his health grew worse. It is unclear what he was suffering from, but it may have been tuberculosis. After a time of rest, he returned to Italy to regain his health, but the journey weakened him seriously. He died in Rome, 25 September 1843, after a full and strenuous life. He was only 54 years old.

Because the Pope had honored Rosati by appointing him Assistant at the Pontifical Throne, his funeral was conducted with great solemnity. He was buried at Montecitorio, where he remained until the Roman confreres moved to the Collegio Leoniano. From there, in 1954, his remains were returned to the cathedral that he had built in St. Louis.

What kind of a man was this Italian-American confrere? Writing in 1975, a Jesuit historian has aptly summarized his personality and gifts. "Rosati had all the characteristics a missionary bishop should have: organizational ability, zeal, order, discipline, dedication, and bounce. He was in love with his work and a loving associate of all his coworkers. He organized the diocese. He put spirit back into despondent missionaries who would have otherwise returned to Europe. He was appreciative of everything well done."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> FAHERTY, "Footsteps," p. 290.

A more recent appreciation comes from Pope John Paul II, in a homily delivered in St. Louis, 27 January 1999. “In fidelity to Christ’s command to evangelize, the first pastor of this local Church, Bishop Joseph Rosati — who came from the town of Sora, very near Rome — promoted outstanding missionary activity from the beginning. In fact, today we can count 46 different dioceses in the area which Bishop Rosati served.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Homily* (Trans World Dome, 27 January 1999), [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/travels/](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/travels/).



# From Exile to Glory: Bishop Peter Schumacher, C.M. (1839-1902)

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*Province of Colombia*

## **Introduction**

This article is not presented as a biography of Bishop Peter Schumacher, C.M., the second bishop of Portoviejo (Ecuador). Rather this essay is written as a pious remembrance of a venerable confrere and missionary. In his impenetrable ways, God led Fr. Schumacher on a courageous and self-sacrificing journey, making use of his meritorious life and enviable vocation. God led him from the arid desert, lacking in ideals (a place where we all find ourselves at different times if we become content with mediocrity) to the joy and fulfillment of imperishable glory, a glory to which he had always aspired.

Fr. Schumacher understood the psalmist's idea of "the perfect way" (Ps 18:31) and this led him to meditate on another passage: "The Lord guides the humble to justice... he teaches them the way" (Ps 25:9-10). This reflection enabled him to accept the consequences that flow from prayer centered on the mystery of the Son of God made man, who revealed the essence of his being and his action when he said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Jn 14:6).

## **1. His home and childhood**

On the shores of the Rhine River in Germany, on the road from Cologne to Aachen, there is a beautiful town called Kerpen (formerly known as Kerpen the Royal). It has a long history of wars with its neighbors, some ending in victory, others in defeat, the outcome being signaled by the hoisting of the flag of the conqueror: German, French, Spanish, as the case might be. A reminder of these events was seen in the fact that the ancient mansions were always occupied by the conquerors or princes who peacefully relaxed there.

On 14 September 1839, Peter Schumacher was born in the Christian home of Theodor Schumacher and Christina Niessen. He

was one of nine children; five died prematurely and four survived: Heinrich (the third child who was given this name), later married; Gerhard became a diocesan priest; Peter and Gertrud, twins, were called to the Vincentian Congregations, Peter to the Congregation of the Mission and Gertrud to the Daughters of Charity. The last child was born in 1844, immediately baptized and then died. Because he was not baptized in the parish church we do not know his name. According to his parents, he was the most beautiful of all the children.

Besides the loving and dedicated formation that he received from his parents and from the favorable spiritual environment in which he lived, Peter also benefited from the guidance and teaching of Jakob Wilhelm Statz, a prestigious educator at that time who knew how to win the hearts of young people through love, selflessness and understanding. All of these qualities enabled him to share his knowledge with these young people and form them for life. In this setting, young Peter was ready to receive his First Communion at the age of 12. Besides this "Eucharistic seed" there was also a "missionary seed" planted within him. The Vincentians, who had recently established themselves in Cologne and were attached to the Motherhouse in Paris from 2 July 1851, preached a mission in Kerpen. The people responded very positively and their Catholic fervor was reanimated. Later in life, this seed would bear fruit in the life of Peter.

Meanwhile, responding to his father's desire and the advice of Mr. Uhle, Peter, at the age of 13, went to Perl, Trier, to begin his initial studies in pharmacy and there began secondary studies. His young age, however, prevented him from entering this specialty and it was then that he was able to freely express his own desire: "They want me to be a pharmacist but I will not be one... be at peace though, I have decided to study theology, like my brother Gerhard" (he was preparing for the diocesan priesthood).<sup>1</sup>

Peter went to Münstereifel to continue his studies, with the possibility of later entering the university in Bonn. When Mr. Uhle, a family friend, entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1853, Peter became convinced of his Vincentian vocation. He dedicated much time in reflection and consultation with his spiritual director. In Cologne, he lived with the Vincentians during a period of discernment and later the Congregation accepted his petition to make his novitiate in Paris.

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<sup>1</sup> LEONARDO DAUTZENBERG, C.M., *Ilmo. Sr. Pedro Schumacher. Obispo de Portoviejo*, Translation by Dr. Wilfrido Loor (Vicar General of Msgr. Schumacher), Editorial Ecuatoriana, Quito, Ecuador, 1968, p. 19.

## 2. His missionary journey 1857-1902

### 2.1. Formation period

On 6 October 1857, Peter Schumacher, at the age of 18, began his missionary journey in Paris. There he entered the Internal Seminary (the novitiate) of the Congregation of the Mission, located at the Motherhouse. This was the foundational stage of his Vincentian vocation and he entered this stage of formation with a deep sense of responsibility and commitment. His missionary life emerges from the silence of this period of his life and we find documentation of this fact in the letters that he wrote to his family beginning on 5 October 1857. In this letter we find the following spontaneous affirmation: "I feel very happy, in fact I believe that there is no one else on earth more blessed than I."<sup>2</sup> This appraisal of his situation is complimented by many others which filled the letters that he wrote to his family.

Within the Congregation the data are more limited and discreet, as often happens, and one must take that into account if one would like to make a deeper analysis. "One knows Mr. Schumacher through his letters."<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, it is good to consider the evaluation of one of his companions, who would later become the Superior General, Antoine Fiat: "His conduct in the novitiate always edified me; we singled him out as a model, and in reality he truly was one."<sup>4</sup> We can add to this Fr. Chinchon's (who was Novice Master at the Motherhouse for 26 years) recognized quality as formator. During this period of formation, it is important to point out some events that stimulated him and deepened his commitment:

- On 29 August 1859, his brother Gerhard was ordained a diocesan priest. Unfortunately his ministry was brief because he died on 27 May 1873;
- In October 1859, Peter Schumacher pronounced his holy vows;
- On 3 June 1861, in Cologne, and not in Paris, he received the order of subdiaconate and his family was able to participate in this event;
- On 14 June 1862, he was ordained a priest in Paris. A retired bishop from Latin America presided at this

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, cf. pp. 24-26.

<sup>4</sup> San EZEQUIEL MORENO, Bishop of Pasto (Colombia): "Funeral eulogy" in the Cathedral of Pasto (2 August 1902).

ceremony which was done very quietly. This permitted him a greater intimacy with God and allowed him to reiterate, in a peaceful way, his missionary desire.

## **2.2. Missionary in Chile**

This was his first assignment in the Congregation and it gave him great satisfaction. On 2 November 1862, with another missionary and 20 Daughters of Charity, among them his sister Gertrud, he began his journey across the Atlantic. Leaving from the port of Le Havre, they arrived at Cape Horn on 25 November and at Valparaíso on 11 January 1863. The sisters remained there but Fr. Schumacher and his companion continued their journey on 18 January to “La Serena,” the Vincentian missionary center. From there they traveled throughout Chile on their apostolic journeys. He remained in Chile for six years. He loved this mission and dedicated himself to the work there with all his energy and love. Unfortunately, he became ill and exhausted physically by the work. He returned to Europe in 1869 to recuperate his health.

## **2.3. Montpellier**

While in Europe, he spent some time in Kerpen with his parents and took four weeks rest in Cologne, in the house of the Vincentians. Upon his return to Paris, in the fall of 1869, his superiors assigned him to the seminary in Montpellier. There he dedicated himself to the formation and teaching of the seminarians, preaching spiritual retreats and other ministries. We are able to summarize his experience there with the words: “He was a sick man in search of health, but he worked like a healthy man.” Despite the care received and being in a good area of the country, he did not feel well in France: he suffered during the French-German War of 1870. Furthermore, his sights and his heart were on Chile and he sought the beloved “corner” of his service to the poor.<sup>5</sup> This yearning lasted for three years.

## **2.4. Quito - Ecuador**

In 1870 the first Vincentians arrived in Quito: Frs. Claverie, Lafay and Stappers. They awaited other missionaries in order to begin work at the seminary. As so often happens, and this particularly for Fr. Schumacher, the plans of God are not always in accord with the desires of men and so in order to respond to the

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<sup>5</sup> DAUTZENBERG, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.

persistent pleas of the Archbishop of Quito, the superiors in Paris, instead of Fr. Schumacher going back to Chile, decided to send him to Quito, to take on the direction and new organization of the Archdiocesan Seminary. On 10 September 1872, accompanied by Fr. Gaudefrey, he arrived at his new destination. His work at the seminary would prove to be very difficult and very complicated.

The seminary was under the direction of the Jesuit community and was joined to a school which they also directed. This presented difficulties in maintaining discipline and also provided few vocations. This marked the prelude to a tense struggle against adversity in all its nuances: independence, vocations, economic problems, and a disastrous physical plant (on this matter, Fr. Foing, the Visitor, said: "This is an impossible place"). Indeed when describing the building that they took over and which was the former convent and novitiate of St. Francis, it was said that this place was very humid, lacked lighting and adequate fresh air, had uncomfortable living quarters and common rooms, etc. But providential resources were not lacking and, through human intervention, fundamental solutions were achieved little by little:

- Unconditional and continuing support from the Archbishop and the Papal Delegate;
- Effective and timely help from Gabriel García Moreno, President of the country and a great Catholic;
- Tireless concern of Fr. Foing, Visitor of the Province of Central America;
- The surprising organizational skill of Fr. Schumacher, who, besides being a good priest and a learned and competent teacher, was also an able carpenter and mason.

He realized that the deficiencies could not be overcome "with a few small repairs," and so he set in motion a tremendous work: the construction of a new building for the seminarians (major and minor). He undertook this work with a determined resolve and happily he was able to achieve his goal. With reason then, *La voz del pueblo [The Voice of the People]*, noted in 1873: "Fr. Schumacher knew how to multiply in an admirable way resources and strength; in his hand one was like ten... besides his intelligence, activity and constancy... his selflessness and heroic sacrifice deserve our gratitude, not only our words of gratitude but a gratitude that is expressed through action and commitment."<sup>6</sup>

It is impossible to go into further detail here. Rather this brief summary of his work on behalf of the Seminary of San José in Quito

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<sup>6</sup> San EZEQUIEL MORENO, *op. cit.*

enables us to understand that all of this would never have been achieved without an enterprising spirit driven by love. Yet even more important and deeper was the spiritual work that Fr. Suchmacher carried out during his 12 years in the formation of future priests.

The people of Quito had a very clear concept of his gifts as an educator and formator of the clergy. When they saw him in the street, they pointed him out saying: "Look, the man who gives us such good priests." Through a gift of God, he was very friendly and understood the young men. Everyone admired and loved him, but they also knew he was inflexible in matters of morality and righteousness. He demanded dignity and respect, discipline, responsibility and study from the seminarians, but he also knew, when the moment was right, to give them time for rest and relaxation.

In the classroom, his philosophical and theological lessons flowed with a marvelous clarity, since he knew how to teach. His most valuable and significant lessons, however, sprang forth from his priestly and missionary heart, as a living teaching, as a breath of prayer and holiness, of poverty, humility, charity, as nourishment of ideals in the young aspirants to the priesthood. Covering all the aspects that Fr. Schumacher took into account as a formator in Quito, he presents us with simplicity and as a synthesis that which he communicated to the new Superior General, Fr. Antoine Fiat, in a letter dated 8 January 1879: "With respect to the two seminarians in Quito, I believe it is my duty in conscience to inform you that the spirit that animates them is a very comforting one. Our major seminarians are outstanding in piety and their good will far surpasses our expectations."

Three significant events occurred during his 12 years in Quito and though he was not directly involved in them, they affected him greatly:

1. The vile assassination of the president, Dr. Gabriel García Moreno in December 1875. He was a generous benefactor of the seminary and a good friend of Fr. Schumacher.
2. The sacrilegious poisoning of Bishop Checa, the Archbishop of Quito, in the cathedral on 30 March 1877 during one of the celebrations of Holy Week. This was a difficult moment for Fr. Schumacher because he and the archbishop were joined together by bonds of close collaboration and mutual esteem.
3. He was particularly affected by the death of Fr. Boré, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, in June 1878. As a result of this event, a General Assembly was convoked to elect his successor. Since Fr. Foing, the

Visitor of Central America was unable to participate in the Assembly, Fr. Schumacher, as Vice-Visitor, traveled to Paris.

## 2.5. Bishop of Portoviejo

The 12 years Fr. Schumacher dedicated himself to the service of the Church and the Congregation of the Mission in Quito made him an outstanding ecclesiastical figure in Ecuador. Today, when we historically examine the many good works that he accomplished, we are aware that the information that was sent to Rome showed that he possessed the necessary and admirable qualities that led Pope Leo XIII to name him the new bishop of Portoviejo. This nomination occurred in 1884 and he replaced Bishop Luis Tola, who was the first bishop of that diocese from 1871.

The Diocese of Portoviejo was comprised of two provinces, Manabí and Esmeraldas, provinces located between Quito and Guayaquil. The nomination of Fr. Schumacher as bishop was a great loss for the Church in Quito. But the needs of Portoviejo, an extensive diocese with few priests, required a good pastor. Therefore these realities were more urgent than the sincere desires of the people of Quito who wanted him to remain there.

He went to Portoviejo and was received with great applause from many good people who wished him success. At the same time, however, some clerics feared him to be an "Achilles heel," one who would challenge their lack of discipline and earthly lifestyle; thus they felt it was a mistake to name a foreigner as their bishop. Fr. Schumacher was ordained a bishop in the cathedral of Quito on 31 May 1885, the feast of the Blessed Trinity. Archbishop José Ignacio Ordoñez presided at this ceremony. The new bishop spoke of a curious detail: on 15 June 1851, he had received his First Communion on the feast of the Blessed Trinity, and on 15 June 1862, he was ordained a priest also on the feast of the Blessed Trinity.

Despite the long distance between Germany and Ecuador, his family was always very close to him affectively and he loved them very much. His family was able to be present for his Episcopal ordination and he considered this to be a true gift from heaven. His brother Heinrich presented him with a pectoral cross that he wore until his death. His sister Gertrud, a Daughter of Charity (María Luisa), who had gone to Chile with a group of 20 sisters and who had not seen her brother in 15 years, was in Quito from August 1884 and accompanied him at his ordination.

a) *Bishop Schumacher's initial contact with the diocese was his first pastoral letter dated 24 June 1885*

Today we are able to appreciate and analyze the thought that went into the conception and implementation of a true "program of governance." He saw obedience to the Divine will as the origin of his mandate to renounce his beloved work as a formator and become the tiller of soil in a new land. Mistrustful of his own strength but trusting in Divine assistance, he spoke with simplicity about himself as a member of the Congregation of the Mission that set him afire with missionary zeal. He greeted the people of his diocese warmly: "As I greet you today, for the first time, as the pastor of your souls.... I have no other title nor merit except that of knowing I have been sent to you by the successor of St. Peter, the voice and interpreter of the Divine Will."

Later he presents his program as necessities and tasks:

1. The lack of priests and the need to supplement the existing clergy with others;
2. The urgent need to visit the different places of the diocese;
3. The absence of religious communities and the need to bring them here to work in the area of education and in the missionary centers. But, there was also a need to see women's communities established in the diocese, dedicated to charitable works, e.g., consoling and comforting the sick and those who suffer from poverty, caring for abandoned children;
4. The need to create, immediately, some educational institutions;
5. The need to intensify devotion to Mary, the Immaculate Mother, placing before her all our desires and hopes:
  - May her name resound in the depths of the jungle, in the huts of the poor and in the lavish mansions of the wealthy;
  - May her temples and shrines, better than trails blazed with blades, indicate the happy road to peace.

In light of this valuable guide of his pastoral work for the Diocese of Portoviejo, and strictly following his outline, we can:

- recognize what he did;
- find explanations for what he could not do or others destroyed;
- discover the truth or falsehood of the cruel accusations of his enemies;



- recognize as well the state, revolutionary or Masonic machinations that worked against him and that, little by little, pervaded the environment, threatened him with death, and, in the end, ostracized him and forced him into exile.

b) *Let us call to mind some facts*

- Bishop Schumacher was truly tireless in his search for more priests. He looked for these both within the country and abroad, especially in Europe. He knocked on the doors of convents and religious communities (Vincentians, Capuchins, Benedictines, Franciscans, Jesuits, and others). He humbly asked for economic assistance (in the United States he could be seen in the streets begging for alms for his works). The most important and most lasting of his works was the construction of the seminary. Its success is seen in the fact that while there were only nine priests in the diocese at the beginning of his episcopacy, when he left it there were more than 50 priests.
- In the same way he knocked on the doors of the communities of women religious (Daughters of Charity, Benedictines of England and the United States) both in Europe and the United States. While traveling through New York, he met with Fr. Buenaventura, a Capuchin Brother, and spoke to him about the great spiritual needs of the diocese: young children and adolescents deprived of a Christian education for lack of teaching communities of religious. Fr. Buenaventura spoke to him of the Franciscan Sisters in the Convent of Maria Hilf, in Altstätten (Switzerland). The bishop traveled there and spoke with Mother Bernarda Buther who promised to send seven sisters to the mission.
- He obtained from Rome the necessary dispensations for them to leave the Maria Hilf convent and join the diocese of Portoviejo, freeing them even from the norm of observing the cloister. Mother Bernarda Buther and Mother Caridad Brader were among the group of seven sisters who traveled to Ecuador. They left Switzerland on 19 June 1888 and arrived in Mante on 4 August. They settled in Chone and the bishop had a dwelling built for them in the forest. These were heroic women and one of them, a novice, Otmaria Haltmeier, 22 years old, died because of the harsh climate.
- With the help of different communities who generously responded to his calls, he organized real days of charitable works at the service of the poor. He founded a school or a

handicraft institute, properly equipped with tools and work machines. He gave tools to the farmers and personally taught them how to use these tools. While he had an extraordinary gift for knowledge and books, he was also an expert in simple manual labor.

- In Europe he acquired a printing press that enabled him to produce books, messages, pastoral letters (24 in all), timely orientations, defense of the Church's doctrine against the errors of his enemies, a Catholic weekly newspaper, *El Hogar Cristiano [The Christian Home]*, which provided a wonderful way for him to communicate with and orient the diocese.

All these pastoral options set in motion caused hatred and indignation among the anticlerical groups that were inspired by revolutionary ideas. They looked for ways to rid themselves of this annoying person. They threatened him with death and while the bishop miraculously escaped the attacks, the road to exile appeared before him. Particularly terrible was the revolution of Alfaro, which set fire in the territories where Bishop Schumacher labored and which aroused outrageous calumnies against the prelate. His works and goods were expropriated, as occurred with the school which the bishop built and maintained and which later was called the Alfaro School, with real cynicism. After having completed ten years of pastoral work in Portoviejo, the bishop was obliged to flee to Quito where he arrived on 20 July 1895, with a broken heart and in need of finding tranquility somewhere else.

## **2.6. Colombia was the place [Túquerres - Samaniego]**

Accompanied by his good, faithful priests, he traveled at night to Colombia. That night, Quito became an open door to exile.<sup>7</sup>

Given the insecure conditions that were present and increasing, the Franciscan Sisters, whom Bishop Schumacher brought from Switzerland, established a house in Túquerres, at 3,100 meters above sea level. There Mother Caridad Brader was named Director General of the schools. She arrived there on 10 March 1893 with six other sisters and with the blessing of the people. When the bishop left Ecuador, Mother Bernarda Buther and the rest of her companions also had to leave. Mother Bernarda preferred to continue her journey toward the Atlantic coast of Colombia, advising Mother Caridad Brader to establish one group independently in Túquerres, while she

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<sup>7</sup> Fr. ÁNGEL AVINOÑET, Capuchin, *Biografía de Monseñor Schumacher*, pp. 135-171.

herself did the same in Cartagena. As a result of this mutual decision, two Franciscan communities were born: the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary Immaculate in southern Colombia and the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary Our Help in northern Colombia. Both have continued in existence and the Church has benefited greatly from their apostolic labor.

The bishop remained in Túquerres, teaching theology to the young seminarians who had come with him from Quito. The altitude and cold weather affected him adversely and he remained there only six months. In December, he was offered the opportunity to preach a mission in the Valley of Samaniego. He found the climate more agreeable and the people very welcoming and obliging, so he decided to take up residence there and with the blessing of the Bishop of Pasto, today St. Ezequiel Moreno. The bishop entrusted to him the pastoral care of the Valley of Samaniego, in these terms: "Your Excellency, you are the proper bishop of these places." From that moment until his death seven years later, Colombia was his new homeland and Samaniego the land of his apostolic labor and also the fortunate land of his burial.

Tireless in his pastoral activity, he became a fervent apostle of the sacrament of Reconciliation and very concerned about offering timely solutions to the moral problems that confronted families as well as individuals in their personal lives. He opened a school for young underprivileged boys whom he orientated toward a priestly vocation. With regard to social projects, he collaborated with others in realizing his dream of providing drinking water to Samaniego. He also was the driving force behind the construction of bridges and roads. He organized a musical group to enhance the worship services and to provide entertainment for the people. With his own money he bought musical instruments in Belgium and he taught people how to play them. All of this, as well as his great goodness, earned him the respect and love of the people of Samaniego who considered his presence among them a true gift from God and who in turn gifted him as a sign of their gratitude. On the other hand, his enemies, who forced him into exile, continued to besiege him. The people of Samaniego, however, remained alert. Nevertheless, one day his house was broken into and money and some of the musical instruments were stolen.

## **2.7. The final Stage of a journey well traveled**

In 1902, on the feast of Saint Peter, the people of the area made a pilgrimage to Samaniego to pay homage to their beloved pastor. Despite his pain, he received them with great emotion and profound humility. A few days later, faithful to his pastoral commitments, he went to a house where four people were ill with typhoid fever. He

heard their confessions and prescribed a treatment for their illness. He, however, became infected. Five days later, on 15 July 1902, at 10:00 p.m., when nothing more could be done, he surrendered his spirit to God. He was attended by two Franciscan sisters who had arrived there from Túquerres. These sisters, accompanied by the Superior of the Capuchin Fathers and two other priests, united themselves to a grieving people who loved their pastor and solemnly, but humbly and simply, buried him in the way he had asked.

## **2.8. Analyzing a spirituality that never dies**

Bishop Peter Schumacher died in Samaniego (Colombia) at the age of 63, but his spirituality remains alive because we have studied him, and we “take him out of unmerited anonymity.” Without a doubt he was a person very privileged both humanly and spiritually with a true universality of gifts and aptitudes. Within his slender body, elegant face, blonde hair and blue eyes, we find a spirit with many values, a broad vision and courage of steel. There was a certain magnetism about him that attracted others to him. As a man of God and as a psychologist, he was esteemed as an illustrious and beloved formator. He communicated a vision of hope for the future and was rooted in sound doctrine. Yet he was never boastful but rather humble and simple. He clothed himself simply, in a frayed cassock, and often said: “On many occasions, poverty is the greatest wealth” and “I ought to be content with what is necessary, and few things are necessary.” He was a man of faith and had a special love for the Virgin Mary.

We might ask, why has his canonization process become bogged down? Is it our fault, or Rome’s, that we are not moving on this? The souls of many close friends accompany him in heaven: the saintly bishop Ezequiel Moreno, Blessed Mother Bernarda Buther and Blessed Mother Caridad Brader. Now is the time to promote the cause of Bishop Schumacher, either from Germany or in Rome or from Ecuador and Colombia.

I could find no better words to conclude this lengthy reflection than those spoken by St. Ezequiel Moreno, Bishop of Pasto, on 9 August 1902 in his cathedral, on the occasion of a memorial service celebrated for this friend and servant:<sup>8</sup>

*We find ourselves before a tomb that reminds us of a man who no longer exists, yet he remains with us; a man who is no longer counted among the living, yet he lives; a man who is dead, yet he speaks to us. Who is he?... Bishop Schumacher*

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<sup>8</sup> San EZEQUIEL MORENO, *op. cit.*

*will not die of old age, overwhelmed by suffering and long illness; he dies out of love. The deceased still speaks refuting his slanderers with his admirable virtues, with his good works on behalf of the people, with his doctrine, with his precious death.... The deceased still speaks and encourages all good people not to fear persecution in the defense of the truth.*

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(CHARLES T. PLOCK, C.M., translator)

## Fr. Georges Marie Salvaire, C.M. (1847-1899)

Apostle and Chaplain of the Virgin of Luján in Argentina

by Msgr. Juan Guillermo Durán \*

*Argentina*

Fr. Jorge María Salviare (1847-1899), the most illustrious and beloved chaplain of Luján,<sup>1</sup> referred to as the chosen son of the Virgin Mary of Luján,<sup>2</sup> formed part of a large group of priests who arrived in Buenos Aires during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Fr. Salvaire and many other priests came to the shores of Latin America through the intervention of Archbishop Mariano Escalada and Bishop León Federico Aneiros who were able to interest some European religious communities in beginning a new apostolic work in Argentina: Vincentians, Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Bétharram, Salesians, Passionists, Redemptorists, Pallottine Fathers, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> This title was given to Fr. Jorge by his devoted friend Vicente Comas, Director of the newspaper *La Razon* of Luján at the time when he wrote about the burial of Fr. Jorge (*La Perla del Plata*, no. 474, 12 February 1899, 101). Regarding the decision of Fr. Salvaire to be known, first and foremost, as the "Chaplain of the Virgin," Fr. Antonio Brignardelli said: "On 25 May 1889, the glorious day that commemorates the anniversary of our Independence, the faithful received Fr. Salvaire as their new pastor. He took upon himself the title Chaplain of the Shrine of our Lady of Luján" (*ibid.*, no. 333, 31 May 1896, 375). In this way Fr. Salvaire referred to himself with the title that had been used by the first priests who served the Holy Image from the time of Don Pedro de Montalbo (1685-1701), the founder and first chaplain of the Chapel of Our Lady of the River Luján, but had fallen into disuse, replaced with the title of pastor.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 475, 19 February 1899, 144.

All of these Congregations were inspired by the idea of contributing their efforts so that the pastoral work in the extensive Archdiocese of Buenos Aires might be sustained and broadened. Because of the deep crisis that resulted from the lengthy struggle for independence and then national organization (a situation that was common for many dioceses in the interior of the country), the diocese lacked sufficient clergy who were adequately prepared to meet the new challenges that the present age laid before them: parish work, missions, hospitals, education, social promotion, care for immigrants, etc.

The destiny of these priests was varied: some remained in the larger cities or in the new towns that began to rise up in the interior of the province of Buenos Aires; others began to visit periodically the rural populations and those towns where the new immigrants settled (Irish, French Basques, Russian-Germans, etc.) and still others committed themselves to preaching missions in rural parishes and frontier towns, thus bringing the Word of God to some small and peaceful Indian tribes.

Fr. Salvaire left his native France at the end of September 1871 and arrived in Buenos Aires on 24 October of the same year. He was a young priest, 24 years old and filled with a desire to realize his missionary dream. Many years later, Canon Juan A. López, director of the newspaper *La Voz de la Iglesia* [The Voice of the Church], recounted the arrival of Fr. Salvaire and highlighted the contributions that this son of St. Vincent de Paul made to this diocesan Church that received him with such great hope:

*Fr. Salvaire was not born on our soil, but it was the design of God that here, on our shores, he would find the right place to develop his vocation. This distinguished priest of the Congregation of the Mission, though very young and recently ordained, came to live with his confreres, and placed his talents, intellect, erudition and especially his outstanding character and wonderful willingness to study at the service of the vast Archdiocese of Buenos Aires.*<sup>3</sup>

On 4 February 1999, the centennial anniversary of Fr. Salvaire's death was celebrated. Fr. Salvaire has been called *flor de los Lazaristas del Río de la Plata* [flower of the Vincentians of Río de la Plata],<sup>4</sup> for he is eternally united to Luján by reason of his pastoral

<sup>3</sup> Death notice: *R.P. Jorge M. Salvaire (De La Voz de la Iglesia)*, in *ibid.*, no. 474, 12 February 1899, 107.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Fernando Meister, the long-time companion of Fr. Salvaire on the native mission of Azul (Argentina), gave him this title when he received news of Fr. Salvaire's death. In a letter written on 5 February 1899, from San Juan,

ministry and the construction of the basilica. In 1872 he was appointed pastoral assistant of the Shrine and in 1899, pastor and chaplain. It was at this time that he fully dedicated himself to the realization of his dream: the building of a new shrine that would house the sacred image of the Virgin and that would comfortably accommodate the increasing number of pilgrims who traveled there. The new railroad brought many pilgrims to this area, as well as to the ancient shrine of Lezica and Torrezuri, inaugurated on 8 December 1763.<sup>5</sup>

Without doubt, his time in Luján is very well known and is the place where he had a lasting impact. Many people from this town and others who helped him, pilgrims who came to know him as well as the reporters that published his initiatives and undertakings — all of these bear witness to his tireless efforts. Indeed, it was at the shrine in Luján that Fr. Salvaire projected himself as an exemplary priest, an eloquent preacher, a selfless catechist, a tireless promoter of Marian devotion, an organizer of great pilgrimages, a reporter, a historian, an initiator of social and charitable works, and, finally, an architect who planned and began the construction of the monumental basilica.<sup>6</sup>

On two different occasions, many people publicly and in writing expressed their thoughts about the priestly personality of this illustrious son of St. Vincent de Paul: the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his priestly ordination, 14 June 1896, and his death, 4 February 1899.

In the pages of the magazine that he created, *La Perla del Plata*, we find abundant material about his life, e.g., homilies, discourses,

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where he was rector of the diocesan seminary, to Fr. A. Brignardelli, then in charge of the Shrine of Luján, he said: "... What a terrible loss, not only for the members of the Congregation of the Mission, even though he is without doubt *la flor de los Lazaristas del Río de la Plata*, but for the whole country. My God, what will become of the Basilica and his other important works? Where will we find someone with such strength and courage to finish all that remains to be done? All of Luján and Buenos Aires join with you in your grief. I truly believe that the train today will not leave without bringing everyone from San Juan to assist at his burial and accompany you in your sorrow" (*ibid.*, 19 February 1899, no. 475, 135). Others added to the above-mentioned title and said that he was also *la flor de los Lazaristas de Sudamérica* [the flower of the Vincentians of South America] (*ibid.*, no. 487, 14 May 1899, 342).

<sup>5</sup> Antonio Scarella synthesizes the meritorious work of Fr. Salvaire in Luján in the following words: "Apostle of devotion to Our Lady of Luján. Its historian. Promoter of her coronation. Initiator of the basilica project. Builder of the high school. Founder of the magazine *La Perla del Plata*, the first hospital, the Circle of Catholic Workers, and the Conference of the Ladies of St. Vincent. He worked in Luján for more than 25 years" (*Historia de Nuestra Señora de Luján*, 346).

<sup>6</sup> *La Perla del Plata*, no. 525, 4 February 1900, 67-78.



articles, letters, etc. In writing a brief synthesis that points out his most outstanding qualities, we present below a commentary that was entitled “*Reminisces from the Past.*” This article was published, on the first anniversary of his death, in the paper *La Verdad* whose director was the distinguished Julio Jordán. It was taken, in turn, from a “loose transcription” in *La Nación* in 1887 on the occasion of the celebration of the Pontifical Coronation in Luján.

We have selected this account for three reasons: it expresses the powerful impact that Salvaire and his work produced in the press at that time (not simply among his friends and collaborators); it presents him at the time of his greatest pastoral creativity; and finally, it points to the transcendence that his priestly labor entailed for the Church in Argentina. The reporter, writing about the events that occurred at the time of the coronation of the Image, on 8 May 1887, wrote:

*... The magnificent way in which the Church was adorned, its historical chromolithograph inscriptions, the order and distribution of functions — all of this is due to the inspired historian of the Virgin of Luján, Reverend Fr. Salvaire, who with untiring zeal knew how to bring about the four works that immortalize his name in the annals of the South American Church: the National Shrine, the History of Our Lady of Luján, the Pontifical Coronation of the Image and his apostolic preaching.... His virtues are like the perfume of the modest violet which, though hidden beneath the foliage, is perceived from afar. Fr. Salvaire is a man whose facial expression reveals his intelligence and goodness. During the festivities of Luján he has been — and without a doubt always will be — the friend in whom all, collaborators and strangers, learned and uneducated, Catholics and liberals, reporters and country folk have found someone willing to meet their needs, always animated by a spirit of evangelical charity without the least affectation. One never saw him annoyed nor much less showing himself upset in the midst of the large crowds that wanted to invade and know everything. Fr. Salvaire realized his dream of the Basilica in the Republic of Argentina and of a National Shrine to Our Lady of Luján because he had great faith, which, as the Apostles to the Gentiles says, is able to move mountains from one place to another.*

But there is another side to his life, one that is often overshadowed by his “Luján ministry”; namely, his missionary work among the Indians of the “pampas” who settled near the present-day cities of Azul and Bragado. This experience, though lasting only two years (1874-1876), was quite intense, selfless and had a profound impact on the evangelization work of that era. It offered the national

government an alternative: the Indians could be integrated into "civilized life" by the peaceful system of missions or reservations (chapel, school, organized work) with the purpose of avoiding using a simple "political offensive," which hoped to achieve the subjection of the Indian tribes by military campaigns of persecution and the taking of prisoners.

In this sense, Fr. Salvaire became part of that group of priests who collaborated closely with the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Federico Aneiros, in giving shape to this pacific missionary outreach. This initiative began among some gentle and submissive Indian villages; later, when a certain development was reached and there were sufficient personnel, it was extended to the interior of the country, the way to Salina Grandes and Carmen del Patagones, in the direction of the distant region of Patagonia.

This aspect of Fr. Salvaire's life, so rich in evangelical experiences and commitments, and in deep humanitarian tradition, was unnoticed by many of his contemporaries. Even today, the work of Fr. Salvaire is practically ignored by everyone except members of his Congregation and some specialists in this area.

At this moment, as the centennial of his death draws near and because of the great esteem that we have for him, I decided to study this aspect of his ministry. I examined his personal papers and supporting documentation (Archives of the Provincial House of the Congregation of the Mission in Argentina, Archives of the Basilica of Luján, Archives of the General Curia of the Vincentians in Rome), as well as newspapers from that era that reported his activities and journeys.

Abundant material was gathered together, enough to write more than one page about his work among the Indians. Therefore as a modest contribution to the centennial celebration mentioned above, I have published two extensive works, hoping to keep alive the memory of this venerable son of St. Vincent de Paul. In following the teaching of St. Vincent, he knew how to reveal a compassionate heart and a merciful soul to these "new poor," the Indians of the Pampas Plains. My books are entitled: *El Padre Jorge María Salvaire y la Familia Lazos de Villa Nueva. Un episodio de cautivos en Leubucó y Salinas Grandes. En los orígenes de la Basílica de Luján (1866-1875)*, Ed. Paulinas, Buenos Aires, 1999, 669 pages; and *En los Toldos de Catriel y Railef. La obra misionera del Padre Jorge María Salvaire en Azul y Bragado (1874-1876)*, Buenos Aires, 2002, 1042 pages.

I am in the process of preparing a third book dedicated to the life of Fr. Salvaire: an account of the period that begins with the completion of his missionary activity in Azul (1876) until his sudden death in Luján (1899). Several times I questioned myself about the title for this work. I think the following title is most appropriate:

*De los Toldos a Luján. El Padre Jorge María Salvaire, Párroco de Luján y Capellán de la Virgen (1876-1899)*. This title is sufficiently broad so that I can include the various pastoral and cultural works that he undertook when he returned to Luján, including his missionary activity in Uruguay. This was also the era when his mind and heart were set on the realization of his dream: the construction of a great basilica in the French neo-gothic style, destined to house, as in a precious jewelry box, the sacred image of Our Lady of Luján, which he called “La Perla del Plata,” Patroness of Argentina.

God willing, with the publication of this work, the “historical trilogy” will be complete. My purpose in writing this book is to publicize the life of the unforgettable Fr. Salvaire. I am encouraged by the fact that in the not-too-distant future the Congregation of the Mission contemplates the possibility of introducing his cause for beatification.

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(CHARLES T. PLOCK, C.M., translator)

## José María Alcácer, C.M. (1899-1994)

Minsister of Sacred Music

by Marcelino Boyero, C.M.

*Province of Madrid*

### **“You will hear my voice at dawn” (Psalm 5)**

On 24 August, 1994, Fr. Teodoro Barquin and I were in the Philippines. We had gone there with the project of recording a selection of the music of Fr. José María Alcácer. We visited Cardinal Jaime Sin, Cardinal of Manila, and spoke to him about our plan. “Oh, Fr. Alcácer! I have his Cancionero (song book) on my night table. I was educated by the Vincentians.”<sup>1</sup> We had a long and pleasant conversation about that and many other topics.

Not long ago, while going through the correspondence of our musician, I came across a letter that Fr. J. Martínez San Juan wrote to him from the Philippines; in it he tells him he has interpreted some of his Psalms and asks his advice about adapting some detail for his choir so as to be able to interpret another work.<sup>2</sup> Fr. Alcácer is well known even in the Philippines. The Vincentians have made him known there. We could also mention America and other places. Many good students of his have made him known.

### **“Awake lyre and harp” (Psalm 56)**

José María Alcácer Martínez was born on 14 March, 1899, in Aldaya (Valencia). Manuel Alcácer, his father, played the clarinet in one of the town’s two bands and the violin in the orchestra of the Musical Chapel of the parish. Andres Temprano has left us a charming scene from his childhood: “When he was five years old the child used to go with his father in the religious processions carrying the clarinet case and whistling in his own way what the band was playing.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> M. BOYERO, *Los Trabajos y los días. Anales*, t. 104, n. 3, May-June 1996, pp. 260-276.

<sup>2</sup> Provincial Archives of the Congregation - Madrid.

<sup>3</sup> ANDRÉS TEMPRANO, O.Carm., *Panorama actual de la música religiosa española*. Tesoro Sacro Musical, n. 2, 1972, pp. 42-47.

He had music in his blood, but from a very early age that seed found fertile ground and a favorable climate. Between the ages of eight and 14 he attended the Colegio-Asilo Romero in Valencia. He was registered in the Conservatory of the city of Turia: three years of music theory, four of piano and one of harmony. He practiced the piano assiduously in order to accompany the songs of the school children. When he was 12, he registered to study piano in the Conservatory. Juan Cortes was his piano teacher and Amancio Amoros his professor of harmony. At that age he wrote an *Ave Maria* for voice and organ which has been lost. When he was 14 (1913) he studied three courses of humanities at the Conciliar Seminary. At the end of the first one he obtained the position of organist in a competition. He studied Gregorian harmony and counterpoint with Vicente Repulles. It was a good start for making beautiful sounds.

Encouraged by the Daughters of Charity at the Asilo and by his brother Manuel, at the age of 18 he entered the Internal Seminary of the Congregation of the Mission, the Vincentians, in Madrid. His novice master, Fr. Adolfo Tobar, encouraged the young José María to compose religious works for the liturgy, for literary gatherings and trips, which would take the place of existing works that were not popular with the director of the novitiate. He was even allowed to attend the concerts arranged by Fr. Luis Iruarrizaga in the Royal Theater. Thus were written several songs that later became part of the first edition of the *Cancionero Religioso* (Religious Song Book) (1928).

He studied philosophy in Madrid and Horaleza (Madrid) from 1919 to 1922 and theology in Cuenca (two years) in the Seminary of St. Paul, a former Dominican convent, handed over by the bishop to the Vincentians. He finished the other two years of theology in Madrid. In Cuenca, besides being a good theology student, he showed himself a precocious composer, director and organist; he did outstanding work in all that had to do with music in the religious celebrations as well as in the literary gatherings. The Vincentian choir, directed by the seminarian Alcácer, went beyond the limits of the seminary and performed successfully in the Cathedral, in the Salon Palafox in the city and other places. Art and constancy were two virtues that would be with him throughout his life.

He was ordained a priest in Madrid in 1926 and was sent to work in the musical-pastoral work of the Basilica. He renewed his studies of harmony, counterpoint, fugue and instrumentation under Emilio Vega. He acquired great mastery of these subjects and everyone recognized his skill which would progress throughout the years. Emilio Vega himself would write the prologue to the first edition of the *Cancionero Religioso*, in 1928, with 70 songs, and the second volume three years later with 77 songs. He would advise him to go to Rome to further his studies of religious music.

**“What glorious praise for you, O City of God!” (Psalm 86)**

He studied in the Superior Pontifical School of Sacred Music for many years, a pioneer in the teaching of liturgical and religious music. There were well-known teachers there: Licinio Refice y Cassimiri taught classical polyphony; Manari taught organ; Ferreti y Suñol, abbot of Montserrat, taught harmony, counterpoint, fugue and composition, and the interpretation of Palestrinian polyphony. Lorenzo Perosi was the master of the Pontifical or Sistine Chapel; he was not a professor, but he was a model. The *Motu Proprio* of Pius X of 1903, was the norm and guide. After barely two years in Rome, he brought to Madrid a in Gregorian chant and a wealth of knowledge and techniques in religious music. N. Otaño and L. Iruarrizaga, wellknown Maestros, directed and promoted Musical Congresses which Alcácer attended, hungry to learn and familiarize himself with the musical climate in Spain.

**“Keep me, O Lord, for I trust in you” (Psalm 16; Vulgate 15)**

1932-1940. Organist and composer in the Basilica of the Miraculous Medal. While he was studying, he was also collecting compositions which would later fill out the successive editions of the *Cancionero Religioso* and *El Salterio*. But in 1936 war broke out. His ups and downs, his hiding out, his imprisonment in the Women’s Prison in Ventas, his release in the same year of 1936, his passage through the French Embassy and the concentration camp, his brief stays in Paris and Solesmes, where he spoke with Dom Gajard, his return to Spain in 1938 by way of San Sebastián where he had his earlier studies in harmony and piano validated and where he registered for the third and fourth levels of harmony and the fifth of piano are like a historic-tragic novel with a happy ending and told with sorrow but also with grace by Fr. E. Escribano and other authors in *Anales*.<sup>4</sup> Wherever he went he left ample proof of his character as a priest and his quality as a musician — in prison, in the houses of the Daughters of Charity, who helped him greatly. His works *Gloria a Ti, Cristo Rey* (Glory to You, Christ the King), *Al Volver de las Yuntas* (Upon Returning from Plowing) and *Viva Madrid* all belong to this period. He traveled to Barcelona for the new edition of the *Cancionero Religioso*, which now contained 292 pieces.

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<sup>4</sup> *Anales*, t. 46, n. 7, July 1938, pp. 369 and following. Cf T. MARQUINA, *José María Alcácer, C.M., Vida, Obra y Testimonios*. Editorial La Milagrosa, 1996, pp. 62-73 (There are some errors in the citations).

### “A Music Never Before Heard”

In 1940 we find him once again as the organist in the Basilica of the Miraculous Medal in Madrid. He continued to study organ and composition. He made contact with N. Otaño and especially with the great Maestro Conrado del Campo. With him he studied counterpoint, fugue and composition. In 1943 he received the first prize in Composition, by a majority of votes, for his work *Primer Tiempo de Cuarteto* (which has been lost).<sup>5</sup> He completed his musical formation years later (1948) with specialized studies on modern procedures for composition and orchestration with Maestro M. Palau in the Superior Conservatory of Music in Valencia.<sup>6</sup>

There are particular stories which could be generalized. It was Eugenio D'Ors who first taught us to do that. Here we find another Cardinal, Cardinal Segura. A certain friendship between Segura and Alcácer came from the years in Rome. The Cardinal used to go to Cuenca once in a while to relax. There he heard the Vincentian choir sing some of Alcácer's *Salmos* (Psalms). The Cardinal remarked: “The choir of the Vincentian theologians in Cuenca presented a literary-musical evening for me there on one occasion. I heard religious music that not only pleased me, but also moved me.” In March of 1945 the Cardinal convoked in Seville a Provincial Congress of Sacred Music. He had the inspiration to invite the Vincentian theologians from St. Paul Seminary in Cuenca to present the assembly with “a new kind of sacred music.” The Assembly took place from 15-17 March. A group from the cathedral and some children from different schools augmented the choir. The author of the *Salmos* himself directed the choir. At the end the Cardinal congratulated him: “Fr. Alcácer, it was a success.” On 28 March he wrote the Superior of the theologate to thank him for allowing the choir to travel from Cuenca to Seville. He added: “Fr. Alcácer's work was wonderful, and the work was a good advertisement for itself.” Each psalm was presented by none other than D. José Artero, prefect of music of the Pontifical University of Salamanca. He said, among other things: “Fr. Alcácer's music evokes the oratorios of the great German masters of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn and, above all, Haydn.” No small compliment. And someone has repeated it.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. T. MARQUINA, *ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>6</sup> Provincial Archives C.M. - Madrid. Cf. T. MARQUINA, *ibid.*, pp. 77-79.

<sup>7</sup> *Anales*, t. 53, n. 5, May 1945, pp. 150-154.

**“Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest...”  
(Psalm 84, Vulgate 85)**

The Central House of the Vincentians at 45 García de Paredes, Madrid and Basilica of the Miraculous Medal were the center where Fr. Alcácer lived out the greater part of his life. I will quickly summarize other places where he lived and then return to the center where he exercised his pastoral and musical ministry.

He passed very briefly (1952-1953) through Hortaleza in Madrid as a professor of Logic and Music, and also through St. Paul's theologate in Cuenca from 1953-1957, as Professor of Moral Theology and Music, and also a few years in the theologate in Salamanca (1957-1963), with a brief interlude in New York (1962-1963). The rest of his years he lived at the Central House as priest and organist, as composer and music director; a life dedicated to religious music and minister of the same. Holy Mass and religious ministry in a chaplaincy of the Daughters of Charity, a service to which he was always faithful, as punctual as a clock and never missing a day; a community life of obedience, simplicity and piety for many long years, as constant and exemplary as a monk; work in his room at his desk, writing music with that small, clear hand which was peculiar to him; trials at the piano, rehearsals at the organ, continuous service to the liturgy year after year: all these form the long and lovely tapestry of the hours and days zealously dedicated to giving glory to God through music. He was not a highly sociable man, but he always received cordially anyone who knocked on his door, or wrote him a letter to ask for spiritual or musical advice or help.<sup>8</sup>

**“How I love You, O Lord” (Psalm 18; Vulgate 17)**

Alcácer was a precocious, long-lived and productive musician. Precocious and long-lived — the dates of his life show that. He began to compose music and be involved in it from a very early age and he lived for 95 years (1899-1994). The productive aspect can be seen from the number of his works. Later I will write a shortened Catalogue. To do a complete one would be impossible for such a brief biography as this one. But now, let me pause to describe some of his major works; and to judge their worth I will present the opinions of well-known musicians.

*El Cancionero Religioso* (The Religious Sangbook). “A ‘best seller’ in its time, up until Vatican II, indispensable for liturgical and paraliturgical moments, with small master works, some of which will

<sup>8</sup> Cf. T. MARQUINA, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-245.



last in the coming decades. It was the best religious song book of its time, far superior to the others.”<sup>9</sup>

Emilio Vega, in the prologue to the *Cancionero*, wrote: “Fr. José María Alcácer... has placed himself at the musical level of those composers who... in our country... constitute the group which has begun and developed the genre of religious and popular music.... The compositions of the *Cancionero* spring forthright, fresh and substantial from the spiritual wellspring that fills Fr. Alcácer’s soul with mystical fervor.”<sup>10</sup> And let us not forget his artistry in the accompaniment of Gregorian music.

Vicente de Dios, a great collaborator in the edition of some of our musician’s works, says: “Besides Fr. Nemesio Otaño, S.J., I cannot think of another author so much of the Spanish people as Fr. José María Alcácer.”<sup>11</sup>

“All the songs breath such fervor and feeling as to be most suitable for moving the spirit peacefully and elevating it to God in prayer.”<sup>12</sup>

About the accompaniment book, Muneta says: “This is a monumental work in which shines forth in singular relief the harmonizer, never trivial, always of noble quality.... It shines forth with simplicity in the harmonizations of the Gregorian melodies...”<sup>13</sup>

**El Salterio** (The Psalter). Among the many judgements, appraisals, analyses and critiques that have rained upon *El Salterio*, I know of no study as ample and thoughtful as that of Muneta in his work about Alcácer. He begins with this specific, categorical affirmation: “The four notebooks which make up *El Salterio* constitute an enormous musical monument, unique in Spanish musical history. We find no work of such scope, not in the chapel masters of the past from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, not in modern musical literature.”<sup>14</sup> Surely it will remain “in a very high place in Spanish musical history.”<sup>15</sup> If this is true, and Muneta tries to show that it is, then I must also agree with the judgement that Andres Temprano made to me personally, when I was gathering data and

<sup>9</sup> J.M. MUNETA, *Anales*, t. 102, n. 6, November-December 1954, p. 593.

<sup>10</sup> From the *Prologo de la Primera Edición (Libro del Acompañamiento)*. Cf. T. MARQUINA, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. T. MARQUINA, *op. cit.*, p. 152. (I have not been able to verify the citation in *Anales*).

<sup>12</sup> A brief and charming analytical note by B. GARCÉS, *Anales*, t. 40, n. 5, May 1932, pp. 260-263.

<sup>13</sup> J.M. MUNETA, *José María Alcácer, un clásico de la música religiosa contemporánea*. Teruel, 1988, p. 36.

<sup>14</sup> J.M. MUNETA, *ibid.*, pp. 75-113.

<sup>15</sup> J.M. MUNETA, *Anales*, t. 102, n. 6, p. 594.

appraisals for this biography. So as not to ask him where he would situate Alcácer within Spanish religious music, I asked him “in which line.” His answer was decisive, emphatic: *in the very first line*.

Norberto Almandoz, a great musician, writes: “Analyzing the *Salmos* musically, one finds throughout them the inspiration of a vigorous musician, firm and well trained, who translates and handles his ideas with ease and a total knowledge of the sonorous element. Above all, Fr. Alcácer is an artist of the polyphonic polymelodic tendencies, in the sense of expressive multiplicity, in simultaneous use of vocal resources.”<sup>16</sup>

José Artero offers this analysis: “This is music with an oriental origin and requires large groups for its performance. We come across passages of great aspirations which remind us of the oratorios of the great German masters.”<sup>17</sup> The same author, on the occasion of a grand concert in Seville in March 1945 affirms: “If to the fine work of Fr. Eugenio Escribano — referring to his translation of the psalms — were joined the musical technique of Fr. José María Alcácer, what a work of art would we not have. Fr. Alcácer’s music evokes the great oratorios of the German masters of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, like Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn and, especially, Haydn.”<sup>18</sup>

Barron explains: “Fr. Alcácer is putting together his monumental *Salterio* with the firm hand of a master and Benedictine dedication. Let us be mindful that *El Salterio* is not just any construction; it is a cathedral, it is the pyramid of Cheops; upon the first foundations so magnificently laid, let us hope that it rises to monumental heights for the glory of Spanish sacred art.”<sup>19</sup>

José Ignacio Prieto affirms: “Fr. Alcácer’s pen is agile and inspired.... Through the interventions of soloists and different choral groups, Fr. Alcácer manages to give interest and variety to long texts which may not lend themselves to musical arrangement. There are some that are simple and adaptable to the people, at least in part; and there are some suitable only for great chapel choirs. In all of them appears, together with the clarity of the lines and the purity of the phrases, a knowledge of modern technique skillfully applied.”<sup>20</sup>

Federico Sopeno, the music critic, writes: “Simplicity, as the summary of many and difficult technical problems, this is the distinguishing mark of this music placed on its knees before the divine words. These fortuitous arrangements move between two

<sup>16</sup> *El Salterio*, t. II: “Juicios Críticos....” Cf. A. TEMPRANO, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>17</sup> *El Salterio*, t. II: “Juicios Críticos....” Cf. A. TEMPRANO, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>18</sup> *Anales*, t. 53, May 1945, pp. 150-154.

<sup>19</sup> *Ritmo*, September-October 1947. Cf. J.M. MUNETA, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.

<sup>20</sup> *El Salterio*, t. II: “Juicios Críticos....” Cf. J.M. MUNETA, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

tones: the noble design for the people, without commonness; and the polyphonic splendor, heir to the greatest tradition.”<sup>21</sup>

It is not necessary to read the *Comentario Musical de 'El Salterio'* (Musical Commentary on the Psalter) (a notebook with commentary on the first ten psalms) to realize one thing which I believe all the commentators have passed over, and which I judge fundamental: the cohesion, the unity, the structure of each psalm, its aptness for the text. Some might say this is so elemental that it does not need to be underlined. But I think it must be said explicitly. I imagine the music soaking up the text. In fact, the best psalms are those in which the music has taken possession of the words through study, meditation and contemplation, and then given them the form and structure that are most fitting. And I do not speak only of the great psalms (5, 8, 18, 29, 34, 40, 117...), but also of the *big-little* pieces like (and this is just one example) psalm 13, a masterpiece. It may begin with a humble and simple prayer, but then the internal thread of the text leads it to a tremendous finale, affirming the blessing of God which surrounds the just one like a shield (psalm 5). One could cite many others (4, 11, 84...).

One final citation from the critiques of *El Salterio*: once again from José Artero, now commenting concretely about volume IV: “Fr. Alcácer advances... with the thrust and wisdom of an author from the classical periods. And... he advances... in technique, thoughtful modernity, melodic richness and the ardor of inspiration.”<sup>22</sup>

***Ofrenda lírico-litúrgica*** (Lyrical liturgical offering). This poetic name captures another of Fr. Alcácer's monumental works. It is nothing more or less than the complete Liturgy of the Hours: the Office of Readings, Lauds, Middle Hours, Vespers and Compline with their invocations, brief responses, formulas for the recitation of the psalms, hymns, antiphons for the psalms and gospel canticles, etc. The most important pieces are, naturally, the hymns and antiphons. This work constitutes, to my way of thinking, the most important contribution of our brilliant musician to the religious music renewed by the directives of Vatican II. It is an unpublished work, finished in 1984 and presented that same year to the Provincial of the Vincentian Fathers. Thinking about its publication, the author distributed it in eight volumes of words and melody, and eight volumes of accompaniment — 16 volumes in all. The author had great hopes of having it published, at least in part; but it is still there in the archives. I have had the great privilege of handling it from beginning to end. It is like a forest, with large and small plants, but all of them beautiful; or if you wish, like a large jewelry case with

<sup>21</sup> *El Salterio*, t. II: “Juicios Críticos...” Cf. J.M. MUNETA, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>22</sup> TSM. January-February 1961. Cf. J.M. MUNETA, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

precious pearls (the hymns and antiphons). I believe it is the third great work, along with the *Cancionero* and *El Salterio* — three great works to immortalize a great musician, without taking away from any of the other works.

#### **“For he is like a tree” (Psalm 1)**

“Let us praise worthy men” (Ecclesiasticus, 44). Among these worthy men are the *composers of music* (v. 5). This praise has been extended to Fr. Alcácer in some way during his lifetime in a multitude of tributes celebrated to honor the importance of his work and his person. I would like to point out just a few of these, among the many that one could choose from such a fruitful life.

*Tribute of “Apromur” (Association for the Promotion of Religious Music)* December of 1988. At the beginning of the celebration an outline of his life was read. One of his works was played on the organ and Gabarain read the special papal blessing granted to our musician “as a composer of sacred music.” He was presented with a trophy in the form of a lyre with the inscription: “Apromur to Fr. José María Alcácer, young like his music.”<sup>23</sup>

*Tribute of the Vincentian Family.* March 1990. In the Basilica of the Miraculous Medal on the occasion of the presentation of his book *Cantoral Litúrgico de la Familia Vicenciana* (Liturgical Songbook of the Vincentian Family). In the morning there was a special Mass because the tribute was held on the Day of the Province. In the afternoon there was a poetic-musical presentation. The choir *Coro Vocal Círculo 92* interpreted nine of his psalms and the Papal Nuncio, Bishop Mario Tagliaferri, conferred on him the Augusta Cross “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice,” *above all for his outstanding work and his extraordinary creative merit.* This same Nuncio would write in May to the Provincial, Fr. Miguel Ángel Brenes: “It was very pleasant for me to be able to give this decoration to our dear Fr. Alcácer in recognition of the valuable work carried on throughout his life.”<sup>24</sup>

A tribute that I consider wonderful was the one prepared for our musician by the city of Zamora when the Brotherhood of the Dying Christ invited him on Good Friday of 1992 to be present for the entrance of the Dying Christ into the Viceroy’s Plaza. There in the midst of an imposing silence, a choir of a hundred men sang our outstanding composer’s Psalm 50, *Miserere*. This piece has been sung there for many years. When Fr. Alcácer died in 1994, the Supreme Council of the Brotherhood resolved: *To name José María Alcácer*

<sup>23</sup> *Anales*, t. 97, n. 3, March 1989, p. 128.

<sup>24</sup> *Anales*, t. 98, n. 5, May-June 1990, pp. 331-339.

*posthumously an Honorary Brother*. The chronicler would say Alcácer conquered Zamora in an hour.<sup>25</sup>

A grand implicit tribute was the recording of a selection of Fr. Alcácer's works in the Philippines in 1994. This was done at the initiative of Fr. Teodoro Barquín. The bar is set very high; and I would like to see who manages to reach it; but it is one of the best we have in a recording. *Paz y Armonía* (Peace and Harmony) is the title of those efforts in which I personally had a hand. For three long months, from August to the middle of November, I had the privilege of detailing that work in an article in *Anales* titled "The works and the days" (Recording Fr. Alcácer's music in the Philippines). While we were in the midst of that difficult labor, the sad news reached us from Spain about the death of our grand musician on 10 September at the age of 94.<sup>26</sup>

Several confreres also offered magnificent tributes to Fr. Alcácer; some because they lived with him for many years, others because they closely followed his musical production and they also were good musicians. Their names are in the great biographies of the great maestro.

Fernando Espiago evokes, laconically, a number of recollections of Fr. Alcácer: *Thirty years living with a saint*. Martín Abaitua, a cultured man and an excellent interpreter of Alcácer's music as director, speaks of *our dear and admired little great man... quiet, unless there was some exciting music around: then emerged the bundle of nerves hidden under his skin*. As a student of philosophy and theology in the 40s, he was a witness to the early experiences of the first *Salmos*. José María Martín, Alcácer's successor as organist in the Basilica of the Miraculous Medal and a great admirer, says: "Maestro Alcácer's music is profound. The first time one hears it, it seems hard to assimilate. But if one continues to listen attentively, soon he will feel it penetrate his soul and his heart.... It comes forth from a source that, like good high quality wine, comes from a good high quality mother: his most profound artistic and musical inspiration."<sup>27</sup> Luis Bacaicoa, a great organist and friend, is enthusiastic in his praise: "His technique in harmony cannot be improved upon... neither Zamacois nor Durand, nor the great masters in difficult musical architecture, found in his compositions neither chords to correct nor musical phrases to amend. He flew with the eagles in the great number of his written works."<sup>28</sup> Of my own admiration for this great musician I can say that I have left ample testimony. Aside from

<sup>25</sup> LÓPEZ OLMEDO, *Boletín Informativo*, n. 25, May 1992, pp. 58-59.

<sup>26</sup> M. BOYERO, *Anales*, t. 104, n. 43, May-June 1996, pp. 260-276.

<sup>27</sup> T. MARQUINA, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-270.

<sup>28</sup> *Anales*, t. 102, n. 6, November-December 1994, p. 597.

anything else, I just want to bring to mind something that Bacaicoa has remembered as well: On the great feasts of the Miraculous Medal, of St. Vincent de Paul, Holy Week... how the nave of the Basilica resounded when we would sing *Misas, Salmos y otras obras de Alcácer* (Masses, Psalms and other works of Alcácer). The organist was the author himself or Bacaicoa; and the director either the author or Abaitua or someone else, even daringly, myself. The choir, almost always, was the Vincentian students from Hortaleza and the novices of the Daughters of Charity. Bacaicoa wrote with admiration: "Who can forget those almost heavenly moments here on earth?"<sup>29</sup> Also admirable are the biographical voices of the great musician Muneta and the poet Marquina. I could go on and on.

I would also like to remember Andres Temprano. He was the first to write a brief firsthand biography to which all who have written of Alcácer have had to turn. He coined the felicitous phrase, describing our artist as "a real classic of the religious music of our surprising century." "Paradigm of simplicity and amiability... the music transforms and makes a giant of him. It is his element. To watch him direct his own work is quite a show."<sup>30</sup>

In his tribute to Fr. Adolfo Tobar, Visitor of the Madrid Province, on his Golden Anniversary of vocation, Fr. Escribano wondered humorously how so much and such good music could fit into such a small figure as that of our artist. The answer was that it was not a question of physical size, but rather of artistic and spiritual stature.

The liturgical renewal of Vatican II did not exclude nor intimidate a musician forged in the old styles; it gave him wings to continue to work in the service of religious music. Notice the dates of composition on many of his works, above all on the *Ofrenda-Lírico-Litúrgica*. I visited him in his room frequently and many parts of *Salmo Responsorial* (and others) flowed from his pen to be interpreted in the Basilica or in the chapel of the philosophy students in Hortaleza.

#### **"My Music is for You, O Lord" (Psalm 100)**

I want to add a word to the subtitle of this brief biography. Years ago I wrote an article about "Music and Formation."<sup>31</sup> In it I cited various Church documents on religious music. From them and from other later ones, one can deduce that religious music (and concretely, liturgical music) is a ministry, a service; and the musician is a minister, one who is at our service. That Fr. Alcácer was such a

<sup>29</sup> *Anales*, t. 102, n. 6, November-December 1994, p. 598.

<sup>30</sup> A. TEMPRANO, *op. cit.*, 44 and 43.

<sup>31</sup> *Anales*, t. 101, n. 6, November-December 1993, pp. 602-621.

minister, a servant of religious music, is more than clear to anyone who has followed his life and his work.

A little while ago I spoke with the great musician Antonio Alcalde and he told me that for Fr. Alcácer music was a true pastoral ministry; that he served God and his people with music. He emphasized two aspects: as a great organist and as a heartfelt devotee of the Virgin Mary. (What a marvelous collection of Marian songs!).

Our musician once wrote to one of his nieces when he had just received from the Nuncio the “Crux pro Ecclesia et Pontifice” He told her of the sense of the insignia *as a reward to those who have rendered notable service to the Church. And I — he continues — have dedicated almost my whole life to composing religious music for divine worship.* It was a confession he had made in another moment, but now he did it with music in the antiphon of psalm 100: *My music is for you O Lord.*<sup>32</sup> I would gladly copy it here.

Fr. Sopeña, whom we quoted above, spoke of the music of *El Salterio* as “music placed on its knees before the divine words.” To that I have nothing further to add. That is the way it is.

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#### Principal Works of Fr. José María Alcácer, C.M.

*Cancionero Religioso en estilo popular* (Religious Songbook in the Popular Style), 1928-1966. Nine editions.

*Missa in honorem Beati Antonii Mariae Claret*, 1940.

*Missa de “Requiem,”* 1944?

*Missa in honorem Sancti Vincentii a Paulo*, 1955

*Misa, “Vaticano II,”* in popular style, 1965.

*Misa Basilical*, 1965.

*El Salterio* (4 volumes: the first 40 psalms of the book of Psalms).  
Other Psalms.

*La Navidad en diez canciones* (Christmas in ten songs), 1958.

*Trípticos de Navidad*, 1966.

*Cantos Interleccionales* (Songs between readings), 1964-1965.

*Cantos Interleccionales* (Complete and official text, unpublished).

*Cancionero Polifónico*, 1963.

*Ofrenda Lírico-Litúrgica* (music for the Liturgy of the Hours), 1984.  
Unpublished work.

<sup>32</sup> *Lauds*, Tuesday, Week IV of O.T., Antiphon I.

*Música para Organo* (numbers 42 and 43 of the “Biblioteca organica”).

*Viñetas* (Vignettes) (organ music on texts from the Song of Songs), 1967-1969.

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*Boletín Informativo de la C.M.* - Madrid.

*TSM: Tesoro sacro musical* (Magazine).

*Melodías* (Magazine).

*Ritmo* (Magazine).

### Records

*La Navidad en diez canciones*. Autor and director: José María Alcácer, C.M. Interpretation: Choir “San Vicente de Paúl,” Jesús Aguirre y M. De los Ángeles Murguiondo.

*Cánticos Misionales*. Director: Fr. José María Alcácer, C.M. Organist: Sr. Milagros Aguirre. Choir of the novitiate of the Daughters of Charity in Madrid.

*Paz y Armonía*. José María Alcácer, C.M., a classic of our times (A selection of works). Dr. Elisabeth Basilio-Innes. Choir: Vincentian Seminarians (Manila), Daughters of Charity a selection of students of the Conservatory of Music of Sta. Isabel College of Manila, and Tiples of Santo Domingo, Manila. Soloists: Virginia Tondoc Llamas, Leodegario del Rosario, Gamaliel R. Viray, Constanancio M. Cadelina. Editorial La Milagrosa.

*Villancicos* (Christmas Carols). Choir: Madrigal Singers of the Phillippines. Editorial La Milagrosa.



# Bishop Tulio Botero Salazar, C.M. (1904-1981) \*

From Vatican II to Medellín

by Gabriel Naranjo Salazar, C.M.

*Visitor of Colombia*

Tomorrow in the archdiocese the centenary of the birth of Bishop Francisco Tulio Botero Salazar will be celebrated. In the concelebrated mass, at which the Archbishop of Medellín, Alberto Giraldo Jaramillo, will preside, the formators and students of Sepavi (Seminary of Philosophy) and the 40 confreres who have come to the theological updating course will represent the province. I write to you from the city to which he dedicated a good part of his life to invite you to join with us in celebrating this occasion with a real sense of belonging as members of the same Congregation and the same Church; we can do this by means of a vocational “reading” so that these reflections may be useful to you.

## 1. *Lectio*: what does his life tell us?

He was born in Manizales, Colombia on 9 March 1904 into a home of very strong Christian customs. Four days later, on the 13<sup>th</sup>, he was baptized. At the age of seven, 21 June 1911, he made his first communion. Between 1914 and 1918 he studied at the apostolic school, but he finished the humanities cycle outside, in 1923. He studied law for one year at the University of Rosario in Bogotá. He returned to the community on 17 February 1924, when he received the cassock in Santa Rosa de Cabal. Ten days later, on 27 February, he was admitted into the Congregation upon his entering the Internal Seminary in the Central House. His definitive incorporation came with the pronouncing of vows on 28 February 1926; at this point he

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\* This “article” is the same as Circular No. 5 for 2004 which the Visitor of Colombia wrote to the confreres of the Province on 1 March 2004 on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of this confrere bishop to be celebrated the following day in Medellín, Colombia. The circular follows the steps of a “*Lectio Divina*”: *lectio, meditatio, contemplatio et oratio*.

was studying philosophy and theology. He was ordained a priest by Bishop Ismael Perdomo, Archbishop of Bogotá, on 19 December 1931 in the primate cathedral.

He spent the first two years of his priestly ministry preaching missions in the Archdiocese of Bogotá with Fr. Emilio Cid. From 1934 he labored as professor of philosophy and procurator in the Major Seminary in Popayán. In 1941 he returned to the Central House as director of the Internal Seminary, an office he fulfilled while also acting as the private secretary to the Apostolic Nuncio from 1945. In 1948 he was named director of the Seminary at Tunja.

On May 7 of the following year, Pius XII named him as Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop José Ignacio López Umaña of Cartagena. On 14 August 1949 he received the episcopal ordination in the cathedral of Manizales at the hands of Bishop Bernardo Botero Álvarez, C.M., who was then Bishop of Santa Marta. Acting as co-ordinators were Archbishop Crisanto Luque of Tunja and Archbishop Julio Caicedo of Cali. On 1 May 1952 he was assigned as the first bishop of the new diocese of Zipaquirá and he took possession of the see on 15 August. He labored there for almost six years, until 9 December 1957 when he was transferred to Medellín where he was archbishop for more than 21 years, from 2 February 1958 until 2 June 1979, when his resignation because of age was accepted. The coadjutor, Bishop Alfonso López Trujillo, replaced him. He died in that church which was his own on 1 May 1981, his 76<sup>th</sup> year of life, 57<sup>th</sup> of vocation, 50<sup>th</sup> of priesthood and 32<sup>nd</sup> of episcopacy.

## **2. *Meditatio*: what does his vocational personality say to us?**

He was a bishop for almost half his life; the first half was divided equally between his family and the community. As a matter of fact, more than a little has been recalled and written of him in Medellín, as well as in Zipaquirá and Cartagena. But it is we ourselves who most evoke his belonging to the Congregation: he was the personification of the Vincentian identity which we recognize emerging from the Constitutions, which we have been reflecting on in that "Assembly mode" in which we still find ourselves. With that character he stamped seven generations in the novitiate. He kept close to the Congregation in a discreet way; he was a frequent visitor to the philosophy house in Medellín where the library bears his name. When we were students at the Bolivarian he paid the tuition with his own money.

- a) He consecrated his life to the fulfillment of the end of the Congregation, in the following of Christ the evangelizer of the poor, putting on his spirit and adopting him as the "Rule of

the Mission.” He dedicated himself to the promotion and evangelization of the poor; he helped enormously with the formation of the clergy. As soon as he arrived in Zipaquirá he started a seminary; and as soon as he got to Medellín he dedicated himself to the ongoing formation and the welfare of the priests. To that end he built the present building of the major seminary, founded the theology faculty in the university, opened the Paul VI House and set up the Ecclesiastical Social Security and the Common Fund for Priests. Many of the present priests in Medellín, more than 160, were fathered by him for the Church. They continue to recognize him as the model he was of unity and faith, shepherd and missionary, sanctity and worship, truth and teaching, authority and service, fatherly and pastoral love. But at the same time, the effort to form an adult and committed laity was never far from him.

- b) A man of exuberant apostolic vitality, he was creative and dynamic in responding to needs, always attentive to the gospel, the signs of the times and the urgent calls of the Church, doing his best to open new roads and using the means best suited to the circumstances of time and place (C. 2). For this reason he was enthusiastic about the Council and he allowed it to touch him as a *kairós*. Upon his return, on the first feast of St. Vincent de Paul he presided over, he affirmed that with the Council the Church had become Vincentian. Very soon he showed he was a bishop of the Council.
- c) A man of unshakable faithfulness to the Church, he expressed it in active obedience to the Holy Father. This characteristic made him a very important figure in the Colombian and Latin American Church. We have but to recall the II General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate which he promoted as its host and which made Medellín the first formal application of the Council, of the worldwide episcopate. But it was at home where he best projected his ecclesial enthusiasm: in 1961 he organized the Great Archdiocesan Mission, he created 122 parishes. One cannot forget that for 15 years he presided over the Economic Committee of CELAM. There, as in his other pastoral projects, he extended the organizing genius of St. Vincent and his good financial sense.
- d) He was, in a word, a spiritual man. This is the secret of his missionary dynamism, for he was first of all a believer, then a Vincentian, priest and bishop. He incarnated “those intimate personal attitudes of Christ which the Founder recommended to the members from the beginning: love and reverence toward the Father, compassionate and effective love for the poor, and docility to Divine Providence” (C. 6), and the Vincentian virtues of simplicity, humility, gentleness, mortification and zeal.

### 3. *Contemplatio*: where do his life and his mission lead us?

The best way to keep his heritage alive is through our commitment, understood as the Fathers of the Church understood it, i.e. as a mystical experience of faith, and by being moved by his contagious Conciliar spirit. In this respect we recall that very quickly he rid himself of his trappings and, in a prophetic gesture, he left the episcopal palace to go and live near the poor. He participated enthusiastically in the Conciliar liturgy commission and championed this reform in his archdiocese. He firmly supported the foundation of the CELAM Institute in Medellín. He put his own local Church on track as the People of God and in dialogue with the world by means of the specialization of his priests, the Corporate Institute of Pastoral Action (ICAP), joint pastoral action, pastoral programs for youth, the Third Archdiocesan Synod, the creation of the Governing Council and the Presbyteral Council, the episcopal vicariates, the pastoral zones and departments, the promotion of education and culture by means of the Academy of Church History, Teachers' Training School for Young Women, the Bolivarian University, its faculty of sociology, the Neighborhoods of Jesus, the children's farms, the Isla Foundation for workers, the bank of social benefits for the lay employees of the curia, the special pastoral fund for poor parishes.

### 4. *Oratio*: what does his living of his vocation cause us to say?

Let us begin by recognizing that he personified in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the figure of Jonah about whom the readings for Wednesday of the first week of Lent speak (Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 11:29-32). The prophet, who was a sign of the nearness of God, crossed the city from end to end to proclaim the Word of God so that the people would be converted and that "God might see their works." Let us react with St. Vincent:

*I thank God for all the graces that his goodness is granting to [you].... O Monsieur, how astonished those people are, in my opinion, to see their prelate living like a real bishop.... Of course, Monsieur, I have perfect confidence in the goodness of God, who called the bishop to the ministry... he will give him all the graces he needs to continue and to become perfect in the way of life he has begun.... Alas! Monsieur, what can we not hope for from a prelate who has so well regulated his own life and that of his servants; who has given so many corporal and spiritual alms in his diocese; who takes such care of poor...; who is blessed with the conversion of heretics...? What can we not hope for, I repeat, with regard to the graces and blessings to be granted to such a prelate and to those "quos vocavit in sortem operis ejus"?* (SV II, 2).

(JOSEPH CUMMINS, C.M., translator)

# Aleksander Usowicz, C.M. (1912-2002) <sup>1</sup>

A Priest, Professor and Scholar Who Was a Living Legend

by Wojciech Paluchowski, C.M.

*Province of Poland*

In one of his articles, "Golden Legend and Reality," Fr. Aleksander Usowicz, while pondering over the relation between mythical account embraced in legend and reality grounded in facts, wrote: "Poetry can be more philosophical and much more meaningful than historical account." A similar relation occurs between legend and truth when it comes to a depiction of such a remarkable personage as Fr. A. Usowicz was. The essence of his life and deeds, as a passionate servant of the faith, committed educator and scholar, has been indeed difficult to capture as it even inspired myths and legends about him during his own lifetime. In this case, however, myths and legends about Fr. Aleksander Usowicz are deeply grounded in reality and they contain a rich lode of truth. The purpose of this article is to introduce us to the life of this extraordinary follower of St. Vincent de Paul.

## **From Lithuania to Poland**

Fr. A. Usowicz was born on 14 July 1912 in Drublana Wileńskie, Lithuania. He attended elementary school in Dukszta Pijarskie located about 30 kilometers from Vilno, now Lithuania, where he moved with his parents after World War I. In 1924 he entered the

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<sup>1</sup> We had thought at first to publish in this issue of *Vincentiana*, on the subject of "lesser-known" confreres, an equally brief biography of Fr. Konstanty Michalski, C.M., Polish (1879-1947). However, Fr. Jan Telus, C.M., whom we asked to write the article on that distinguished confrere, informed us that *Vincentiana* had published his article: XXII (1978) 57-62, and suggested that we present another figure, no less important, related to Fr. Michalski, like that of Fr. Aleksander Usowicz, C.M. This seemed good to us. We thank the author of the present article for his kindness in accepting the proposal (editor's note).

Classic Gymnasium in Vilno run by the Vincentian Fathers where he completed a four-year educational program in three years. This was the place where his life-long fascination with St. Vincent de Paul captivated his heart and mind. He continued his studies in Kraków, Poland, first at the Vincentian Gymnasium and, after receiving a secondary school degree, he enrolled in the Vincentian Institute of Theology. He formally entered the Congregation of the Mission on 15 June 1928 and made vows two years later on 2 July 1930. Already as a deacon, young Usowicz was sent to Rome to pursue his studies. In the next two years he received his licentiate and doctorate degrees in philosophy from the Angelicum. His first doctoral dissertation was written in Latin: *De Aristotelis circa definitionem doctrina commentatorum sententiis illustrata*. In 1935 Usowicz was ordained a priest.

Upon his return to Kraków Fr. A. Usowicz taught philosophy at the Jagiellonian University where he met his future promotor and professor, Fr. Konstanty Michalski, C.M., who at the time held the chair of Christian Philosophy at the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University. K. Michalski was also rector of the Jagiellonian University and became famous as an historian of medieval philosophy. Under the direction of Fr. Konstanty Michalski, in 1945, Fr. A. Usowicz completed his second doctorate, this one in theology, presenting as a thesis: *Układ cnót i wad u Arystotelesa i św. Tomśza z Akwinu w związku z życiem uczuciowo-popędowym (The composition of virtues and vices in the works of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas in regard to human passions and appetites)*. The following year Fr. Usowicz presented his qualifying thesis on *Tomistyczna sublimacja uczuć w świetle nowożytnej psychologii (The sublimation of sense appetites in the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas in light of contemporary psychology)*. Those two works grounded his position as a philosopher interested in Thomism; however, Thomism opened toward a dialogue with contemporary development of philosophical and scientific thought.

In 1947, after the death of Professor K. Michalski, Fr. A. Usowicz was appointed to a professorship of the Department of Christian Philosophy at the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University. He held the chair until the Faculty was shut down by the Polish communist regime in 1954.

Between 1961 and 1964 he was Visitor of the Polish Vincentians. On several occasions he took part in the General Assemblies in Rome and contributed to the work of editing numerous documents in Latin. He also acted as superior of the Kraków Provincial House and two-term rector of the Vincentian Institute of Theology (1963-1964 and 1978-1979).

On 20 October 1997, Fr. Usowicz was honored as an outstanding and erudite scholar with the *Bene Merenti* medal issued by the

Pontifical Academy of Theology, Kraków. In a eulogy delivered by Professor Mieczysław Markowski, a renowned philosopher and medievalist, can be found (among others): *Professor Usowicz's merits as an academic teacher, philosopher and historian of philosophy become above all conspicuously evident in his 60 years of teaching authentic philosophical knowledge among generations of young seminarians preparing themselves for theological studies. Prof. A. Usowicz is one of the gigantic figures of a scholar whose life left an indelible mark, not only on the development of philosophy, but also on theology as well, in Kraków's academic circles.*

In Fr. Usowicz's self-ironic response one can trace down his well-known sense of humor: *In my tender thanks to Professor M.M. for the praise just heard I must say that he found so many virtues honoring my person I can hardly recognize myself. But, I guess, I must agree with this statement since it was said with the authority of a member of the Polish Academy of Science, and, at the same time, the vice-chairman of an international committee working on editing a monumental work of Aristoteles Latinus.*

Prof. A. Usowicz passed away suddenly on 8 June 2002 on his way to a sweet shop to buy treats for his upcoming 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. "He went out to buy sweets and landed in heaven" Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski concluded in his funeral sermon, pointing out one of Fr. Usowicz's characteristics, a constant willingness to endow others with gifts and treats.

The funeral Mass was concelebrated on 13 June 2002 at the Vincentian's Seminary Church in Kraków. The presiding celebrant was Marian Jaworski, Cardinal of Lwow (Ukraine), along with several bishops and a multitude of priests. The funeral ceremony started with the presentation of a letter of condolence from the Holy Father John Paul II by Professor and Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek, Rector of the Pontifical Academy. In his letter, John Paul II indicated several times that he considers himself to be a grateful pupil of Professor A. Usowicz. Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, the Metropolitan of Kraków, led the funeral procession to Rakowicki's Cemetery.

### **Lecturer, Professor and Master**

Soon after his arrival in Kraków from his studies in Rome, in 1936, Fr. A. Usowicz started lecturing philosophy, beginning in seminaries, which he held in high esteem throughout his whole life. He strongly believed there is no other educational institution like a seminary, which is able to transform both the hearts and minds of young people in such a radical way. His students immediately recognized him as zealous instructor, a thorough professor and a

genuine master. He began teaching at the Vincentian Institute of Theology in Kraków on 11 September 1936 and remained there as a faculty member throughout his whole life with two exceptions: when he worked at diocesan seminaries in Gdańsk-Oliwa (1959-1961) and in Gorzów (1971-1978).

During World War II, while Poland was under Nazi occupation, Professor A. Usowicz maintained lecturing underground at the Częstochowa Seminary (1939-1943) and at the Salvatorian Seminary (1940-1945) in Kraków. These underground classes continued the teaching program of the closed-down Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University.

In 1947, after the death of Prof. K. Michalski, he undertook teaching philosophy at the Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University, a post he held for the next seven years, until the eradication of the Faculty by the Polish communist government.

Despite all the difficulties in the post-war situation and communist oppression of the Catholic Church in Poland, Fr. Usowicz embarked on intense teaching in the various diocesan seminaries of Gdańsk, Gorzów, Kraków, Kielce, Sosnowiec and the Silesia region. He also taught at the seminaries of the Capuchin and Salvatorian Fathers and that of the Order of St. Paul.

As a result of his extraordinary commitment to teaching he managed to educate several thousand priests and missionaries. Now, therefore, his former students are scattered all over the world and they carry on the mission on almost every continent.

The scope of the subjects and topics he taught was vast and most impressive. It included all areas of philosophy, many fields of theology and other disciplines such as Church history, didactics, pedagogy and bibliology. In regard to the last, it was a well-known fact that the library was his favorite place to be. He knew the seminary's 200,000-volume collection of books to such an extent that he was able to find almost every book in that collection without using the library catalog.

Some philosophical topics, such as metaphysics, history of philosophy and psychology he treated with a special interest and consideration. While listening to his lectures one could easily sense the presence of an open mind not confined to one discipline but an outstanding scholar. His great knowledge of philosophy and theology included as well almost all topics and subjects.

Professor Usowicz's interest in contemporary social and political life, however peripheral to his major interest in philosophy, was still strong and dedicated. For many years he held monographic lectures at the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków. The topics of those lectures were dedicated to various problems of the dignity of the



human person, such as human rights, freedom, problems of peace and war. He was also actively engaged in opposition to the death penalty. On many occasions Fr. Usowicz presented his in-depth analysis of social democratic doctrine as a better (in opposition to the totalitarian regime) way for citizens to exercise their political liberty, tolerance, and right to privacy and social justice. However, in his analysis, he did not underestimate both the shortcomings and potential perils of democratic social doctrine. He strongly believed that exposing and stressing goodness is the best way to win over evil, since our priority should not be the “weeding out the darnel” but wise cultivation of soil so it can bring about an abundant harvest.

It is interesting to note Fr. A. Usowicz’s original way of lecturing. All his lectures were scrupulously prepared in the form of textbooks of which he left behind over 50. They covered not only all the philosophical disciplines but also a significant amount of theology. However, while lecturing he never used his notes and was able to cite by heart even reference sources and bibliographic citations. For that reason alone generations of his students were deeply impressed with his style of teaching and he himself became an endless topic of student’s stories and legends.

In his modesty, he would never use phrases like “I did it” or “in my opinion” but instead he would say “we have referred to,” “we decided upon” and so on. This attitude reflected his deep conviction that what is taught *ex cathedra* incorporates the heritage of all the past generations and not necessarily the opinion of the lecturer.

### Work of Writer

In spite of his heavy load with didactic and instructive activities, Fr. A. Usowicz was able to find spare time for writing and publishing. His literary output published in the form of books, articles and reviews includes several areas of studies.

His two most important works analyze the Aristotelian problem of definition as a part of his formal logic (“De Aristotelis circa definitionem doctrina commentarium sententiis illustrata,” in *Collectanea Theologica*, XIX, 1938, 273-317; “De partitione definitionis apud Aristotelem,” in *Divus Thomas*, XLII, 1939, 114-119). In his next works come to light the professor’s new interest in the philosophy of man (*Układ cnót i wad w związku z życiem uczuciowo-popędowym u Arystotelesa i św. Tomasza z Akwinu*, Kraków 1939; *Tomistyczna sublimacja uczuć w świetle nowożytnej psychologii*, Kraków 1949).

A very special chapter of Fr. Usowicz’s writings explores the legacy of Professor K. Michalski, the man whose life inspired and fascinated him. He wrote numerous books and articles in which

he discussed and presented the life, deeds and works of K. Michalski. As a co-author with Fr. Kazimierz Kłósak and Fr. Franciszek Bima, C.M., he compiled and published a complete biography (*Książki Konstancy Michalski 1978-1947*, Kraków 1949) and bibliography of his writings ("Bibliographie," in *Die Philosophie im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. In memoriam Konstancy Michalski, 1879-1947*, Amsterdam 1988).

To the very end of his life he worked on compiling all of Fr. K. Michalski's works. They were published as the complete works of K. Michalski in the monographic series: *Studia do dziejów Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego (Studia res gestas Facultatis Theologicae Universitatis Jagellonicae illustrantia)*, vol. V: *Filozofia wieków średnich*, Kraków 1977, 636 pages; vol. IX: *Nova et vetera*, Kraków 1998, 678 pages; vol. XI: *Histoire de la philosophie*, Kraków 1999, 594 pages and vol. XV: *Dilatato corde*, Kraków 2002, 655 pages.

The latest book was dedicated to Fr. A. Usowicz in honor of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his writing work. One cannot overlook the fact that Fr. Usowicz was a highly respected reviewer and critic of theses, dissertations and papers for licentiates. The number of his reviews of works submitted for higher university degrees is uncountable. Nevertheless, it turned out that at least one of his reviews of a qualifying thesis had historical meaning. It was in 1953 that Fr. Usowicz was a member of a three-man committee at the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University who accepted the qualifying thesis of John Paul II, then Fr. Karol Wojtyła.<sup>2</sup> Soon after that the Faculty was closed, and it turned out that Fr. K. Wojtyła's thesis was the very last submitted and defended at the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University.

A very special chapter in Fr. A. Usowicz's literary output is deeply rooted in Vincentian spirituality. That theme was the prevailing subject matter of his articles published from 1932-1938 in the *Meteor*, a magazine of Vincentian students. They also reflected the high ideals of the youth. In one of those articles he analyzes what

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<sup>2</sup> It is John Paul II himself who mentions this fact in his most recent autobiography: "Much time later, Fr. Różycki proposed to me the topic of the thesis for becoming a lecturer which dealt with the work of Max Scheler: *The formalism of ethics and the material ethics of values*, which I translated into Polish while writing the thesis. It was a new turning point. I defended the thesis in November 1953; the co-supervisors were Aleksander Usowicz, Stefan Świeżawski and the theologian Władysław Wicher. This was the final qualification for the teaching chair in the theology faculty of the Jagiellonian University before it was suppressed by the Communist authorities." Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Alzatevi, andiamo!*, Mondadori, Milan, Italy, 2004, p. 76 (editor's note and translation).

love meant in St. Vincent's life, pointing out that, in fact, it was the center of his life and the very source of charity and self-giving to others. St. Vincent, he writes, was a genius of charity and altruism ("Wielki Święty wielkiego wieku," in *Meteor*, XXIV, 1932).

His remarks are valid to these days:

*Without hope, and especially without love, our faith will be fruitless. St. Vincent possessed all three of these theological virtues, and that is why he was so successful in founding a worldwide web of orphanages, hospitals and other charitable institutions. That is why to continue St. Vincent's deeds means to accept Christian values. It is an illusion that one can use St. Vincent's ingenuity and at the same time abandon the core of Christianity. Such an effort will only produce false philanthropists who, in fact, will be more concerned about themselves than about others, and in the best scenario they will soon lose heart for working in the fallow of a human nature deprived of God's grace.*

In the *Meteor* one can also find a series of six articles written by Fr. Usowicz in the form of a philosophical dialogue under the common title *Athalos*. In the preface one can read a short description of the series: "Athalos personifies a restless mind and an immortal soul in a never-ending quest for truth and true happiness [...] Great souls will appear on the scene to discuss being mysteries." Indeed, through the series of the articles *Athalos* continues his discussion with the souls of, among others, Socrates, Voltair, Miriam (Mary) and Savonarola. But, most importantly, it is Fr. Usowicz himself, as *Athalos*, who marks his presence through the series of articles and he is in fact one of the Great Souls of the Polish Province of the Vincentian Fathers.

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