

EDITED BY  
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# HISTORY OF THE SCALABRINIAN CONGREGATION

VOL. VI  
(1941-1978)

**ISTITUTO STORICO SCALABRINIANO**



# HISTORY OF THE SCALABRINIAN CONGREGATION

VOLUME VI

From 1941 to 1978

by Mario Francesconi, c.s.

Translated by Martin Bortolazzo, c.s.

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## FOREWORD

As was already pointed out at the beginning of Volume III, this VI and last Volume of the History of the Scalabrinian Congregation has the scope of placing at the disposal of Scalabrinians the Documentation stored in the General Archives of the Congregation, thus proving the tools useful and necessary for more thorough historical and critical publications.

In addition, more so than the other volumes, this last volume assumes the character of a chronicle, as it deals with a period too recent to allow critical judgments and syntheses without the risk of sounding presumptuous or partial. In fact, the more recent the information, the quicker the facts are being related and the more difficult it becomes to deal with persons who may be still living, or with events that are still evolving, with the needed impartiality, which only time will provide.

In reading these short “diaries”, the reader may get the impression that the “history-makers” have been almost exclusively the pastors or the directors of missions or institutions; but we had to limit ourselves to individuals who represent a special point of reference, due to practical impossibility of finding out all the facts concerning each single Scalabrinian, to whom this “story” is affectionately and admiringly dedicated.

Rome, on the 75th anniversary of Bishop Scalabrini’s death



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# PART I

## THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION



## CHAPTER I

### EMIGRATION IN THE LAST FORTY YEARS

#### WORLD WAR II

The historical period to which this volume bears reference is in great part conditioned as to its influence on the migratory phenomenon by World War II, which broke out on September 1, 1939, with the German attack on Poland. Two days later, England and France declared war on Germany; on September 12 Russia invaded eastern Poland, and on November 30 it attacked Finland. In April 1940 Germany occupied Denmark and Norway, in May the Netherlands and Belgium and on June 14 Paris. Germany attacked Russia June 10, 1941. In December of the same year, Japan and the U.S.A. entered the conflict. In 1943 Germans and Italians were chased out of Africa, and Americans landed in France. In May 1945 the remaining German forces collapsed, and Japan capitulated in November.

World War II brought about the translocation and exodus of enormous masses of people. Massive deportations were carried out by the German government, which "imported" nine million foreign workers. The Russian government dislocated two million Poles to northern Russia. With the expulsion of minorities and the exodus of fugitives and refugees, by the end of the war, about thirty million Europeans had to abandon their country of origin. In the Orient, many millions got out of China, Korea, and North Vietnam. Hundreds of thousands more refugees left Hungary, East Germany, Indonesia, New Guinea, Algeria, Congo, Palestine, etc.

#### ITALIAN AND OTHER MIGRATIONS

Until 1966, the Scalabrinian Congregation was officially engaged only in work for Italian emigrants, to whom we devote therefore our particular attention.

In the years between 1946 and 1976, 7,447,330 Italians emigrated; 4,319,560 of them repatriated, with an active balance of 3,127,770. In particular, 5,109,860 Italians migrated to European countries and 3,628,430 returned, with an active balance of 1,481,430. The flow to-

wards extra-European countries was smaller, but marked by a greater number of permanent expatriates. In fact, there were 2,337,220 emigrants, but only 691,156 of them returned with a consequent active balance of 1,646,064. The decline of extra-European emigration began in 1958. The phenomenon of Italian emigration affected mostly the regions of the South, that contributed two-fifths of emigrants to foreign countries (the Veneto is still first among the other regions) and 55% of the internal migration.

As to internal migrations, in their widest sense of change of place of residence, between 1941 and 1976 they involve 12,431,000 Italians: but only for half of them we can speak of a real change of cultural environment. In fact 3,800,000 migrated to the so-called "Industrial Triangle" (Lombardy, Piedmont, Liguria), half of them from the South and the Islands, one-fourth from the Triveneto, and the rest from other regions. Another 2,300,000, half of them from the South and the Islands, moved up to central Italy, to Rome especially. Thirty-six percent of the people of Milan are immigrants from other regions; Turin has the highest percentage of immigrants, that is, 42 percent of the total population.

A new phenomenon has taken place in Italy in the latest years: some half a million foreigners have entered in search of work in this country already plagued by a high rate of unemployment. It involves mostly Afro-Asians, drawn to Italy by hunger and unfortunately willing to be made the victims of injustices if only to find some solution for their main problem.

In 1966 the Scalabrinian Congregation officially extended its field of action to migrants of all nationalities. It is not easy to give a real picture, all-be-it approximate, of the actual state of migrations: be it enough to consider the phenomenon of the "illegals", the "undocumented"; the "clandestine"; their number estimates are extremely various among scholars themselves. In the United States for instance, some speak of two million Spanish-speaking "illegals", but there are those who tell us that there are nine million of them. We can have a look, instead, at the general trends of migrations following World War II. About 60,000,000 Europeans had migrated before it, but the flow had markedly been reduced after World War I, first because of restrictive laws, and then on account of the great economic "reces-



sion". Following World War II, emigration resumed with 7½ million units between 1946 and 1959. In the years between 1960 and 1970 emigration from Europe to countries overseas marked a further decrease: in fact, only a little over 4 million Europeans emigrated in those ten years.

At the same time, however, new currents appeared within Europe, especially from the South and East to the West, involving some 8 million migrants. We repeat: statistics concerning European migrations are very uncertain. Some of the most important movements concern Asia: the exodus of 700,000 Palestinians in 1947 and the arrival in Israel at the same time of 830,000 Jews; a dislocation in both directions of some ten million people between India and Pakistan; the flow into Hong Kong of a million and a half foreigners; the migration of half a million persons from the Asian countries of the Commonwealth to Great Britain; as well as an immense number of Asians into the United States and Canada, especially in 1965.

Africa, too, has known massive dislocations: within it, some five million people moved each year into West Africa (Ivory Coast, Ghana), South Africa, and Rhodesia. In more recent times, large migrations flowed from North Africa and Turkey to Western Europe. We point out that in the years 1960-1970 the 450,000 Turkish emigrants preferred Germany, while 900,000 North Africans entered France. In the period 1950-1970 another mass phenomenon took place: the repatriation of Europeans from their former colonies of Africa and Asia: 1,350,000 French, 200,000 Dutch, and then the Portuguese, followed in smaller numbers by the Belgians and the Italians. In the years between 1946 and 1960 Latin America witnessed the arrival of two million Europeans at the same time there came into being the emigration from South America to North America and the so-called "neighborly migration", that is, from one country to another within South America itself. In the 20 years between 1950 and 1970, almost 2 million Latin-Americans immigrated to the United States; to them one must add also 378,000 Cuban refugees and 165,000 Puerto Ricans. In the sixties, the United States received 450,000 Mexicans, 93,000 Dominicans, 73,000 Columbians, 134,000 Indians, 100,000 Filipinos, 75,000 from Hong Kong. At the same time 320,000 Latin Americans and Asians entered Canada. In the seventies, some of these movements

in a certain sense got out of control; in regard to Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, for instance, it is a question of millions, no longer of hundreds of thousands. The countries of South America most involved in foreign immigration are Argentina and Venezuela.

Some 600,000 Paraguayans, 450,000 Bolivians, 350,000 Chileans, 100,000 Uruguayans, and 100,000 Brazilians were thought to be living in Argentina by 1975. It is estimated that about one million Colombians are now present in Venezuela, the great majority of them "clandestine", or, rather, "undocumented".

The most massive phenomenon of internal migration is found in Brazil where more than 30 million people are thought to have migrated from one State to another: for a good many of them the same observation holds valid which was made in regard to Italian internal migrations, that it involves a real change into different social and cultural environments, even though taking place within the same political and linguistic reality.

In Australia within a total population of 13,500,000, there are 3 million immigrants from 70 countries. Until a few years ago Europe represented the most massive migrations.

In the 20 years (1950-1970), Europe sent overseas nine and half million emigrants: 2,500,500 to the United States, 2,400,000 to Australia, 2,300,000 to Canada. There was a marked decrease, instead, of Southern Europeans to South America because Northwestern Europe began to offer better conditions. And now the awakening of the "emerging" countries or of the "Third World" has made emigration a worldwide phenomenon. Politics also has played an important role in the last forty years. No sure statistics are available yet on the displacements of Asian countries battered by wars: they concern a drama of such proportions in number and quality as to defy still any statistics. Instead, we are in possession of some figures about Europe: in the 50s, almost 2 million refugees fled East Germany; 154,000 Turks were repatriated from Bulgaria in 1950-1951; 160,000 Hungarians abandoned their country following the revolutions of 1956-1968; 200,000 Poles emigrated in the sixties. If we consider emigration's contribution to the increase or the decrease of population in the twenty years between 1951 and 1970, on the gain's side we find the United States at the head of the list with an increase of about 7 million; then comes

Germany with a gain of 4,800,000; followed by France with 3,300,000, Oceania with 2,000,000, and Canada with close to 2,000,000. South America had an increase of about a million between 1946 and 1957, and a loss of almost two million in the sixties. Because of emigration, Africa lost almost two million people and Europe about three million. The most reliable statistics, so far, though limited to the twenty years between 1950 and 1970, have been supplied by UNESCO at the world conference on population of 1974. We present four of them.

Unfortunately, the third one gives only the "data" of emigrants from European countries. The figures are "net", that is, they represent the balances between expatriates and repatriated:

Migrants from Europe to the main destinations overseas (1951-1970)

Destination	1951-1955	1956-1960	1961-1965	1966-1970	1951-1970
Australia	513,100	524,900	588,800	764,800	2,391,600
New Zealand	82,300	70,900	86,100	70,400	309,700
Canada	699,900	672,900	365,200	589,900	2,327,900
United States	628,200	700,100	531,600	600,600	2,460,500
South Africa	68,400	45,200	78,600	149,700	341,900
Latin America	799,700	490,000	226,300	131,000	1,647,000
TOTALS	2,791,600	2,504,000	1,876,600	2,306,400	9,478,600

Migrants from Africa, Asia, Latin America to Australia, Canada, and the United States

Destination	1951-1955	1956-1960	1961-1965	1966-1970	1951-1970
To Australia from:					
Africa	9,300	10,700	21,000	30,600	71,600
Asia	31,100	41,300	53,800	105,300	231,500
Latin America	800	800	3,100	10,800	15,500
To Canada from					
Africa	3,200	7,000	11,400	19,900	41,500
Asia	20,900	20,800	25,900	102,600	170,200
Latin America	11,800	12,600	17,700	66,900	109,000
To the U.S. from					

EMIGRATION IN THE LAST FORTY YEARS

Africa	5,200	8,900	9,600	19,300	43,000
Asia	50,100	108,900	104,300	318,600	581,900
Latin America	229,500	389,500	551,700	751,400	1,186,300
TOTALS	361,900	600,500	789,500	1,425,400	3,186,300

Emigrants from each European nation in 1951-1970 (Balances)

East Germany	2,488,000
Italy	1,958,000
Portugal	1,952,000
Spain	1,377,000
Yugoslavia	1,282,000
Greece	651,000
Ireland	558,000
Poland	526,000
Romania	250,000
Finland	214,000
Great Britain	181,000
Bulgaria	178,000
Czechoslovakia	174,000
Hungary	161,000
Austria	103,000
Malta	81,000
Netherlands	50,000
Denmark	32,000
Norway	10,000

Immigrants into the main receiving countries in 1951-1970 (Balances)

United States	6,896,000
West Germany	4,780,000
France	3,258,000
Canada	1,802,000
Australia	1,712,000
Switzerland	630,000

Belgium	211,000
New Zealand	145,000
Luxemburg	22,000

N.B. The reported figures are official: but the reality of emigration is only outlined by the official statistics, even only from the viewpoint of quantities.

The phenomenon of clandestine or otherwise unregistered immigration alters, substantially in some parts of the world, the actual proportions of the great movements of world's population. While in Bishop Scalabrini's times it was considered by most as a temporary phenomenon, emigration has become instead an ever more universal and lasting fact, fostered not only by political causes and wars, but to a larger degree by those very economic conditions that according to the dominant theories of the end of the 18th century should have helped to stamp it out.

## PRESENT MIGRATORY TRENDS

Reserving to give more detailed information on the single Scalabrinian Provinces in the following sections, we offer here a general view of the most recent trends of emigration, based on the Geneva "Bureau International du Travail" of May -June, 1976:

### Europe

Consequently to the oil crisis of 1973 some two million migrant workers have lost their jobs in Western Europe: 3 out of 10. Some economists tell us that the price of this recession could have been much higher: a rather meager comfort for the thousands upon thousands of emigrants who had to return to increase the numbers of the unemployed in their countries of origin. What will be the fate of migrant workers in Europe when a recovery will set in? Any research on this point must necessarily be based on at least two suppositions: such is the opinion expressed in a recent study of the "BIT" (Bureau International du Travail). One of them is that the free interchange of workers within the common European Market will not be extended further; and the other is that Denmark, Norway, and Sweden - whose gates are already tightly shut - will strengthen their blockades to prevent the entry of non-Nordics or of people who are not citizens of the European Common Market. The study finds that France, West Germany, the Benelux, Austria

and Switzerland still are the seven main countries of immigration, adding, however, that feelings are nearly everywhere running against immigrants.

The Federal Government of Switzerland has been openly invited to reduce the number of foreigners or to keep it at a stationary level. It is a known fact that some members of the governments of Austria, Holland, and West Germany are in favor of adopting analogous policies for their countries. Yet, the economic systems of these countries will still be in need of foreign labor. Western Europe's active population will stop increasing by 1985, and it will indeed be necessary that someone be doing the 'dirty, heavy, and dangerous' work which the natives will continue to shun. The manufacturing industries will represent for a short while yet, the main sector of occupation for foreign workers, providing jobs for three million immigrants. By 1985, however, the demand would experience a marked decrease, especially because many activities that presently require a large portion of manpower will have to be abandoned on account of a new distribution of the world's labor forces. Transportation, health services, educational systems, and other public services will undergo a great growth. Together with other activities of the service sector, they will provide jobs for some 900,000 immigrants by the year 2000. As to farming, as many foreign workers will find an occupation in it as there are today, that is, about 300,000 people. The next ten years, - the study concludes, - will see a stagnation of migrations in Europe. Beginning with 1985, there will be a reduction of the total number of foreign workers. It is thought that the mass of foreign workers in Europe may well decrease from its highest peak of 6 million in 1973 down to 3½ as of now to the end of the century."

### **In the Rest of the World**

The conclusions of the study on migrations in Europe may be viewed within the context of world's migratory movements of these last years and of their effects on employment such as can be deduced from the report of the General Director of "BIT" to the world conference on employment. The number of "Third World" emigrants employed in industrialized countries on economic systems of trade and in the Middle East (oil producing countries) amounts to about 12,000,000.

About a million and a half immigrants from developing countries are now permanent residents of the United States; but some four million foreigners, most of all Mexicans, illegally enter the country each year. According to some reports, there could be in the United States anywhere between seven and twelve million illegal immigrants. In the Middle East, immigrants represent three-fourths of Kuwait's labor forces, one-third of Saudi Arabia's, and

Bahrein's. Five out of six workers of Lesotho in Africa, who are employed in paying jobs, reside in the Republic of South Africa. At least one-fourth of the total labor force of Botswana is employed abroad. On the other hand, though the majority of migrant workers are made up of unskilled and unspecialized laborers, the developing countries supply also, in increasing numbers, highly qualified workers and free professionals: in the period between 1962 and 1972, the United States, Canada, and England, have admitted about 170,000 workers belonging to these classes. Out of 75,000 people who immigrated to the United States, one-third (13,000) of them were scientists and architects from India, and scientists, architects, and doctors from the Philippines (11,000). In certain developing countries such exodus of qualified manpower has reached dramatic proportions: in 1970 emigration from the Philippines increased to half the number of registered nurses. The percentage of doctors, surgeons, and dentists, is still higher.

### **Consequences**

Who stands to benefit from these migratory movements? It is not easy to assess losses and benefits, but some elements for an answer may be drawn from three possible points of view: 1) that of workers and their families, 2) that of countries of origin, and 3) that of countries of immigration. In the great majority of cases, these people benefit from their stay abroad. They find jobs which insure them higher profits than those they would gain in their countries of origin; they acquire, at times, a certain stock of professional skills; they can have the members of their families benefit the most from their work. All these benefits are acquired, however, at the high cost of the great social and personal difficulties, which migrant workers must confront. Immediately speaking, the countries of origin benefit on two counts: reduction of the unemployed or half-employed, and of the disparity of earnings, on one side; the re-equilibrium of the balance of payments, on the other. The departure of skilled workers represents also a negative factor for the country that has paid the price for their instruction and formation, and it worsens the scarcity of skilled working forces. The remittances, remarkable at times, sent by emigrants to their countries of origin can certainly speed up the rate of growth of the nation's economy and bring about an increase of the national income 'per capita' provided they be wisely invested; but it is also true that the return of migrants from the countries that dismissed them because of the recession does not but aggravate the already serious problems of unemployment.

### **Economic Benefits and Social Costs**

With migrant workers at their disposal, immigration countries have a reserve manpower, which allows them to better conform the economy to the variations of the demand. And so, it would seem as though the balance be definitely in favor of the employers, but the advantages of a situation like this are not quite so evident for the workers and the unions. In fact, the presence of unskilled immigrants may hinder the raising of salaries attached to certain jobs and thus be detrimental to natives who must leave the jobs in question. From the viewpoint of production's structures, migrations could slow down the reconversion needed for an international distribution of labor. And this for the fact that in certain cases industrialized nations may continue to produce by means of migrant workers goods requiring large quantities of manpower which would otherwise be manufactured and then exported by developing countries. Finally, from the social viewpoint, problems multiply and tensions grow when the foreign population increases too fast.

Serious difficulties set in particularly in the sectors of housing, transportation, education, hospitalization, and other social services. Tensions result in great part from inability or insufficient willingness on the part of immigration countries to provide the services due to immigrants and their charges.

### **Both emigration and immigration countries equally involved**

Governments of countries supplying manpower as well as those of industrialized ones are interested in reducing the social costs of emigration and in a better sharing of its net profits. In the strategic plan proposed by BIT to the World Conference on employment, the poorest classes of each nation should be the foremost beneficiaries of the advantages provided by emigration. In any case, the countries of departure should make all efforts to limit the exodus of qualified workers by the use of adequate economic motivations and restraints.

Highly qualified or semi-specialized workers occupied in sectors for which there is a scarcity of manpower, for instance, could be excluded from migration programs supported by the state.

The unions could urge their members not to emigrate when they have acquired a certain degree of skills and take initiatives of bringing job opportunities to the attention of the unemployed and unskilled workers. The countries of origin could also set up some actual programs, such as: - savings banks, cooperatives, agro-industrial projects, fit to facilitate a productive use of the remittances of emigrants. The investments so made could



give an easy start to activities requiring a great amount of manpower in the very countries of origin of the emigrants. The governments, employers, and unions of immigration countries should avoid any form of exploitation of emigrants and accord them equal treatment and opportunity. The international instruments recently adopted by ILO (International Labor Organization) on the matter should be made the object of a particular attention. A special housing indemnity should be granted by immigration countries' governments to migrants who return to the lands of their origin; this way repatriations would be made easier while allowing at the same time for the carrying out of cooperative projects of construction, leading on one hand to the creation of new jobs, and, on the other, to the provision for one of the essential human needs.

### **International Measures**

A great part of problems deriving from migrations could be provided for on the international level by means of treaties between interested countries, upon consultation with the organizations of employers and with the unions. And this essentially with the scope of forestalling abuses and safeguarding migrants' rights. Immigration countries could provide estimations on their needs for manpower to make easier in the countries of origin the information of candidates and their eventual professional formation. In any case, a new international distribution of labor would let us avoid, in great measure, migrations due to unemployment and poverty, to the reciprocal advantage of employing countries and of those of origin.



## CHAPTER II

# THE HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION FROM 1941 TO 1978 THROUGH ITS GENERAL ADMINISTRATIONS

### THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION FROM 1941 TO 1951

The war years (1940-1945) blocked the departures and the interchanges of missionaries between Italy and the Americas, so that the missions of the United States, Brazil, and Argentina had to rely only on their own men for continuing a work that had become a real problem because of the aging and the death of the personnel.

In Europe, instead, it was possible to develop the presence of Scalabrinians in France, where the Italian Catholic Mission of Paris was strengthened, in 1942 the Mission of Hayange was accepted, and in 1944 that of Agen was taken over, following the murder of the former Bonomelli missionary, Mons. Torricella.

The vicissitudes of the war opened another mission field for Scalabrinians: the religious assistance to about 400,000 Italians, who had to take the place of German soldiers in German industry and agriculture. From 1941 to 1945, 8 Scalabrinian missionaries worked side by side with the other "workers 'chaplains" in extremely difficult conditions. One of them contracted a sickness that led him to his death; others returned with shattered health.

Fr. Aristide Pagani, deceased because of the sickness contracted in Germany, and Bro. Secondo Bruno Dal Bello, killed in an air raid near Acquasparta (Terni) were the only Scalabrinian casualties of the war. Europe suffered much the consequences of hunger and of the physical and psychological effects of the war, but differently than many others, as a whole our Congregation got away with minimal damages even in its buildings which were affected only indirectly and in a negligible manner. So also the Congregation's seminaries, unlike the major part of the religious and diocesan ones, were able to carry on their ordinary routine. Already on February 24, 1945, the Superior General, Card. Raffaello C. Rossi was in a position to address to the

Provincial Superiors a circular letter in which, after congratulating all of them, he said:

“In a few words I can assure you that the sure and mighty protection of St. Joseph, never invoked in vain, has been openly manifested to Superiors, Confreres, and Houses of the Institute especially in some particular circumstances (...). Good news: regular investitures and professions; a good number of new high school boys (...). Hopes are in bloom also in the missions: no doubt, you know about the progress of the seminary of Chicago and of that of Guaporé which is fast on its way to competing with the seminary of Bassano (...).

About the missionaries outside Italy, in Europe, I cannot tell you much: when news came, it was always good (...).

Humanly sorrowful events were not lacking in the meanwhile (...): the announcement of the departed: - Bishop Rinaldi (Rome, May 31, 1941); Fr. Domenico Corso (São Paulo, May 12, 1942); Fr. Martini (Piacenza, May 26, 1942); Fr. Preti (Piacenza, June 29, 1942); Fr. Peona (U.S.A. East, February 10, 1944); Bro. Zuccolotto (São Paulo, May 5, 1944); Fr. Serraglia (Río Grande do Sul, 1944); Fr. Navarro (São Paulo, 1944); Bro. Dal Bello (near Narni, April 15, 1944); Bro. Zonta (Bassano, July 1944); Fr. Pagani (Bassano, November 1944); Fr. Fey (São Paulo, December 1944).”

As he had actively taken care with Italian and German authorities in 1943 that our Seminaries of Italy were spared any requisition, the same Card. Rossi did also write in 1944 to the Military Ordinary of the American forces, Bishop Spellman, so that they might be respected as institutions directly dependent on the Holy See. In fact, as Card. Spellman himself would later on confirm, he asked him to let the Allied Air Forces know the location of Scalabrinian seminaries.

War itself caused a certain decentralization to take place in the field of formation: the need for seminaries in America had always been affirmed, but it was also thought necessary at the same time that the students should complete their formation in Italy so as to insure loyalty to the Congregation’s spirit of unity. When it became impossible in 1941 to have the students go to Italy for their Novitiate, the Province of Río Grande do Sul had solicited permission for opening a Novitiate in Brazil. Card. Rossi did not grant this authorization explaining it as follows:

“My fears concern the fact that by establishing them outside of Italy at the present time we would have Novitiates that will bear no fruit and introduce imperfect elements and future causes of decline in the Pious Society.”<sup>1</sup>

Fr. Tirondola declared himself in agreement; in fact, he showed concern over a trend of autonomy he seemed to notice in the Western Province of the United States, and he added: “We must take care of Italian vocations and of our Seminaries of Italy if we wish to insure the unity, the scope, and the spirit of our newly reborn Congregation.”<sup>2</sup>

And so permission was granted to the students of Guaporé and Melrose Park, the two seminaries respectively of Brazil and of the United States, to continue their studies and also to receive the Sacred Orders: they would have made their Novitiate in Italy after the war. But by war’s end, Card. Rossi had given in to the evolving of reality: in the Guaporé seminary alone there were more than a hundred students; it had become impossible, therefore, to have them travel to Italy. Immediately after communications had been re-established, in June of 1945, Card. Rossi declared himself inclined to authorize the opening of Novitiates in the United States and Brazil.

In structural questions of this kind, Card. Rossi always maintained a prudent, though not inflexible, attitude. It could be stated that certain renewals sprang up from the ranks; others were promoted by Fr. Tirondola or by other Major Superiors. At first they met with the reluctance from the Superior General, who always ended up, however, with ratifying those that proved to stand up to the test of the first difficulties. But the point where Card. Rossi showed himself adamant - though unfortunately not always listened to - was to maintain the Congregation within the bounds of its scope: “We cannot accept proposals of foundations that do not respond to the scope of the Pious Society which is that of assisting Italian migrants.”<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand he was asking at the same time for the opinion of the Superiors and of the “prudenciores” in regard to the project of

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Card. R.C. Rossi to Fr. F. Tirondola, March 21, 1941.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Fr. F. Tirondola to Card. R. C. Rossi, March 26, 1941.

<sup>3</sup> Circular letter of Card. Rossi to the Provincials Superiors, December 3, 1945.)

granting a greater autonomy to the internal government of the Congregation:

“Since 1939 I had in mind to ask the Holy Father whether the time had not come to give the Pious Society a Superior General of its own as required by the Constitutions. But, I wanted to find out first what some of you, at least the Superiors in office, thought of it. I must say that the responses so far received reflected the following opinion: The Pious Society should still continue to depend in all things on the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. We should like to think that the Lord indeed inspired those who so answered, because there broke out in the meantime the greatly serious and woeful war, and events well proved actually how beneficial for the Pious Society was its total and direct dependence in all things on the Holy See.

Now the war is over, however, the idea of 1939 recurs in my mind. It seems to me that, constituted now as a religious Congregation, strengthened by an ever increasing number of religious, and animated by a good spirit, the Pious Society will be able to find within itself the elements necessary for the autonomous evolving - so to speak - of its own life.

On the other hand, I am well aware of the fact that, because of right-ful reasons respondent to the good of the Pious Society, such as that dependence on the Sacred Consistorial Congregation lends prestige to the Institute with the Most Excellent local Ordinaries, you would like the change of government not to be so radical, at least for now. And so, in order to comply with your open desire, rather than any change of the present mode of the pious Society’s dependence on Sacred Consistorial Congregation, by which its Cardinal Secretary may continue to be the Superior General for as long as may be necessary, I would intend to propose to the Holy Father the appointment of a Vicar General to whom all the faculties be given as will be proper and needed in carrying out his office. He will have to be assisted by the General Councilors, as required by the Constitutions.”<sup>4</sup>

He added that, unable as he was because of existing difficulties to call together the General Chapter, he had decided to consult the religious who should have the right to attend it and others, on two questions: 1) whether they thought the appointment of a Vicar General is opportune; 2) if so, whom would they propose for this office. In

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<sup>4</sup> Circular Letter by Card. R.C. Rossi, December 3, 1945.

fact, the religious consulted were 34. All answered in favor of the first point and three-fourths of them pointed to Fr. Francesco Tirondola.

A study of the replies to the first questions reveals that almost all of them considered the changeover to complete autonomy still untimely because the particular position of Scalabrinian missions with the Bishops could not be sustained for the reaching of their specific scope without the effective support of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation as one having authority over the Bishops. The unity of the Congregation was the reason added by others. And so, on July 16, 1946, Card. Rossi sent out the following communication:

“In compliance with the unanimous desire expressed by all the religious consulted that the Cardinal Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation be kept at the general government of the Pious Society and the same entire Pious Society continue under the direction of said Sacred Congregation;

Having obtained on all this the sovereign confirmation and approval of the Holy Father, together with a most special Blessing,

In virtue of the faculties granted us by His Holiness himself, we appoint for the next six years, August 20, 1946, August 20, 1952, unless it be possible in the meantime to convoke the General Chapter:

Fr. Francesco Tirondola as Vicar General

Fr. Angelo Corso as 1st General Councilor

Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan as 2nd General Councilor

Fr. Stanislaus Fiscarelli as 3rd General Councilor

Fr. Giovanni Sofia as 4th General Councilor, with the tasks of General Treasurer and General Procurator

The Vicar General shall carry out his office with the assistance of his General Councilors and according to the faculties given him in strict contact with the Cardinal Superior General, who, in turn, reserves personally for himself: 1) the final admission of postulants to the Novitiate, of Novices to the temporary vows, and of Religious to the perpetual Profession; 2) the granting of the dimissorial letters for Tonsure and Holy Orders; 3) the appointment of General Visitators and of any Superior wherever need be.”<sup>5</sup>

Thus constituted, the General Council gathered together for the first time at Crespano del Grappa in September 1946. On that occasion, Card. Rossi explained that the Vicar General had to be regarded

<sup>5</sup> Circular letter of Card. R.C. Rossi, July 16, 1946.

as the acting Superior General as though there were in practice two Superiors: the one with the juridical title bestowing actually on the other, called Vicar General, all the faculties of a Superior General excepting those reserved in the circular Letter: "You are the ones who must govern the Pious Society. The Councilors are the advisors of the Vicar General."

In the meanwhile, Fr. Tironola, still convalescing from a sickness that by the end of 1945 had made everyone fear for his life, on January 3, 1946, revealed an immediate program of expansion contemplating a new seminary in Northern Italy for students of Theology, another one in Southern Italy, and the completion of the seminary of Bassano with the construction of the chapel. Card. Rossi replied that by means of opportune restorations the Mother House could be properly fitted for the "theologians"; the seminary of Cermenate could be set apart for the students of "Philosophy"; thought had to be given to a mountain home for the clerics. A plan had also to be studied on how to accede to the desire manifested by some missionaries of North America that another minor seminary might be opened in the Eastern Province.

On the other hand the Cardinal gave in without much difficulty to the objection that it was impossible to hold all the students at Bassano, and he granted him permission to look for a building in a location halfway between Bassano and Cermenate fitting a seminary for the upper high school classes which was opened afterwards at Rezzato (Brescia) in 1947.

The Mission "sui juris" of the Immaculate Conception was established on January 6, 1946, for the missionaries of France, Luxemburg, and Belgium; Mons. Babini was to continue on as Director of Italian non-Scalabrinian missionaries. The missions "sui juris" of St. Raphael for the missionaries of Switzerland, as well as that of St. Joseph for those of Argentina were erected on February 2, 1946. Between June 1945 and June 1946, following resolution of all bureaucratic procedures consequent to the war, 33 priests could reach American and European missions thus giving new relief to all circumscriptions and impulse to the initiatives that had remained frozen since the conflict had broken out.



On August 31, 1945, Fr. Giovanni Sofia was named a "consultant" to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation and given charge over the "Emigration" office. The same Fr. Sofia collaborated with Mons. Peter Pisani, Attorney V. Veronese, Count D. Secco-Suardo, and Hon. G. Pastore, in founding (June 6, 1946) the "National Catholic Committee for Emigration" under the auspices of the ICAS (Istituto Cattolico di Attività Sociale) of which he was made the Vice-President. The Committee had the scope of coordinating the activities of the various Catholic-inspired organizations engaged in assisting Italian emigration. The following organizations joined it: "Le Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani" (ACLI - Christian Associations of Italian Workers), "La Confederazione Cooperativa Italiana" (Italian Cooperative Confederation), "Il Centro Italiano Femminile" (Italian Womens' Center - CIF), "L'Opera Nazionale Assistenza Religiosa e Morale agli Operai" (ONARMO - National Association for the Religious and Moral Assistance to Workers), "L'Aiuto Cristiano" (Christian Help), the "Scalabrinian Congregation", the "Pontifical College of Emigration", the "Pious Society of Salesians", the "National Association for the Assistance to Italian Missionaries".

As an offshoot of the Pontifical Commission for assisting emigrants, of the Catholic Committee, and of the ACLI emigration Patronage, on May 25, 1947, a "Catholic Junta" for Emigration was set up with the scope, among others, of establishing, possibly in every Italian diocese, an Emigration committee. In early 1952 its title was so precisely stated: "Italian Catholic Junta for Emigration".

In line with the directives of the Apostolic Constitution "Exul Familia", the Sacred Consistorial Congregation instituted in February 1953 the "Office of coordination of Emigration Apostolates in Italy," with headquarters at Via della Scrofa 70, in Rome. The National Director of Emigration Apostolates was also Vice-President of the Catholic Junta and coordinated its activities on the more properly religious level. On February 7, 1953, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation appointed to this office the Scalabrinian Fr. Francesco Milini, who headed it until October 23, 1969.

Until 1964, the spiritual assistance to Italian migrants depended directly on the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. On January 1, 1965, it was handed over to the Italian Conference of Bishops that com-

bined on the same date the tasks of the National Office of Emigration Institutions for Italy and of the Italian Catholic Junta for Emigration into one organism, the "UCEI" (Central Office of Italian Emigration), to serve as the operative office of the CEMT (Bishops Commission for Italian Migration and Tourism).

Fr. Giovanni Sofia resigned in December 1951 (succeeded by Fr. Marco Caliaro until 1962, and by Fr. Antonio Perotti until 1969) as "consultant" of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation to devote himself full-time to the office of Rector of the Pontifical College of the Priests for Italian Emigration (Roma, Via della Scrofa, 70) whose direction had been entrusted by the Sacred Consistorial Congregation on August 1, 1949, to the Scalabrinian Congregation.

In 1973, the Secretariat of State turned the building of Via della Scrofa 70, to other uses, and the preparation courses for Italian missionaries of emigration were continued by the UCEI with the contribution of Scalabrinians, especially Frs. Flaminio Gheza and Caesar Zanconato, who were in charge of them as Vice-directors, respectively, from 1971 to 1975 and from 1975 to 1978.

With regards to Scalabrinian participation in the central emigration organisms, at an audience granted by Pius XII to the General Council in February 1947, Fr. Francesco Tironola had hinted to the Pope a bold proposal: "Scalabrinian Missionaries are in the hands of the Holy Father and of the Holy See for the assistance of Italian emigrants in the world."

At a successive session of the General Council, Fr. Tironola specified that he deemed the time was ripe for the Scalabrinian Congregation to assume responsibility over the whole Italian emigration, either directly or indirectly by coordinating the activities of diocesan priests engaged in migration work; and then he mentioned the Pontifical College of Emigration, closed at that time, and the Office of the Prelate of Emigration.

"His Eminence" -the Council's recorder reports - "observes that things must remain as they are for the time being."

The strengthening of the internal organization was still the main concern of Card. Rossi. To this end, consequent to a visitation to the Provinces of North America conducted by Fr. Angelo Corso, an extraordinary meeting was called together at Bassano del Grappa from

September 10 to 17, 1947, attended by seven Superiors of provinces and "Sui Juris" Missions, and by four Rectors of Italian seminaries. Card. Rossi opened the meeting stressing the point that it had only a consultative character; he urged them to ask themselves before any deliberation what the Founder would do in their place; and then left the meeting hall reserving the right to return in due time for the approval of their decisions. After listening to the reports of Superiors, the need was underlined for giving a unitary character to the formation of students in the various seminaries; another year of studies was added to the curriculum (college was divided into two sections of two years each, literary and scientific, with the novitiate between them); the opportunity was acknowledged of sending theology students to complete their studies in the seminaries of the United States and Brazil, as well as of having students of these nations sent for their academic training in Rome. Plans were made for the construction of the theological seminary of São Paulo (Brazil) – Card. Rossi approved it on condition that classes be taught by professors of the Congregation – and of a minor seminary at Casca in R o Grande do Sul. The desire was also expressed for the opening of a minor seminary in Paran . The necessity was felt for developing the missions of Europe, where the migratory masses were directed in ever increasing numbers; forces had to be converging, however, to places of greater immigration without any dispersion in peripheral foundations. Also for Argentina a recommendation was made to direct efforts to immigrants of recent entry.

A proposal was voted down concerning the union of the two Provinces of North America that were urged instead to reshuffle the ranks especially by the rotation of pastors. The project was passed for a home for the aged in Chicago and two high school seminaries in New York and Chicago. Permission was granted to transfer the Novitiate from the Western to the Eastern Province.

Lastly, the question was brought up of a greater regularity of contacts between the General Administration and the Provinces. A unanimous vote was cast in favor of moving the General Government to Rome as a definitive point of reference. But, they limited themselves, however, to appointing of Fr. Ugo Cavicchi as Fourth General Councilor (in place of Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan, named superior

of the Province of St. John the Baptist), naming him at the same time Procurator General and Rector of the General House. It was on that occasion that plans had to be abandoned for purchasing the mansion of Count Premoli, next to the General House in Rome, because the owner discontinued dealings with the Congregation upon a better offer and because in spite of the doubts expressed by Card. Rossi, the will was confirmed to obtain a parish in Rome and establish next to it the headquarters of the General Administration.

At this same meeting of September 1947, as also at other successive ones, the General Council studied the modifications to be brought to the "Constitutions" of 1936, after the comments Card. Rossi had solicited from the Provincial Superiors in view of the final approval by the Holy See. These changes were approved by Pius XII on August 7, 1948 at the last audience he had granted to Card. Rossi, along with the Constitutions of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo - Scalabrinians.

The main changes were:

1) Additions to Chapter One: "The Scope of the Pious Society and the Means to achieve it":

2) The words "and their descendants" were added to the expression "Italian Emigrants".

3) The following means were added: "to accept the parishes Bishops may entrust to them for the assistance of Italian emigrants;" "to assist Italian workers on temporary emigration;" "to accompany as chaplains-on-board Italian emigrants on their trips overseas."

4) Lastly, of a particular significance, to the comma contemplating the admission of children of Italian emigrants to the seminary, the following was added: "and in exceptional cases, to be approved by the Superior General, also young boys of other nationalities and extractions, who have grown among Italians could be admitted."

5) The extension to the provincial superiors of various faculties till then reserved to the Superior General.

6) The acknowledgment and legal settling of the "sui juris" missions.

The final decree of promulgation of the Constitutions was signed by Card. Rossi on August 15, 1948. A month later, on September 17, 1948, Card. Rossi died at the Scalabrinian Novitiate in Crespano del

Grappa. His funeral was celebrated presided by Card. Adeodato Piazza, Patriarch of Venice, on the September 19 at the Seminary of Bassano del Grappa. His body was entombed on September 28, in the Church of St. Theresa on the Corso Italia, Rome. On October 28, 1976, centennial of his birth (Pisa, October 28, 1876) the process of Card. Rossi's beatification was opened by the Diocesan tribunal of Rome.

On October 2, 1948, Card. Piazza was called by Pius XII to succeed Card. Rossi in the office of Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation and, therefore, he became also the 7 Superior General of the Scalabrinian Congregation. On October 6, Fr. Tirondola called on him for the first time to offer the respects of Scalabrinians. Card. Piazza remarked that the Congregation could by now well take care of itself. At this, Fr. Tirondola pleaded with him to carry on the work of Card. Rossi assuring him that the whole Congregation wishes for the time being to remain at the direct dependence on the Sacred Consistorial Congregation.

In his first Circular Letter to Scalabrinians of January 17, 1949, Card. Piazza assured he would continue on the path undertaken by Card. Rossi and with it he presented the new Constitutions. On January 20, 1949, he limited the cases reserved to the personal decision of the Cardinal Secretary of the S. Consistorial Congregation "Ex audientia Sanctissimi". (Upon an audience with the Holy Father), on June 16, 1951, he granted that the General Chapter might be celebrated a year earlier. In itself the Chapter had to be celebrated in 1952, but the General Council had asked in April, 1950 that it might be anticipated by one year. Card. Piazza had granted his approval, in view of the naming of a Scalabrinian Superior General, but in such a way that the direct dependence of the Pious Society from the S. Consistorial Congregation should be discontinued without loss of the advantages deriving from it. In fact, at the same audience of June 16, 1951, the Pope approved that the General Chapter might present to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation three names from which the same S. Consistorial Congregation would choose the one to submit to the Pope for appointment as Superior General. To this end, the Cardinal Secretary of the S. Consistorial Congregation would preside over the elective section of the General Chapter no more as its Superior General but as its Cardinal Protector.

The Pope, however, provided that the following cases should remain reserved to the S. Consistorial Congregation:

- 1) Permission for opening and discontinuing parishes and missions.
- 2) Previous approval of appointment, removal, or change, of pastors or local superiors.
- 3) The granting of dimissorial letters for Holy Orders.
- 4) Approval for the naming of Visitor General.

The first two reservations indeed aimed at maintaining the advantages of the dependence on the S. Consistorial Congregation, thus insuring the survival of many Scalabrinian parishes. It must be pointed out that all this had been requested by the General Council at the meeting of June 1, 1951.

In his report presented to the General Chapter of 1951, Fr. Tironola summed up the historic event of the renewal of the Congregation as follows:

“You all know what has been accomplished between 1923 and 1946 while the Pious Society has been fully under the supervision of the S. Consistorial Congregation and its Most Eminent Secretaries and, with hearts full of gratitude for all the good received, we can well say that the history of the Pious Society marks this period as its golden age. In fact, our Institute, that for various reasons had seen its future as doubtful, taken over “with motherly care” by the Holy See (as the lamented Card. Rossi had the occasion to express it), flourished visibly, and entered the list of the Religious Congregations by the introduction of the holy vows thus returning to the initial form given it by our Venerated Founder Bishop Scalabrini. It opened houses of formation and Novitiates in Italy and the Americas; it has extended to new provinces and missions. The priests, who numbered only about 80 in 1923, by 1946 have grown to the attractive number of 231 (...). The Beatification cause of our Venerated Founder has also been introduced and the “Bolletino” has likewise been revived with the title “Missioni Scalabriniane” etc. (...). Such was the state of the Pious Society on August 20, 1946, when it was entrusted to the government of the Vicar General and his Council, though still under the supervision and authority of the Most Eminent Lord Cardinal Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, Superior General of

the Pious Society. Since then, when they were 231, the Fathers have grown to the present number of 301, so distributed:

Italy	55
North America: Province of St. Charles	60
North America: Province of St. John the Baptist	47
Brazil: Province of São Paulo	31
Brazil: Province of São Pedro	41
Argentina: "Mission Sui Juris"	12
France, Belgium, Luxembourg: Province of Immaculate Conception	23
Switzerland	7

We have promoted the growth and formation of the members of the Pious Society; opened seminaries on both sides of the Ocean, though daringly at times, considering the means and personnel at our disposal; sent a good number of our students to various universities to the end of preparing a well-qualified staff of teachers; opened new missions and strengthened the existing ones in America and Europe; we have been granted the grace to prepare more than 250 confreres for the priesthood; at the present time we have over 600 students in formation; one of our confreres working in the Emigration Office of the Consistorial Congregation; we have a parish in the city of Rome; we have given start to an information center for attracting vocations and making our institutions known ....".

#### FR. FRANCESCO PREVEDELLO, SUPERIOR GENERAL (1951-1957)

The 3rd General Chapter of the Scalabrinian Congregation took place from 5 to 15, 1951 at the General House of Via Calandrelli in Rome. It marked return of the Congregation to the full normalcy of the internal government of the Pious Society, something like a passing from a protectorate to an autonomous entity, and, at the same time, from a "family style" management to a more juridical mode of government.

The Chapter was attended by 22 Religious: the Major Superiors, the General Treasurer, the Rector of the Mother House, the 8 delegates elected by the ranks. On July 6, the voting chose the three names



to be presented to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation for the naming of the Superior General. On July 7, Card. Piazza announced that the choice had fallen on the name of Fr. Francesco Prevedello, who was then proclaimed the 8th Superior General. On the same day the following were elected General Councilors:

- Fr. Francesco Milini, 1st Councilor and Vicar General
- Fr. Raffael Larcher, 2nd Councilor & General Treasurer
- Fr. Francesco Tironola, 3rd Councilor
- Fr. Angelo Ceccato, 4th Councilor & General Procurator

From that moment the General Government fixed its headquarters in Rome. The Chapter devoted its attention above all to the religious life and to the internal organization of the Congregation. A certain amount of time was given also to the formation sector, though remaining on a rather generic level. It was decided that priests should return to Italy after a period of five (5) years of missionary work for "a course of spiritual perfecting" that was actually started in 1956. A criterion was adopted for the rotation in offices: the pastors, especially, were to be changed after six, or after nine years, at the most, to avoid personal concentrations of power and discriminations.

The apostolic sector was touched upon indirectly but in one of the most delicate and sensitive points for the evolving of the history of the Congregation. Coming from the experience of a seminary in Brazil, Fr. Prevedello brought into the Chapter the echo of a crucial debate that had come to the fore precisely in the seminaries outside of Italy. The Constitutions were still limiting the range of beneficiaries to the Italian emigrants, to whom the new ones of 1948 had added "their descendants". Fr. Prevedello pointed out that the descendants of emigrants, as they grew ever father removed from the first generation, did not identify themselves with such expression. Though not reneging their historical origins, they simply considered themselves Brazilians, Americans, Argentinians, etc. And so Scalabrinian seminarians born in Brazil or in the U.S.A. were not psychologically inclined to consider themselves Italian missionaries sent to preserve the faith in the heart of Italian emigrants, as the Constitutions required. He proposed, therefore, that paragraph 2 of the Constitutions be modified by adding to the word "Italians" the expression "and non-Italians, as well, should circumstances require it."



The proposal gave rise to a lively debate between two sides. Based on the evolution of matters brought about by the opening of seminaries outside of Italy among the descendants of emigrants, in response to the idea of the Founder who had wanted such seminaries and had already open the gates of the Congregation to emigrants of other nationalities, and in view also of the universalistic tendency taking hold in the world and in the Church, some defended the need for widening the range of action of the Congregation; while others, instead, afraid especially of a division of the Congregation into various national branches, wanted that the question should be left aside suggesting to have it submitted to a deeper study on the part of the different areas and to defer the decision to the following General Chapter. The latter opened in prevailed with 17 votes to 5.

In compliance with the "mandate" received from the Chapter, the action of the new General Government was turned especially towards strengthening the spiritual and religious life of confreres and towards giving a good internal organization to the seminaries without opening new ones. Consequently to this effort of reorganization, a plan was drawn up in 1954 prospecting the transformation of the seminary of Cermenate into a minor seminary, the transfer of college to Piacenza, and the opening of a new seminary of theology in Rome according to the desire expressed by the Holy See that the theological formation should take place there and to the indication of a good number of Scalabrinians that the Congregation's religious students should at a certain stage be united for the preservation of the Institute's own spirit. A search had been started already for a place fitting the scope when everything was suspended especially because of the reactions aroused in the provinces that would have to sustain the greatest part of the financial burden, and the decision was referred to the following General Chapter. They were contented with a better distribution of the seminarians in Italy; in North America the Novitiate and the students of philosophy were transferred from the Western to the Eastern Province; in Brazil, philosophy was moved to São Paulo.

In 1952, the Congregation opened its first missions in Chile and Australia the latter at first depended for a while on the two provinces of North America, but then they were assigned under the direct

administration of the General Administration. In 1953, there began the expansion into Canada, and the Sacred Consistorial Congregation entrusted the Scalabrinians with the guidance of chaplains-on-board, 34 of them at the time, with headquarters in Genoa. In 1954 the Scalabrinian presence had its beginning in England, whose missions were united in 1955 with those of Belgium, in the "missio sui juris Regina Mundi", to which also the first missions of Germany, where Scalabrinians had returned in 1956, belonged in the early years. The beginnings of a short-lived mission in Algeria are traced back to the same year.

Besides the numerical expansion by which the Congregation grew from six (6) provinces and two (2) missions "sui juris", in eight nations, with 301 priests in 98 residences, of 1951, to seven (7) provinces, two (2) missions "Sui juris", and a general delegation, in 13 nations, with 429 priests in 145 places, one is bound to take cognizance of a remarkable effort for expansion and a qualitative reorganization. The complaint was often heard in the years 1953-1954 over the loss of the effectiveness of a Scalabrinian presence in places that most would have demanded the Scalabrinians' specific apostolate. The missionaries of North America were found to be concerned over having "all their papers in order" with the Bishops in a good administration of their parishes: a concern which had them so all taken up as to distract their attention from new immigrants and groups distant from the parish, except for a few praiseworthy exceptions due mostly to individual initiatives; and so the opening of missions among Italians of recent immigration in Canada was indeed considered providential.

Generally speaking, a similar disinterest was also being noticed in Brazil for emigrants who could truly be considered such, because the greatest part of their activities spent themselves in parishes of immigrants' children of the third and fourth generation. The exceptions were represented by the activities of the "Our Lady of Peace" parish in São Paulo, of the new mission in Río de Janeiro, and of the involvement in the diocesan work of assistance to emigrants entering Porto Alegre.

On the other hand, a certain stagnation was fostered also by the bishops who failed in various regions to be made aware of the need for a special pastoral care to emigrants even by the Apostolic Consti-

tution "Exul Familia" in which Pius XII renewed on August 1, 1952, a warning cry:

"What serious reasons for anguish would have been there or be now, had such evangelic ministry ceased or were discontinued!"<sup>6</sup>

In a systematic order the "Apostolic Constitution" presented the laws by which the Church intended to provide for the spiritual care of emigrants. It confirmed the validity of national parishes, gave a juridical status to the "missionaries or chaplains of emigrants", that is, to the priests of the "same language or nation" of emigrants. Bishops are urged to grant them the "personal" jurisdiction of a pastor over immigrants of the same nationality (*missio cum cura animarum*), under the responsibility of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, to which was vindicated the authority to organize and direct the works of spiritual assistance to Catholic emigrants of the Latin Rite. But only a few episcopates, like those of Switzerland and Germany showed themselves willing to establish right away the missions "*cum cura animarum*". The North American Bishops generally opposed or tolerated at most, the national parishes. With this attitude of the Bishops in mind, some were saying that the Scalabrinian seminaries of North America had to limit themselves to provide Italian-American priests for the American parishes distinct from the others only for the fact that they were made up of descendants of Italian immigrants. In Brazil, the cases were not rare in which the Bishop accorded the "Exul Familia" a reductive interpretation based on a speech of Pius XII to the chaplains of emigration given on August 6, 1962, five days after signing the "Exul Familia":

"Have all understand, make all aware that your assistance is an extraordinary one which must provide - among other things - the opportunity to confess their sins in their mother tongue, when this is not possible with the native priests, but that they must endeavor in the meantime to attend Sunday services together with the faithful of the place; encourage them to get accustomed to the local religious life, and above all, to establish contacts with catholic organizations, especially of workers and young people."

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<sup>6</sup> Exul Familia #3

To this external difficulty an internal one was added originating from the seminaries of Brazil, where the educators were Italian and the students Brazilian, though of Italian extraction. According to the majority of the educators, in order to be loyal to the scope of the Congregation limited to Italian emigrants, the seminarians had to be "Italian" and exercise the ministry outside of Brazil. The Superior General replied to them in 1955 saying that this was not requested by the Constitutions which were speaking not only of Italians, but of their descendants, as well. However, this did not solve the problem. On August 10, 1956, the Provincial Superior of R o Grande do Sul wrote:

"We have so many priests lost in parishes that do not respond any more, or never did, to our scope, while there are so many countries where the urgency of the problem of assisting emigrants is very great. We remain here mad with rage (forgive the expression), hardly tolerated by the Bishops who do not want us (...). The majority of our parishioners belong to the third and fourth generation from the early immigrants and are fully integrated, body and soul, in the new fatherland; consequently, the majority of those we assist do not respond any more to the scope of our Congregation as it is viewed and studied in the light of the "Exul Familia". Our very seminarians cannot be looked upon as children of Italians, and much the less can one pretend of them to have our spirit or to be enthusiastic about our specific scope."

On February 11, 1956, Fr. Francesco Prevedello had sought to clarify this fundamental problem in his "circular letter", titled "La Nostra Fisionomia" ("Our Identity"), beginning with #4 of the Constitutions of 1948: "If in carrying out the mission in favor of Italian emigrants other faithful will request the action of the Scalabrinian missionary, he shall not hesitate to accord it to them in all charity."

He concluded to be a duty of charity and of justice, as well, to "exercise the sacred ministry on behalf of those who are not of Italian extraction", in case "there were no ecclesiastical distinction of nationality, that is, in parishes of a territorial character", especially if there should be a scarcity of local clergy.

He added: "Neither is the case lacking - rare, if you wish, but not unique - when one must take care or be placed where there are

no Italian emigrants whatsoever; something that does not deviate, however, from the indications of our Founder." And at this point he proposed the exceptional instance of the missionaries sent by Bishop Scalabrini to the "Indios" of the Tibage. Then he mentioned the bishops who were willing to grant the assistance to Italians only on condition that care should also be taken of the natives. "It is evident that in these cases, indeed rare, our work is only indirectly respondent to our scope, in the sense that other confreres are this way given the possibility to exercise our specific apostolate among Italian emigrants."

He touched on the question of the formation in the seminaries outside Italy, the existence of which, he said, "may not seem to respond to our scope." But he insisted again pointing out the example of the Founder who had supported from the very beginning the need for establishing seminaries in America for the children of emigrants and of St. Pius X who had invited in 1904 the Archbishop of New York to found a seminary for the children of Italians:

"Born of the hearts of two saintly men, this desire finds its explanation in the fact that they were fully aware that the Ministers of God formed in such seminaries could bear richer fruits in nations where their acquaintance with or affinity of language and customs would place them in a better position for understanding the psychology of the descendants of Italians, who while retaining certain ethnic traits of their country of origin have acquired some new ones, at the same time, that are proper of the new climates and cultural environment."

For these reasons, he concluded, Scalabrinians descendants of Italians while proud to be a part of the new country, had to feel honored to carry out their mission among the Ecclesial communities bound to the traditions of the Italian people that through emigration had contributed "to the new country an unquestionable set of spiritual and material values."

But these ideas helped actually in justifying the immobility of those missionaries who considered their task fully achieved in the preservation of the ethnic traits in the descendants of Italians while neglecting the new immigrants. And so they could not find a psychological condition fit for those who would have been willing to renew the apostolic positions, because the opening up to non-Italian

emigrants (the descendants of the third and fourth generation were considered such) was thought only to be an exception strictly framed in the work for Italian emigrants: an arrangement actually prescribed by the Constitutions. Fortunately, however, as mentioned above, there were some safety valves which forestalled the more or less latent danger of an explosion: to the new missions of Canada, already spoken of, we must add those of the Brazilian states of Santa Catarina and Paraná where the descendants of emigrants were in turn becoming migrants, and those to be opened in Venezuela, as planned since 1956, exactly for the missionaries working in Brazil. The Scalabrinians also contributed to the sensitization of the local churches towards a Christian acceptance of migrants, to which a decisive impulse was given by the intervention of Pius XII's "Exul Familia". They were called by the Holy See to membership in the Supreme Council on Emigration, constituted at the Consistorial Congregation, and to assume the direction of Italy's emigration ministries, of the Pontifical College of Emigration, and of Chaplains-on-board. Contributions in this regard came also from the popular publication of Icilio Felici's *Life of the Founder* (Monza, 1954) "G.B. Scalabrini, Vescovo insigne, Padre degli Emigrati" (In English: "Father to the Immigrants" by Carol della Chiesa. New York, 1955); from the solemn celebration, held in 1955 in all nations where Scalabrinians were found, of the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Bishop Scalabrini; from participation in various congresses and meetings of study on migratory problems; from the setting up of ACIM (American Committee on Italian Migration) in the United States; and from the Scalabrinian press, etc.

#### FR. RAFFAELE LARCHER, SUPERIOR GENERAL (1957-1963)

In April 1957 the Sacred Consistorial Congregation asked the General Administration whether it was of the opinion to maintain the submission of the three names for the appointment of the Superior General and to single out what points should still be reserved to the authority of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. After consultation with the General Council, Card. Piazza modified this provision of the Constitutions authorizing the General Chapter 2 elected directly the Superior General by the absolute majority system of votes. Besides,

he granted the Superior General the faculty to issue the dimissorial letters for Holy Orders and kept reserved to the Holy See the authority to open or close religious houses or missions and to appoint or remove the pastors. The number of delegates, which are the religious elected by the base, was also increased. And so on July 8, 1957, the General Chapter opened in Rome with 14 members *ex officio* and 14 delegates. The new General Council was elected:

Fr. Raffaele Larcher ninth Superior General,  
 Fr. Francesco Milini (Vicar General),  
 Fr. Francesco Prevedello (Procurator),  
 Fr. Giacomo Danesi and  
 Fr. Ugo Cavicchi (Treasurer).

Card. Piazza, who had presided the Chapter in its elective phase, wanted to offer a special tribute to Fr. Francesco Tironbola, who though no longer a member of the Council because of age, would always be considered, together with Card. Rossi, as the main author of the revival of the Institute.

The Chapter pledged to carry out the Directives of the Apostolic Constitution "Sedes Sapientiae" (May 31, 1956) on Formation: the Novitiate was again moved back to after the high school years and the period of temporary profession was extended to five years; a year of "apostolic internship" was instituted to take place at the conclusion of theological studies (a provision never carried out); a commission was set up with the task of compiling the "General Order of Studies" for Scalabrinian seminaries, that was approved "ad experimentum" by the General Chapter of 1963.

An intensification of information and the press was solicited especially in the field of vocational promotion, and the creation of a center of studies charged with the writing of a text on Scalabrinian Missionology and the publishing of a "Migration Review" on a scientific level.

However, the scope of the Institute formed the object of the strongest debate in consideration of the changes that had taken place in the migratory phenomenon: a consideration the Chapter expressed in the following introductory statement:

"Today, the idea of an adventure in a foreign land to improve one's fate, is replaced by the Christian and more humane concept of a

transplant with all the demands and assistance that render easy the process of integration into the new country such as must take place without detriment to the spiritual, psychological, and cultural values of the emigrant."

Reference was again made to early history by bringing to the fore the fact that already in 1890 "territorial parishes also had been accepted that included the care of faithful of any nationality and race", and that the Founder had admitted to the Mother house emigrants' children born in the United States and Brazil. In compliance with these principles, it was said, the seminaries had been opened in those two nations that had "offered the possibility of achieving more easily and appropriately the scope of the Pious Society, the preservation of the faith in emigrants and their descendants." A justification was thus given for "the territorial parishes for all people within their bounds" and for the institutions "that may help in completing the last phase of the integration process or be requested by the Bishops or by the very organizational needs of the Pious Society."

The following conclusions were drawn:

"And so notwithstanding a few proposals for the extension of the scope, the General Chapter has been unanimous in the deliberation to keep it intact, agreeing that:

The Pious Society is in a position to assist Italian emigrants all through their integration process, with special care for those of the first-generation;

In immigration countries where it exercises the Sacred ministry, it is allowed to open formation houses, schools, and institutes, and to organize works of social and cultural assistance;

Whenever it becomes necessary to assure, though only indirectly, the achievement of our specific scope and the Bishops should so require, it is permitted also to take care of the spiritual welfare of other people by accepting parishes and organizing activities not directly for Italians.

Candidates to the Scalabrinian way of life must be formed to this mentality and therefore:

In all seminaries of the Pious Society, including those in foreign lands, all Scalabrinian candidates and Religious must be instructed according to the approved rules and Constitutions, without any exception or reservation, above all with regards to the scope and the field of the specific apostolate of the Pious Society.



Let all Scalabrinian candidates in foreign lands be made to study Italian, both as the official language of the Congregation and a means of apostolate; likewise, the Religious trained in the seminaries of Italy must study the language of the place they are assigned to (...).

Let the field of work of the Pious Society be the same for all its members, without exceptions of any kind and Superiors should act accordingly having in mind the various needs." (Ricordi e Richiami del Capitolo Scalabrianiano 1957, pp. 13-14.)

These provisions had only a practical character and were the product of a compromise between different points of view. Those who wanted to keep intact the scope of the Congregation as an apostolate for Italians appealed to a process of integration that could go on forever. This way they could speak of migrants only by straining of the word "descendants". Those, instead, who wanted to justify the reality that had come into being by the transformation of the "missions" into "parishes" hardly different from any other, brought forth as excuses, either the spreading of Christianity through the preservation of Italian Catholic traditions, or the achievement of the scope through indirect means, especially when the Bishops should condition the assistance of Italians to the acceptance of territorial parishes where Italians or their descendants were often times a minority, and even a minimal one.

As it did not solve the question over the principles at issue, the compromise did not succeed in smoothing out the difficulties. The missionaries in Europe and in other regions where they were in contact with migration in the flesh, were claiming preference for their missions, about which there was no doubt as to their full conformity with the scope of the Congregation. In America, instead, the religious of a certain age appealed to tradition, going so far as to state that Bishop Scalabrini had founded a Religious Congregation with only the permanent emigration in mind, while the young ones, seminarians especially, were questioning what sense might have for them, who did not identify themselves as Italians, to be looked upon as Italian missionaries for Italians who, likewise, did not view themselves as such anymore. The problem had grown even more acute in the North-American seminaries, because the idea had not entered

the minds, excepting of a few, of opening up to emigrants of other nationalities or ethnic origins.

Besides, the provisions of the General Chapter and of the Superiors were viewed as a will of Italian missionaries for holding a position of superiority, or at best, as an expression of their fear that Brazilians or Americans would not consider themselves “missionaries”, willing, that is, to leave their country. The flow of descendants of Italians migrating to other states of Brazil and the expansion of Scalabrinian missions in Latin America were seen as a safety valve for Brazilians. But there still remained the fundamental problem of the limitation of the Institute’s specific scope to Italian emigrants. For the sake of loyalty to this fundamental principle, a clear and loud stand had to be taken in *Río Grande do Sul*: the Provincial Superior, the rector of the seminary of *Guaporé*, the master of novices, all tendered their resignations, because they thought that the practical course pursued by the major superiors contrasted the Constitutions even though it was in line with the compromise achieved in the Chapter. The latter, however, was interpreted in different ways, just because it had not resolved the question of the principles at issue.

The resignation of the Provincial Superior was accepted: the others retracted by the mediation of Fr. Cavicchi who proposed a compromise approved with much difficulty by the General Council in April 1958: all were liable to be sent to foreign missions and many would actually be sent to them; those also were to be considered missionaries who were employed in the seminaries of their country or in other fields; the field of work of all had to be accorded the same consideration.

During the heated phase of this debate, many priests and Italian-Brazilian and Italian-American seminarians, especially, looked on as bystanders of a family squabble between Italians. Most of them, in fact, were set on continuing anyway, also because the actual situation accorded them the vision of a future respondent to the idea of remaining in their country, while some had it already in their heart to take an independent decision and pass into the ranks of the diocesan clergy.

The Superior General was aiming at “reconsidering positions” but on the spiritual and ascetical levels: “Let there be less talk, therefore,

about the nature and the techniques of our specific apostolate, and more meditation and deep convictions about the soul of that apostolate, which is the true interior life."<sup>7</sup>.

On one hand he showed the conviction that to be good priests and religious would solve all difficulties; on the other, he himself had to admit that the lack of priestly and religious spirit was not actually the only cause of the malaise disturbing the life of the Congregation. Two passages of the Circular of March 19, 1960, have a special significance:

"One must lament that certain Fathers seem to be doing all in their power to impress the idea, on the people at least, that they are like any other priests, and to hide the fact of their belonging to a religious Congregation as though it were a humiliation.

We even find hostility here and there to this and that initiative of a pure Scalabrinian character. There is a will of not wanting to have anything to do with what is not strictly a parish concern."

Fr. Larcher touched here on a soft spot indeed. In fact, he had to conclude his circular letter with the following provisions:

"I deem it to be my precise the existence duty to point out the existence of a problem of the new immigrants. There exist the proven facts on the matter:

There are thousands of them in the largest cities.

They are in need of religious assistance (...).

The Holy See wants this work. We represent the only Congregation founded in the Church for this: it is our specific scope. Wherever there will be the need, our churches must become the centers of this movement, of this activity, effectively though quietly.

Something is being done, already (in New York and Boston)... and we shall see what we can do in the future."

In the years between 1957 and 1963 some Italian-American priests were assigned to the missions of Canada and Australia, while other Italian-Brazilian ones were sent to Argentina and the United States. Almost all parishes entrusted to Scalabrinians in those years were territorial or mixed, especially in Australia and Canada. Such was the consideration generally imposed by the bishops. This solution was indeed advantageous, or even an ideal one, by many, for the fact that

<sup>7</sup> Fr. R. Larcher, "Circular Letter" of March 12, 1959

it did not preclude any possibility for assisting Italians, something that was extended, at times, to the whole diocese. However, in order to achieve this objective it would have been necessary to assign other missionaries alongside those directly engaged in parish work, who should devote themselves to the “flying missions”, a project that was actually carried out on a modest scale. A special case is represented by the “flying missions” connected with the enlisting of Scalabrinians among the chaplains of the “Italian Catholic Federation” in California, a fact that offered the occasion to open at last two parishes in that state. Though by way of exception, attention was given also to immigrants of Portuguese (Vancouver, Canada) and Porto Rican origin and to Blacks (Chicago). Mixed parishes were opened also in Montreal (Canada) and in England.

During the six year term, the Congregation experienced an increase of 300 new members, half of them priests. The average age was then still very low: percentage-wise in 1960 the priests’ average age stood as follows: 59.3% between the ages of 24 and 38; 32.3% between 39 and 53; 8.4% between 54 and 84. This allowed for a strong expansion: a minor seminary was opened at Osimo (Italy), a novitiate at Cornwall, N.Y., (U.S.A.), the major seminary of São Paulo (Brazil), and some sixty new religious residences were established.

About 50 priests were engaged in the formation of about 600 seminarians in Italy. In 1959, the “Istituto San Carlo” was opened in Osimo for the children of emigrants, to which a small minor seminary was added in 1960. Plans fell through, instead, for opening a minor seminary near Trento and in Southern Italy, where a piece of land had been purchased at Battipaglia (Salerno), and then sold in 1964.

In the Eastern Province in North America, six new residences were established: among them is especially worth mentioning the Home for the Aged of North Kingstown, Rhode Island (1957) the parishes in Washington, D.C. (1960), in Willowdale (Toronto) , and Our Lady of Pompeii in Montreal (1960- 1961), Canada.

In the Western Province of North America, ten residences were opened; among them those of Los Angeles and San Jose in California (1961), already mentioned above, and the parishes of Atikokan, Edmonton, Thunder Bay, Sarnia, Vancouver, and Windsor, in Canada.

Besides the major Seminary “João XXIII” (1958), nine new residences were founded in the Brazilian Province of St. Paul, seven of them in Northern Paraná. The Province of St. Peter established a personal parish for Italians in Porto Alegre (1959) and took charge of two new territorial parishes in the diocese of Frederico Westphalen, RS. With its three seminaries and a Novitiate, this Province gave an essential contribution to the personnel.

The Province of Argentina and Chile also marked an expansion both in the number of residences, seven new ones, among which the parish of La Boca in downtown Buenos Aires, and in its opening into Uruguay (1961).

The Scalabrinian presence in Venezuela began in 1958. In December 1963, its three missions with five missionaries were made a “General Delegation”.

The missions of Australia were declared autonomous in 1957, with the institution of the “Missio sui juri St. Frances X. Cabrini”, which was made into a Province in 1962. Six residences were opened there, three of them “Italian Centers”.

The Province of the “Immaculate Conception”, including in 1963 the missions of France, one in Luxemburg, and another in Algeria, had been endowed during this six year term with five new residences. Particular attention had been accorded the press. The “Flying missions” were continued, but a tendency was being encouraged for the strengthening of the permanent missions; in fact, a territorial parish was accepted for the first time by the province in 1962 at Carrières-sur-Sine.

The eight missions of Switzerland were constituted into a Province in 1961. Two new residences were opened in 1962; the other missions experienced generally a great growth in regard to both structures and expansion of religious and social activities.

The seven missions of Belgium and England were grouped in the “Missio sui juris, Regina Mundi”. Besides the creation of two new residences, in these two countries, this six-year term was also dedicated to a more methodical organization of their religious and social action.

Lastly, during the six years of Fr. Larcher the “Missio sui juris St. Pius X” was opened in Germany. It had its beginnings with a mission

in Essen and in 1963 it counted already six residences with 11 missionaries.

The report of the Superior General to the 1963 General Chapter had to admit that consequently to the pressing requests for new foundations, forces had been considerably thinned out. It was deemed necessary therefore to halt expansion, better consolidate the present positions, and concentrate our efforts on promoting vocations.

Card. Adeodato G. Piazza died on November 30, 1957; he was succeeded as Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation and Protector of the Scalabrinian Congregation by Card. Marcello Mimmi, who died on March 6, 1961. Card. Carlo Confalonieri was his successor until 1973.

The Scalabrinian Fr. Marco Caliaro, a consultant since 1951 to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, was elected titular Bishop of Darniata and acting suffragan Bishop of Sabina and Poggio Mirteto. He was consecrated on March 19, 1962, and transferred to the same see as its residential bishop on May 23, 1962.

#### FR. GIULIVO TESSAROLO, SUPERIOR GENERAL (1963-1969)

The fifth General Chapter was held on July 8-27, 1963, and was attended by 16 ex officio members and 17 delegates. On July 12 – 13 the new General Council was elected in the presence of His Excellency F. Caprino, assessor of the Consistorial Congregation, a delegate of Card. Confalonieri:

Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo tenth Superior General,  
Fr. Fiorino Girometta (Vicar General),  
Fr. Giacomo Danesi,  
Fr. Angelo Susin (General Treasurer),  
Fr. Anacleto Rocca (General Procurator).

Fr. Girometta, however, resigned his office for personal reasons. Fr. Giacomo Danesi became the Vicar General in his place on February 12, 1964, and on the 19th of the same month Fr. Paolo Bortolazzo was named the 4th General Councilor.

The main problem discussed at the Chapter of 1963 was again that of the scope of the Congregation about which the following motion was approved with 32 votes in favor and one against it.

“The General Chapter of the Pious Society:

- acknowledges the need for arriving at a widening of the particular scope of the Pious Society, which, while insuring a continued assistance to Italian emigrants and their descendants, may render possible also the care of emigrants of other nationalities and of all forms of emigration;
- entrusts the General Council with the task of setting up a post-capitular commission for the study and the juridical formulation of such widening (of the scope).”

This motion stated also that the Commission had to take inspiration from the idea that “the particular end is that of assisting Italian emigrants and their descendants and of responding to the religious and moral needs connected with all emigrations.”

An inquiry was immediately started throughout the whole Congregation: out of 547 religious questioned, 522 declared themselves in favor of the widening of the scope along the motion of the Chapter; 25 opposed it. At last, the problem had been recognized. In fact, the 1963 Chapter had already pointed out that the Congregation included some 50 territorial parishes with people of Italian extraction, but wholly integrated in the nation; about 20 parishes of mixed extractions, allowing more or less for an assistance of the Italians in the parish and in those around it; some ten territorial parishes with the addition of the “cura animarum” of Italians of a certain territory delimited by the Bishop; about 40 national parishes for Italians and their descendants; about 30 missions “cum cura animarum” for Italians, and another 20 missions without any quasi-parochial jurisdiction. In any case, many of the territorial or national parishes which had been established for Italians were gradually including emigrants of other nationalities.

The results of the inquiry were examined by the post-capitular Commission set up by the General Council on the occasion of the extraordinary meeting of Superiors and Provincial Treasurers, held in Rome in June 1966. The commission did not accept the proposal made by 18 confreres of eliminating any allusion to the “Italian” emigrants, because it ran counter to the mind of the Chapter and as a consequence it might engender the suspicion that the scope of the Congregation was not just widened but actually changed. The formulation prepared by the Commission was approved with 24 votes

to one in the meeting of Provincial Superiors and Treasurers, and presented to the Holy See, that sanctioned it with a letter of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation on November 28, 1966, in the following terms:

“As with all other Religious Congregations, the scope of the Congregation is the sanctification of its members through the observance of the three vows (...); the Scalabrinian Congregation carries out its scope in a way all its own by means of a direct or indirect apostolate for Italian emigrants, their descendants, and all those who in any nation or because of any migratory movement may present analogous apostolic demands.”

Paragraph 2 of the 1948 Constitutions was modified along the lines of this statement.

The 1963 Chapter brought some changes also to the governing structures: the number of councilors of Provinces with more than 40 religious was increased to four; it was decided that the houses of Italy be organized into a religious Province, that was actually erected with the name of “Sacred Heart Province” later on with Decree of August 6, 1963; secretariats were established for discipline and formation, for studies, for the missions and the pastoral care, and for the administration each headed by a General Councilor. On a more general level, the Chapter acknowledged the need for revising and updating the Constitutions: a directive which was actually implemented by the 1969 and 1971-1972 Special Chapter. A commission was charged with the task of drawing up a “ratio apostolatus”, which was prepared afterwards but never promulgated. A recommendation was made for the specific creation of a “Center of Studies” already envisioned by the previous Chapter, with the task of compiling formation manuals, conducting inquiries, founding a “Rivista di Studi” (“Study Review”), preparing reports, promoting conventions on emigration. The CSER (Centro Studi Emigrazione-Roma) was organized on October 1, 1963, and Fr. Giovanni B. Sacchetti was appointed its Director; the “Studi Emigrazione” Journal began publications in 1964. The CMS (Center for Migration Studies) in New York was opened in 1964 with the “International Migration Review”.

All these deliberations or directives, as well as others recommending a more ample practice of delegating power, a more frequent con-



tact of the General Government with the Provinces by means of visits, even informal ones, the convocation of a meeting of Provincials for a collective study of the general state of things, the annual reports of the Provinces, aimed at giving greater functionality to the government of the Congregation on all levels. Already since the crisis of 1923-1924 and the 1957 General Chapter, both the General and the Provincial governments were being targeted for the weakness and inefficiency of authority. By following such criteria the 1963-1969 General Council distinguished itself for an assiduous and meticulous functioning of the General Government, for a remarkable amount of circulars and correspondence, for the publication of the "Bollettino Ufficiale", for the frequent visitations "ad videndum et referendum" ("to find out and report") of the Councilors, especially of the General Vicar and Treasurer. The Provincial Government also became more efficient.

The General Secretariats' performance was viewed more negatively than positively, for lack of experience, personnel, as well as conviction. Neither did the numerous attempts of the General Government to arrive at a strengthening of religious discipline and community life by means of general directives and canonical visitations of the Councilors, nor the repeated efforts exercised through a stimulating action by the General Council on the Provincial governments for better planning and organizing, achieve all the results it had hoped for. The main cause seems to be attributed to the slow pace of maturation of the sense of belonging to a religious Congregation, and more so, generally, in a certain reluctance for the so-called ongoing education, and also in the difficulties in the formation of candidates present also in the whole Church. Great attention was given to minor seminaries: eight of them were opened, 3 in Italy, 3 in Brazil, 1 in the United States, and 1 in Argentina. In real figures, the number of priests increased by 55. In fact, during this six-year term 120 religious were ordained priests, but 15 others died, 30 left the priesthood, and 20 more the Congregation.

In 1969 Congregation numbered 567 priests, 22 lay brothers, 205 religious students, 39 novices, and 767 seminarians. The residences had gone up to 220. During these six years 19 new parishes were added: 6 in Brazil, 3 in Argentina, 3 in the U.S.A. and Canada, 2 in

Australia, France, and Italy, and 1 in Chile; 18 new missions were founded or completely renovated: 5 in Germany, 3 in Switzerland, 2 in Belgium, 2 in Venezuela, 1 in Uruguay, England, Luxemburg, and France, one for the Portuguese in Vancouver and another one in Paris. And, finally, two centers for the Apostleship of the Sea were opened in Buenos Aires and New York, and two chaplaincies were assumed on board the ships of the Home Lines. The office of the sea chaplains in Genoa had already been lost instead in 1963.

A change was made in the territorial jurisdictions: in December of 1963 the missions of Venezuela were made into the "General Delegation of Our Lady of Pompeii"; in May 1964, the "Missio sui juris "Regina Mundi", that included the missions of Belgium and England, was suppressed; those of Belgium were incorporated into the Province of France, and in August 1964 the ones in England were declared the "General Delegation Regina Mundi". The "Missio sui juris Saint Pius X" was also suppressed in May 1964 and the missions of Germany were annexed to the Province of Switzerland.

In June 13 – 30, 1966, an extraordinary meeting of Provincial Superiors and Treasurers was held in Rome at the Pontifical College of Emigration. In it, the role of the Provincial governments was stressed as a vital linkage of the Congregation's unity in that they serve as organs of communication between the General Administration and the single houses, thus stressing the centralization of the organizational structure demanded by the nature and reality of the Institute then subjected to centrifugal tendencies.

By the same token, the need for a greater centralization of finances was also affirmed in line with the principle of the "proprietà subordinata" ("jurisdictional subordination" - cfr. Constitutions No. 262): all material goods of the Congregation had to be considered as one common patrimony of the Congregation and of all its members. The General Administration had to leave in the hands of the provinces and the houses, also entitled to the right of ownership, only what should be thought necessary and useful to their life and growth, in harmony with the overall interests of the Congregation. Attention was called to the urgency of a more accurate pastoral planning, which had to be studied by the Secretariats for the Pastoral Ministry and the Missions. Plans had to strengthen the transformation of the parishes and

the mission centers into operational bases for activities beyond and besides the parish with a new emphasis to the lay apostolate and an action of sensitization of the local church.

During the same 1966 extraordinary meeting plans were presented and explained for the construction of a Scalabrinian International Seminary in Rome: "no one had any decisive objection against it; someone had limited himself only to ask that no extra burden be imposed on the provinces." (Quoted from the report of the General Government to the 1969 Chapter). This Seminary (later on conventionally called "Scalabrinianum") had been spoken of already in the 1957 General Chapter on the basis of the "Sedes Sapientiae", which envisioned the founding of international or interprovincial colleges close to the Universities, especially in Rome. The 1963 Chapter had again brought up the problem, charging the General Council with the decision to alienate the Mother House and transfer elsewhere the theological seminary. The sale of the Mother House appeared practically impossible and its restructuring improbable. To this must be added the convenience of providing the General Administration with a residence of its own; the opportunity of assuring a unitary and cohesive formation of at least a good proportion of the clerics; the need of finding a place fitting the "Corso di Aggiornamento." Plans were prospected, besides, for placing some quarters at the disposal of tourists and pilgrims - who could thus contribute to the support of the institution - and of conventions and various courses.

In 1964 a vast piece of land was purchased in the locality of "San Cosimato" along the "Via della Pisana", outside Rome's "Grande Raccordo Anulare" (The major circular highway around Rome). Legal procedures were terminated in 1968, the year in which works were started: the cornerstone was laid on October 13, 1968 by Bishop A. Pangrazio of Porto-Santa Rufina, in whose diocese were located the headquarters destined to host, according to final plans, the General Government, the theological seminary for Italian clerics, the international college for the religious assigned for further studies at the universities, the "Corso di Aggiornamento", a center for retreats, conventions, and pilgrims, and also a church in view of a future parish. But by the time the grandiose project began to be given a concrete execution, international colleges were already running out of

fashion. But, to this difficulty the General Council responded that if the Italian Province were not to be in a position anymore to supply a hundred students of theology and philosophy, there would follow a serious question mark as to the survival of the Congregation. Unfortunately, however, a general crisis of vocations was already in progress, more serious, in fact, than could have been imagined just very few years before.

The celebrations for the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation were initiated on November 28, 1967. Fr. Tessarolo and his Council wanted to give this celebration the greatest preeminence certain that in the restoration of the original spirit would provide one of the most effective means for the renewal of the Institute as was required by the Second Vatican Council. For this reason he directed that the new biography of Bishop Scalabrini be written beginning with what had already been started by Bishop Caliaro. It was actually published in June 1968 "L'Apostolo degli Emigrati, Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, Vescovo di Piacenza. La sua Opera e la sua Spiritualità." Editrice "Ancora", Milano, pp. 655). It was instrumental in securing in September 1969 the "nihil obstat" of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith to proceed with the Founder's Cause of Beatification. On January 14, 1969, the Congregation passed under the Sacred Congregation for Religious in matters concerning the religious life while remaining under the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops in what regards to its specific apostolic scope. After reminding all of the total dependence of the Scalabrinian Congregation on the Consistorial Congregation since 1924, Card. Carlo Confalonieri, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops, precisely stated:

"Initially demanded by contingent historical events, the exclusive competence of the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops has seemed, however, to be less functional today, especially consequently to the promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution 'Regimini Ecclesiae Universae'. Therefore, in order to insure on one hand the particular apostolic physiognomy that binds the Institute historically and juridically to this Sacred Congregation, and to adequately provide, on the other, for the religious life of the same through the competent institutions of the Holy See, after a proposal by this sacred office, the Holy Father - at the audience of January 20, 1968 - has decided that this Institute be transferred to the direct dependence on the Sacred Congregation

'pro Religiosis et Institutis Saecularibus' in matters concerning the religious life, while still remaining under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops in whatever refers to its missionary action of assistance to emigrants.

And so, while in virtue of its specific scope it will continue to depend on the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops 'in ea quae hos (sodales) qua missionaries sive uti singulos sive simul sumptos (atingunt)' (in regard to those things that concern its members as missionaries, both as individuals and as a community) in a manner analogous to that established for Missionary Institutes dependent on the Sacred Congregation "pro Gentium Evangelizatione" by Article 88 of the Apostolic Constitution 'Regimini Ecclesiae Universae' in respect to the aspects listed in Article 73, paragraph 2, of the same Constitution, this Institute shall refer to the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes as to its competent organ, always remaining intact the right of this Sacred Office over matters concerning 'finis proprii tutelam et prosecutionem' ('the safeguarding and the carrying out of its specific scope')." (Letter of Card. Confalonieri to Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo of January 14, 1969).

#### FR. RENATO BOLZONI, SUPERIOR GENERAL (1969-1974)

The sixth General Chapter was both "ordinary" because it was taking place at the regular completion of a six-year term to choose the new General Administration and "special" because it was called to revise and adapt the Constitutions to the directives of the Second Vatican Council. As "special", the Chapter did not exhaust its task in phase one, August-October 1969, but concluded it in phase two, October 1971 - January 1972.

Phase one began on August 11, 1969, at the General House in Via Calandrelli, Rome. It was attended by 16 ex officio members and by 27 delegates. Up until August 25, the assembly discussed the ordinary business of the Congregation on the basis of the reports presented by the General and Provincial Administrations. Two weeks were devoted to the study of the proposals for the renewal of the Constitutions that had been prepared on the basis of a Questionnaire sent out to all religious in January 1968, and then elaborated by a pre-capitular commission since February 1969.

The three study committees that had drawn up the “schemata” (drafts) of the various parts of the new Constitutions, began presenting them on September 9 for discussion by the assembly that sent them back afterwards for a second examination. Upon completion of the study on the draft for the “government of the Congregation”, the assembly proceeded to the election of the new General Council.

On September 29-30 the General Council was elected

Fr. Renato Bolzoni the 11th Superior General.

Fr. Rodolfo DeCandido (Vicar General),

Fr. Antonio Perotti (General Procurator),

Fr. Giuseppe Visentin,

Fr. Giovanni Simonetto.

Fr. Emilio Donanzan was elected the new General Treasurer.

Work on the new Constitutions was continued until October 31, when the first phase of the Special Chapter was adjourned.

An “inter-capitular commission” was charged with the writing of the conclusions approved by the Chapter into a textual draft that would be discussed afterwards during the second phase. In the first half of 1970 this commission prepared and sent out to all religious the drafts of the new legislation in line with the indications of the General Chapter and the first plan for the new Constitutions. This draft was studied by the various Provinces till February 1971. Ordered into a questionnaire, the responses of individuals and groups, were thoroughly examined by the Commission, which in May 1971, had a second project of the new Constitutions reach the chapter members and all the communities. This formed the basic text of discussion for the second phase of the Special Chapter that was held at the new headquarters of the General Government on Via della Pisana from October 27, 1971 to January 21, 1972, with the participation of 52 chapter members, including two delegates of the Lay Brothers and three of the Religious students.

The first decision of the new phase of the Chapter was to preface the Constitutions with a “Preamble” (a constitutional statement) that would express in a clear manner the fundamental principles from which the norms of the Constitutions derive. These norms and the General Directory were then long discussed and finally approved. By order of the Chapter, the new code of laws, included under the title of

"Constitutions", was promulgated on February 21, 1972 by the General Government that fixed June 1, 1972, as the date for its application "ad experimentum".

The most important evolution found in the new Constitutions concerns the so called "internationalization" of the scope of the Congregation: differently from the formulation approved by the Holy See in 1966, the recipients of the Scalabrinian mission, instead of being singled out as "Italian emigrants, their descendants, and all those who in any nation or for any form of migratory should present analogous needs for apostolic care", are indicated with the only term "migrants", that is, all those of any nationality who "are living outside their country or outside their social and cultural place of origin and, "because of real necessity" (17) require a specific missionary activity." (Preamble VI) .

This way the accent was no longer placed on "nationality" but on "migration", specifying however both a "preferential commitment for those migrants who more acutely are living the drama of migration", and the implementation on the "operational level" of the principles of homogeneity between missionaries and migrants extended to the concept of a "spiritual, psychological, and linguistic affinity with migrants" to be acquired through "an authentically missionary spirit."

The new Constitutions placed on the same level as the properly so-called "migrants" people involved in the phenomenon of the massive internal migrations within their own nations, and seamen.

Another characteristic note of the new Constitutions is represented by the steady vision of a religious life focused on to the apostolic mission on behalf of migrants in accordance with the thought of the Founder. Deep changes were brought to the exercise of authority by the adoption of various "mechanisms" (habitual delegation, consultation, biennial assembly of Major Superiors, annual Provincial assembly) intended to extend participation in the internal life of the Congregation to all religious.

Concerning the finances, the principle of "subordinate ownership", already previously supported - as seen above - by the extraordinary meeting of 1966, was made into a law.



Following the new formulation of the scope of the Institute and the pastoral outline traced by the new Constitutions, a process of evaluation of positions and methods of apostolic care was introduced through the Congregation to the end of leading it gradually towards its specific mission in the Church. Some parishes became "international" almost automatically due to the "alternation" of new migrants who had entered to take the place of Italians. In other places greater attention was given to the new migration flows or to the poorest and abandoned migrants; in some nations, the problems of internal migration began to be studied; the exchange of missionaries and religious students was intensified between the various provinces; two international theology seminaries were set up in Freiburg in Switzerland and in Merlo in Argentina.

The burning problem of a financial nature engaged the two phases of the General Chapter, and, one might say, the entire term of office of Fr. Bolzoni as Superior General: the so-called "Scalabrinianum" or "Complesso San Cosimato", that is, the vast and diversified building which had been started at 1301 Via della Pisana, in a suburb of Rome. The Chapter expressed its doubts over the opportunity and validity of this enterprise, but in the face of the "accomplished fact" it pledged the moral support of all provinces assuring the new General Administration burdened with expenses of payment and operation of their financial collaboration even if it should mean actually to alienate some properties of the Congregation and of the provinces. All new construction plans or expensive works were thus halted until the second phase of the Chapter.

In June-July 1970, the General Council decided to rent on a temporary basis the structures to a society that chose to use them for tourism and hospitality, reserving some sections for the General Administration, the "Centro Studi Emigrazione", and the "Corso di Aggiornamento". The General Government and the "Centro Studi" moved to the Via della Pisana on October 10, 1970; on November 2 the participants in the "Corso di Aggiornamento" joined them also. The house on Via Calandrelli was turned into the Major Seminary of the Italian Province. The Association "Centro Internazionale Scalabrini", with Scalabrinian religious as its members, was legally instituted on January 8, 1971, in order to assist the General Council in operating



the structures of the Via Pisana for social and cultural activities. The "Centre" was opened on March 19, 1971, with management by an associated group of laymen to whom the whole complex was entrusted as a "cost free loan".

Phase two of the Chapter, opened on October 21, 1971, had the opportunity to examine the results of the first semester of this operational management of the complex. After acknowledging the evident disproportion between the profits from the tourist and hospitality management and the burden weighing down on the whole Congregation in terms of mortgages on many of its buildings, the extraordinary contributions and loans from the Provinces, the dangerous increase of interests on loans from the banks (construction costs had actually risen three times higher than had first been budgeted), the Chapter," upon examination of all aspects concerning the "San Cosimato" complex, evaluation of economic, moral, pastoral and psychological reasons pro and con its alienation, acknowledging with gratitude that the General Government had carried out the task given it in the first phase," gave its mandate "to go ahead with the alienation of the "San Cosimato" complex on condition that the price were as much as possible equal to the capital invested in it by the Congregation". Negotiations for the alienation took a year and half and were extremely laborious, but they reached a satisfactory conclusion on August 10, 1973, date on which the bill of sale to "Regione Lazio" was signed. At the same time, however, the Vatican Secretariat of State decreed the relinquishing to the Holy See of the premises at Via della Scrofa, 70, the seat of the "Pontifical College for Emigration" and of the boarding house "Giuseppe Toniolo" for university students. The house in Via Calandrelli was occupied by the Major Seminary to which the "Centro Studi" had also to be transferred. The General Administration was thus forced to purchase a modest building at 634 Via Casilina, to which it moved in September 1973.

Special emphasis was placed by the Special Chapter on the formation of future missionaries. In the first phase the General Government received the mandate to compile the "General Directory of Formation" for the major seminaries and prepared a draft of it which was submitted for examination to the first general assembly of superiors in charge of formation held in New York on December 28,

1970 and January 7, 1971 and for approval by the second phase of the "Special Chapter". With a few changes aimed at integrating it into the new Constitutions, the Directory was promulgated, in 1972, "ad experimentum" with the title "General Order of Scalabrinian Formation". Vocation promotion was intensified in some Provinces with the engagement of a larger number of promoters. A minor seminary was opened at Jundiaí in the Province of St. Paul. Two small seminaries were discontinued, instead, at Arco (Trento) and Cermenate (Como), in Italy. A "Young People Orientation Group" and a "Young People Community" were established respectively at Piacenza and Strasbourg, France, for late vocations. The theological seminary of the two Provinces of North America was moved in 1971 to Toronto in Canada.

In 1972, following approval by the Holy See, an "Interprovincial Committee for Formation" with "Statutes" of its own (a Regional Secretariat had already been functioning since 1965) was constituted in North America. A like "Interprovincial Committee" was instituted in 1973 for the Seminaries of Latin America.

In spite of all efforts made in promoting vocations, at the 1974 General Chapter a decrease of personnel was noticed for the first time: from a membership of 776 in 1969 the number declined to 746 in 1974: in fact, 74 religious students, 2 brothers, and 42 priests had left the Congregation. Yet, the priests had increased by 20 units, while the number of religious students had decreased from 181 to 133. And so the aging rate of the Congregation was speeding up, as well. Besides, the Congregation's opening to all migrants of all nationalities was calling for new responsibilities and the requests for personnel were becoming ever more urgent. In these five years twenty new residences were opened: among them the "Casa del Marinaio" of New York and Santos; the centers of the "Apostleship of the Sea" at San Pedro (California), Montevideo (Uruguay), Newcastle (Australia), and Genoa (Italy); the parish of Amora in Portugal; the mission of Itupiranga in the region of Pará, Brazil; the interprovincial mission of Sobradinho in the vicinity of the federal capital of Brazil; the mission of St. Teresa in Paraguay, and the mission of Portorico. Several traditional parishes of North America especially, extended their pastoral care to the new immigrants. Some "openings" were short-lived, such as: the

“Zaccagnino Foundation” of San Nicandro, in Italy; the “Catechetical Center” entrusted to our Missionary Brothers in Palm Springs (California); and the house of Place de Porte de Ternes, in Paris. In order to provide for the new foundations and activities a rather vast movement of personnel became necessary; in some missions it was reduced to an indispensable minimum; nine parishes and three other residences were abandoned. Though so opportune, numerous offers had to be turned down.

While the Provinces had begun to hold regularly the annual assemblies required by the new Constitutions, the General Council called together for the first time the Assembly of Major Superiors from November 19 to December 7, 1973. The preparation of the new Constitutions, the heavy burden of the “San Cosimato” complex and poor health, allowed the Superior General Fr. Bolzoni to personally carry out the canonical visitation only of the provinces of Brazil. The Provinces of Australia, GermanySwitzerland, and the Delegation of England were visited by the General Councilors. Plans for the canonical visitations were suspended due to the sickness of Fr. Bolzoni, who underwent a serious operation in June 1973, and then could resume work on a limited scale for only a few months. He had to yield in March 1974 and he died on April 22, 1974, in the “Salvator Mundi” clinic in Rome and was buried in the Scalabrinian tomb in the cemetery of Piacenza.

On that occasion, all Major Superiors were again called together and on May 1, 1974, they decided to convoke the Ordinary General Chapter on October 5, 1974, postponing the final revision of the Constitutions to the next General Chapter.

#### FR. GIOVANNI SIMONETTO, SUPERIOR GENERAL IN 1974

The seventh General Chapter was celebrated at São Paulo, Brazil, in the premises of the “Christopher Columbus Institute” and “John XXIII Seminary” from October 10 to November 12, 1974. It was attended by 42 members: 14 of them ex officio, and 28 delegates. Fr. Rudolph De Candido, Vicar General, whose term of office was expiring, presided over the Chapter until October 29.

On October 29 the new General Council was elected:

Fr. Giovanni Simonetto the 12th Superior General.  
Fr. Laurindo Guizzardi (Vicar General),  
Fr. Peter Sordi (General Treasurer),  
Fr. Velasio De Paolis (General Procurator),  
Fr. Giovanni B. Sacchetti.

From the information gathered in the analysis of the state of the Congregation, the problem of personnel appeared to be a fundamental one. It was decided, therefore, to concentrate all efforts on certain priorities: a) an intensified promotion of vocations; b) the reform of formation in the major seminaries; c) the revision of apostolic positions in accordance with the specific scope of the Congregation.

After pointing out that the problem of personnel could not “be given an adequate solution without a renewed commitment on the part of all, both as individuals and as a community, to a more generous and less superficial observance of the Evangelical counsels”, the Chapter recommended that young missionaries be assigned to the nerve-centers of emigration, that second assignments be made in view of a greater efficiency even through transfers to other provinces, that the Religious be updated through “permanent formation”.

It invited both General and Provincial Administrations to unite and join together all available forces for the various and new forms of pastoral care of vocations among both boys and young adults; to start planning for personnel for Major Seminaries and a revision of formation methods, with insistence on a deeper spiritual, cultural and pastoral preparation, marked by the “Scalabrinian missionary spirit”. Lastly, it supplied the draft of a program for the updating of the apostolic positions, with particular attention to migrants most in need, by means of new concrete institutions, through the revival of old positions, the needs of migrants, and the collaboration with all ecclesiastical forces interested in the migratory problem.

In this regard, the appointment of Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo as Secretary of the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Tourists decreed by Pope Paul VI on July 2, 1975, is particularly worth pointing out.

The General Government was requested to establish greater contacts with the Provinces by entrusting the general councilors with the task of caring for its relations with the various geographic areas, en-

dowed in some cases with ordinary delegated powers. A desire was also expressed for the organizing of an information system within the Congregation and of collaboration between the provinces also in the field of the administration. Finally, plans were drawn for verifying the new Constitutions through a practical experimentation of them in view of their revision to be carried out by the 1980 General Chapter

The two Assemblies of the Major Superiors of 1976 and 1978 were in fact responsible for a more intense contact with the Provinces. The first restated the priority choices worked out by the General Chapter of 1974 on formation. Stress was placed above all on formation to a full missionary availability and on "permanent formation", both generic and specialized. On the level of specialization, a new accent was placed on the coordination of "Study Centers" or like organisms, for which a common internal "Statute" had been established in January 1976. The 1976 Assembly was preceded by a meeting of the Provincial Treasurers that laid down the economic program which could not be prepared by the 1974 Chapter.

In the field of formation, the 1976 Assembly approved the new provisional text of the "General Order of Scalabrinian Formation for the Major Seminaries" which had been written out after a series of meetings by a "restricted committee", but postponed its final formulation to the 1978 Assembly, which in turn delayed it on to the 1980 Chapter.

The 1978 Assembly of Major Superiors concerned itself with the immediate preparation of the 1980 General Chapter that would have to write out the final text of the Constitutions to be submitted for approval by the Holy See. It took note of the new vocational initiatives, such as the opening of a new minor seminary in Brazil, of three "diaspora seminaries" (where seminarians live together only a few days of each month, while being ordinarily cared for in their own families), of two "Contact Programs" and three "Associate Contact Programs" in North America, and of the revival of Brazil's program for vocations among young adults.

A study was proposed for the next three years on the set-up of the Novitiate that might take into account the periods preceding and following it, with the intent of giving continuity to the process of formation. In 1978 also there was an insistence on the need for "missionary

availability", which is, after all, one of the main points of the program of the current General Administration.

Directives were enacted for the setting-up and the use of a common financial fund by the General and Provincial Administrations, and a project was also launched of a pension fund for all religious on the general level as a Congregation.

A study of the directives and statements of the two Assemblies of the Major Superiors brings to light the lines on which the Government of the Congregation is moving along in the last years: implementing the internationalization of the scope on the basis of "being missionaries" and of the "availability" consistent with a serious commitment to the religious life, to poverty especially; an effort of individuals and communities as well on a return to the original inspiration and spirit as to the necessary foundation for the renewal and updating of apostolic positions.

In the years 1974-1978 the Province of Argentina-Chile-Uruguay qualified its apostolate on a larger scale to include migrants of Italian, Bolivian, Chilean, and Portuguese extraction; it accepted exacting tasks in episcopal and diocesan Commissions for migrants. The parish of Santa Teresita of Saenz Peña was returned to the diocese; a missionary community was founded in the diocese of San Justo.

In Australia the three parishes of Unanderra, Newcastle, and North Lismore were relinquished; a new "Italian Center" was opened at Wollongong to serve also as headquarters for the apostolate among Hispanic and Portuguese immigrants; a "inter-parochial" community was established at Liverpool; the Austral "Scalabrini Village" in Sydney was completed and the "Gualtierio Vaccari Village" was opened at South Morang near Melbourne, both of them for the aging. A Scalabrinian was charged with the coordination of the pastoral care for Italian immigrants in the Diocese of Melbourne.

The Province of St. Paul committed itself heart and soul to the task of formation with special attention to "John XXIII" Major Seminary, and the opening of a minor seminary in Paraná and of a community for "late" vocations in the metropolis of São Paulo. The Province was granted a novitiate of its own, and 'in agreement with the other Brazilian Province, it has the construction of the interprovincial seminary of philosophy underway in Curitiba. The parish of Santa

Fé in Paraná was closed but a mission was opened in its stead for the "barrageiros" ("dams workers") of Foz do Areia hydroelectric plant in the same state. In far off Pará, another mission was added to that of Itupiranga at Tucuruí.

The Province of St. Peter continued its intense activity in the field of vocations: a seminary was built at Guaporé, and two minor seminaries were opened in the states of Santa Catarina and Paraná. The Scalabrinians withdrew from the parish of Vespasiano Corrêa in Río Grande do Sul but they took to new positions in regions of actual immigration: the parish of Santa Rosa del Monday for Brazilians in Paraguay, and the parish for the "barrageiros" of Itaipú (Paraná).

The mission of Portugal was assigned to the Province of France-Belgium-Luxembourg in 1979. Here the work for vocations has begun to bear the first fruits, while assistance to Portuguese in Luxembourg and in the nearby diocese of Nancy was intensified. The territorial parishes of Reveil-Matin, and Haucourt were respectively given back to the dioceses of Versailles and Nancy. A new mission for Italians was opened in Avignon and a Scalabrinian was put in charge of that of Metz. All activities of the "Youth Community" of Strasbourg ceased in view of a restructuring of the pastoral care of young vocations.

On January 1, 1979, the former General Delegation of England was joined to the Italian Province. The Major Seminary in Rome, was transferred to Via Ulisse Seni first, and then to Via Casilina. The Mother House is undergoing a vast process of renovation, which has already allowed the transfer of the students of philosophy from the Scalabrini-O'Brien Seminary of Cermetate, which was sold. The house of Carmiano (Lecce) became the seat of a "diaspora seminary". Besides the sector of formation, concerning the centers of internal emigration and immigration, a Missionary Center was founded at Cinisello Balsamo, a suburb of Milan, a parish was taken at Porto Corsini in Ravenna, and two small ones were accepted in the diocese of Mileto in Calabria. The parish of St. Andrew in Manfredonia, instead, was surrendered to the diocese. The Scalabrinian parish in Rome had its church, at last.

The Province of Switzerland-Germany is gradually changing the set-up of its missions, abandoning in the process certain social and



assistance activities in favor of an increased catechetical and cultural action, especially in the schools. Due to the emigration crisis, the two schools the Province was running in Italy for children of migrants were discontinued. The missionary residences were increased with the "Youth Community" of Cologne and the accepting of the mission of Ludwigsburg in the vicinity of Stuttgart.

In North America, attention was extended to the most recent and poor immigrants, especially to the Spanish-speaking ones, many of them "illegals", and to those of Portuguese and Haitian languages. New initiatives were undertaken for Italians. A much greater use was made of the mass-media and of other means for the sensitization of Church and State. New parishes were opened in Brooklyn, New York; Hamilton; Toronto; and Windsor, in the Canadian province of Ontario; while four others were given up at Providence, R.I. (Holy Cross); Fredonia, N.Y.; Atikokan, Ontario; and Eveleth, Minn. The large "Villa Scalabrini" for the aged was built in Los Angeles and that of Mitchellville (Villa Rosa), in the vicinity of Washington, was doubled. One notices a remarkable revival of vocational promotion in both provinces. A small community for formation has been opened in Queens, N.Y. The novitiate was transferred from Toronto to Chicago.

In 1976, the former General Delegation of Venezuela, where the mission of Valencia was opened and that of Puerto Cabello discontinued, was adjoined "ad experimentum" to the Province of St. Charles Borromeo.

For some time now, the Scalabrinians of Venezuela had been assisting also non-Italian migrants, Columbians especially, for whom it was decided to open a residence at Cucuta, a city on the border with Colombia.

As of December 31, 1978, the state of the Congregation in numbers stood as follows:

609	Priests
12	Religious Students with Perpetual Vows
96	Religious Students with Temporary Vows
36	Novices
238	Residences



## CHAPTER III

### INSTITUTIONS AND INITIATIVES DEPENDENT ON THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

#### THE GENERAL HOUSE AND THE ST. CHARLES INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

The seat of the General Government remained at Via Calandrelli 11, until October 1970. Until the 1951 General Chapter, when the General Administration began once again to be composed entirely of members of the Congregation, the house on Via Calandrelli had served only as the official point of reference. In fact, only one member of the General Government, Fr. Giovanni Sofia, resided there as General Councilor, Treasurer, and acting Procurator from 1946 to 1951. As said before, in October 1970, the General Council moved into the "Scalabrinianum", at 1301 Via della Pisana. After the sale of the "Scalabrinianum", in September 1973 the Government was transferred to a building at 634 Via Casilina. It had been built in the 1930s and it had been a monastery of Discalced Carmelite nuns until 1959 when it began to be used as an institution for the care of infants under the "Suore Ancelle della SS. Trinità" (Sister Servants of the Most Holy Trinity).

In July 1976 the General Government returned to Via Calandrelli, properly fitted to host it together with the "Centro Studi Emigrazione", transferred there already in 1973, and the "Corso di Aggiornamento" which had begun functioning in the beginning of the same year. "Saint Charles College" also had its seat at Via Calandrelli until 1970. It formed the community of religious who were attending the Pontifical Universities for their academic degrees. In the years 1941 - 1960, including priests and clerics, it housed about 20 students. In 1947, also a few students from North America and Brazil began to be a part of the group. In the sixties the number of students of the International College began to dwindle. Americans and Brazilians preferred to attend the Ecclesiastical Universities in their own countries; others devoted themselves to specializations in literary and scientific

matters needed for teaching in high schools and colleges in Northern Italy, or in sociological subjects for the "Centers of Studies". Lastly, the numerical strength of the clerics themselves was diminishing as a whole. And it so happened that by the school year 1968-1969 the university students had dwindled to one American priest and five Italian clerics. In 1970, the Major Seminary, Philosophy and Theology, of the Italian Province was transferred to Rome, and precisely to Via Calandrelli; where a good number of the clerics attended academic courses. The "International College" was thus terminated, while the Major Seminary of Italy remained at Via Calandrelli until 1975. It was hosted for one year in a rented building in the nearby Via Ulisse Seni. In 1976 it was moved into the former provisional seat of the General Government at Via Casilina 634.

Fr. Giovanni Sofia continued as rector until 1945. The saintly Scalabrinian Bishop Massimo Rinaldi of Rieti died in the house of Via Calandrelli on May 31, 1941. Machine-gunned by allied aircraft, Bro. Secondo Dal Bello died on April 15, 1944 on his way back from a trip organized by the P.O.A. (Pontifical Commission of Assistance) for food supplies in the Veneto. Besides the shortage of food and the breaking of glasses, the community of Via Calandrelli did not suffer any other damage from the war. Due to impossibility of communications between Central and Northern Italy a small minor seminary opened at Via Calandrelli with ten boys in first year high school, 3 in the second, and 2 in the third. This group and the priests who had completed their studies could move to Bassano del Grappa on July 20, 1945.

At the same time Fr. Angelo Ceccato was appointed rector, but in the spring of 1946 he fell sick and Fr. Silvio Stefanelli succeeded him for the school years 1946-1947. For fifteen years hence, the "St. Charles College" was under the direction of one of the General Councilors: Fr. Ugo Cavicchi, 1947-1951; Fr. Angelo Ceccato, 1951-1957; Fr. Giacomo Danesi, 1957-1962. In the last years preference was given to having rectors who should not belong to the General Council: Fr. Francesco Danese, 1962-1964; Fr. Pio Ceccato, 1964-1966; Fr. Luigi Liber, 1966-1969. But the rectorship was again held by a Councilor, Fr. Giuseppe Visentin, 1969-1970.

A burial plot for Scalabrinians was purchased in 1952 at the “Verano” Cemetery of Rome. The indoor terrace on the top floor of the house at Via Calandrelli was fitted to provide room for the library willed to it by the former Prelate of Emigration, Mons. Erminio Viganò, on very convenient conditions. Other works were carried out in 1970 to supply the Sisters with larger living quarters, and in 1976, upon the return there of the General Administration, to adapt the indoor premises as the seat for the three tasks to which the House of Via Calandrelli, as mentioned before, had been deputed: General Government, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Corso di Aggiornamento.

### THE CSER (CENTRO STUDI EMIGRAZIONE - ROMA)

The 1963 General Chapter had passed the following directive:

“The Chapter recommends that the “Centro Studi” already requested by the previous Chapter be constituted as soon as possible. The principal tasks of the “Centro Studi” shall be:

- a) compiling of Manuals of a formative character;
- b) promotion of historical and biographical research studies;
- c) founding of a study Review, preparing reports, promoting conventions, etc.”

In August 1963 the General Council decided to “institute a Centro Studi Sociali of our own on the premises of the Pontifical College of Emigration in order to conduct scientifically in-depth studies on all social problems concerning our specific field of work, while attending at the same time to the other activities for which the Chapter has already indicated an outline.” (Letter by Fr. G. Tessarolo to Fr. Giovanni B. Sacchetti, August 20, 1963).

On September 12th the Superior General made the proposal to associate Frs. F. Milini, Giovanni B. Sacchetti, A. Perotti, A. Negrini, and T. Rubin, with the rector of the Pontifical College of Emigration, as collaborators in the activities of the College and of the boarding house for university students connected with it, while forming at the same time the staff of Centro Studi Emigrazione. The Sacred Consistorial Congregation accepted the proposal with letter of September 14th.

On September 29, the Fathers so appointed agreed to keep the periodical “L’Emigrato Italiano” distinct from the quarterly scien-

tific review "Studi Emigrazione" while publishing research studies of a historical, sociological, and emographic nature; taking part to study meetings, coordinating the publications of the Congregation, and outlining a pastoral care of emigrants. This is how CSER (Centro Studi Emigrazione-Roma) was born in October 1963: Fr. Giovanni B. Sacchetti was appointed its director.

A library, specialized on emigration, the only one of its kind in Italy, was started in 1964. The mimeographed bimonthly "Selezione CSER" began publications, and the first issue of the quarterly "Studi Emigrazione", published by the Morcelliana of Brescia, saw the light in October. In the course of the first seven years CSER had its headquarters at the Palazzo Sant'Apollinare, by the Pontifical College of Emigration, at Via della Scrofa 70. Following a stay of a few months in Via Calandrelli, it was moved in October 1970 to the "Scalabrinianum" at Via della Pisana 1301, where the library, the machinery center, and technical services could be given a more adequate lodging. In September 1973 it was returned to Via Calandrelli. In 1975, its direction was entrusted to Fr. Gianfausto Rosoli, while Fr. G.B. Sacchetti, elected General Councilor, took charge of the relations of the "Centri Studi" among themselves and with the General Government. In 1976, the latter approved an internal Statute that defined the scope and the place in the Congregation, and solicited the collaboration and the cooperation of the various "Study Centers" - CSER of Rome, CMS of New York, CSERPE of Basel, CEM of São Paulo, CPM of Porto Alegre, CIEMM of Paris, CADEMS of Buenos Aires, SMC of London, CEPAM of Caracas, IPM of Toronto; some of them all well-organized already, the others well on their way.

Little by little, CSER has developed a vast publishing activity with the publication of "Studi Emigrazione", now a plurilingual quarterly, "Selezione CSER" soon to become a monthly and then changed in 1975 into "Dossier Europa Emigrazione", as an expression of the European "Centri Studi"; it published a series of studies ("Prospettive", "Attualità, Sussidi"; two drafts for a "Manual of the history, sociology, and pastoral care of Emigration", intended for the formation of the missionaries.

It conducted various research studies on the social and religious-social aspects of emigration, and it supplied an ever more ef-

fective contribution of ideas to the various organisms of church and society, as well as to many Italian and international conventions on migratory problems.

#### RECTORATE OF THE "PONTIFICAL COLLEGE FOR EMIGRATION" AND "GIUSEPPE TONIOLO" BOARDING HOUSE FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The history of the "Pontifical College for Emigration" was written by Fr. Antonio Perotti in his book "The Pontifical College for Italian emigration: 1920-1970." We have mentioned already the origins of this institution (Volume IV, Chapter III, #5), which had been wanted by Pius X in 1914, and the choice of the Scalabrinian Fr. Giacomo Gambera as its rector made by the Holy See, and his resignation from this appointment.

Actually, the College began to function in 1920 when the new office of the "Prelate for Italian emigration" was instituted, on whom it was to depend. On January 6, 1921, the first course began for the preparation of priests assigned to the assistance of Italian emigrants. In January 1923, preparation courses were also added for chaplains aboard ships. In the period between 1921 and 1932 the College sent 167 Priests to Europe and America. Concurrently with the decrease of emigration brought about by the world's recession of 1930, the annual courses of the College, that was to remain inactive until 1949, were discontinued in 1932. In the course of these years the "Pontifical College" was directed by three Prelates for Emigration: Mons. M. Cerrati, 1920-1925; Mons. R. Beltrami, 1925-1929; and Mons. Erminio Vigano, 1931-1949.

Almost at the same time with the ceasing of the courses, a small boarding house for University students later on named after "Giuseppe Toniolo", was opened on the premises of the "Pontifical College", that is, in the building at Via della Scrofa 70, that had served as the seat of the "Romano" and "Pio" seminaries until 1914. As agreed with the FUCI (Federazione Universitaria Cattolica Italiana), 12 University students were admitted in September 1931, who were to increase to over 150. This work entered as an integral part of the "Mensa Universitaria Cattolica" (Canteen), directed by the "Circolo San Pietro" from 1921 until 1948, and by the rector of the "Pontifical

College" afterwards. Back in 1929 it had already been pointed out to Card. Carlo Perosi in the circles of the Consistorial Congregation that the "Pontifical College for Emigration" had outgrown its scope and that it would have been fit to entrust it to the Scalabrinians. The same proposal was made in 1942 to Card. Raffaello Carlo Rossi, who, though finding it difficult to carry it out, committed himself to take the time to study it. In 1948 Card. A.G. Piazza assured he would take care of the matter and submitted the proposal to Pope Pius XII, who approved it on January 22, 1949.

And so the S. Consistorial Congregation entrusted the Scalabrinian Congregation with the direction of the Pontifical College for Emigration, which was then placed under the direct dependence on the Consistorial Congregation without the mediation of the Prelate for Emigration, and of the institutions in it: boarding house for priests and university students, and canteen for students. On August 1, 1949, Cardinal Piazza appointed Fr. Giovanni Sofia as first Rector; he was succeeded by Fr. Giovanni Favero, 1958-1963; Fr. Anacleto Rocca, 1963-1969; Fr. Giacomo Danesi, 1969-1973. The Apostolic constitution "Exul Familia" codified in 1952 the relationship between the Pontifical College for Emigration and the Scalabrinian Congregation:

"Being the specific scope of the College, that is, the preparation of diocesan priests for the proper religious care and assistance of Italian emigrants in foreign lands, exactly the same as that of the Pious Society of the Missionaries of St. Charles for Italian Emigrants, we provide that the Rector, and the others of the directional and teaching staff be chosen among the priests of the same Pious Society to which therefore we entrust the college itself at our discretion." (Part II, Ch. VI).

The new Rules, approved in 1952, admitted also priests who intended to migrate into foreign dioceses with shortage of clergy. The "Centro Ecclesiale Italiano per L'America Latina" (CEIAL) had not as yet been founded. The courses resumed in October 1949 and were much shorter than those prospected in the first Rules; they were two weeks long, at first, but then they were fixed to last forty days. 464 diocesan priests, and 78 religious, attended the courses in the years between 1949 and 1970. In 1965, admission of new missionaries and of candidates for the courses passed from the jurisdiction of the Sa-

cred Congregation for the Bishops to that of the Conference of Italian Bishops through the operational Office of the Episcopal Commission for Emigration, that is, the "UCEI" (Ufficio Centrale Emigrazione Italiana), established in the same year and located on the premises of the Pontifical College that had served as offices of the "Giunta Cattolica" for Emigration from 1962 till 1965.

In June 27, 1973, the Secretariat of State announced the decision of the Holy See to turn the building of Via della Scrofa into a Guest House for the Clergy. On September 3, the Secretary of State Card. J. Villot conveyed to Fr. Danesi the satisfaction of the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI for the "diligent and generous dedication" of the Scalabrinians in directing for 24 years the Pontifical College for Emigration and the Boarding House for the University students "Giuseppe Toniolo" "with admirable zeal, proven ability, and sense of responsibility". On October 15, 1973, Scalabrinians surrendered the keys of College and Boarding House to the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See.

## CORSO DI AGGIORNAMENTO

The 1951 General Chapter decreed that after the first five years in the missions the religious should return to Italy "for a period of spiritual renewal of their own in a fitting place and under a special guidance", setting 1956 as the starting year.

In January 1956, the Superior General Fr. Francesco Prevedello served notice to the Provincial Superiors that the "Corso di Aggiornamento" (Ongoing Formation Course), also called "Corso di perfezionamento" or "Fifth Year", was to begin in that year. In the following May he obtained from Card. Piazza the use of the Pontifical College for Emigration for this scope. The course consists "of a coming together in community that will foster fraternal charity, an exchange of experiences, a theological updating, personal reflection, and a spiritual reappraisal under the guidance of a competent director." (Constitutions, Art. 113). Up until 1970 it used to last nine months, but it was later cut down to four or five months.

The first course began on September 21, 1956 with 14 participants, under the direction of Fr. Ettore Ansaldo. Until 1961 the priests at-



tended the Institute of Pastoral care at the Lateran University and then the courses of "Pastoral Sociology" at the General Curia of the Jesuits; after 1963, preference was given to intensification of courses held by confreres and to specialists in dogmatic moral theology, and pastoral care, leaving room for other courses freely chosen by the individual participants in accordance with their needs.

The 1969 General Chapter recommended that a research be made on the fundamental aspects of the "Corso di Aggiornamento" among the religious who had taken part in it until then. The inquiry was conducted in 1970. Out of 205 priests who had taken part in the 14 courses between 1959 and 1970, 136 answered: 90% affirmed its validity, though admitting to some reservations as to its organization, contents, and duration.

In 1970-1971 the course was held at the "Scalabrinianum" of Via della Pisana; in 1972 it returned to Via della Scrofa; in 1972-1973 it took place in the premises of the Clerics of Saint Viator "Viatorians" at the EUR; in 1974 and 1975 it enjoyed the hospitality of the "Mexican Seminary" in Via del Casaleto; it was finally housed at the General House of Via Calandrelli. In 1975 Fr. Analdi was succeeded in guiding course by Fr. Giacomo Danesi.

### "L'EMIGRATO ITALIANO" AND INTERNAL INFORMATION

By decision of the Founder Bishop Scalabrini, the first issue of a monthly was published in July 1903 aimed at making known in a simple and popular way the conditions of Italian emigrants and the work being done for them by the Missionaries of St. Charles. Its title was: "Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles for Italian Emigrants in America". Its editorial staff was made up of a group of clerics at the Mother House. It continued as a monthly until the issue of July 1905, entirely dedicated to the passing of Bishop Scalabrini. It resumed publications in February 1906 till the middle of 1907 with the title: "L'Emigrato Italiano in America". In 1908 only one number was published.

It reappeared in 1911 still as a monthly with Fr. Massimo Rinaldi as its director; it became a quarterly in 1914 until 1924, when Fr. Rinaldi was elected Bishop of Rieti. He was not given a successor, due also



to the fact that a part of the missionaries deemed it not to be needed any more either for promoting vocations or for the information of emigrants because of the migratory crisis after the war. Fr. Francesco Prevedello revived it in 1930 in the form of a small four-page quarterly paper that was to continue until the first number of 1934. In April 1934, on the occasion of the return to the religious vows, it took again the format of a magazine with the title "L'Emigrato Italiano" as a quarterly until 1937. Since 1930 the scope of the publication had been limited to information on the internal life and the apostolic activities among emigrants. It very seldom discussed the general problems of emigration.

In 1937, both directional staff and printing offices were transferred to Rome and entrusted to Fr. Giovanni Sofia. In 1938 it became a bimonthly, and in 1939 its title was changed to: "Le Missioni Scalabriniane tra gli Emigranti Italiani all'Estero", because the word "emigrant" was not accepted by "Facism". Because of the war only one issue each was published in the years 1944 and 1945. It resumed as a bimonthly in 1946, and it became a monthly in March 1947. Fr. Giacomo Battaglia directed it from November 1948 to November 1949; Fr. Giorgio Baggio from December 1949 to August 1950; and again Fr. Giacomo Battaglia from September 1950 to September 1951. The administration of it, however, was in the hands of Fr. Ugo Cavicchi. In October 1951 Fr. Giovanni B. Sacchetti was named to head it and in that same year both its direction and administration were moved back to Piacenza. In September 1953 its direction was again entrusted to Fr. Giorgio Baggio; with the beginning of the same year the magazine had reverted to the old title: "L'Emigrato Italiano".

In January 1948, the direction was once again moved to Rome and assumed by Fr. Giovanni B. Sacchetti, replaced by Fr. Antonio Perotti from March 1961 to October 1963. With the founding of the "Centro Studi Emigrazione", in October 1963, the periodical ceased the higher and more scientific character it had assumed in the last years. Inquiries, studies, research works, were all entrusted to the "Studi Emigrazione" Journal, while the "L'Emigrato Italiano" returned to its old note of a chronicle, a propaganda for the life and activities of Scalabrinian missionaries. Fr. Sacchetti was appointed Director of both publications; but in 1967, the General Council preferred to

transfer the "L'Emigrato Italiano" to the Italian Province, also in view of a better use of it for promoting vocations.

Under the direction of Fr. Giovanni Saraggi, the monthly with headquarters at Bassano del Grappa, began the issues of 1968 in a new format of a "journalistic type". Acknowledging the importance this periodical had for the whole Congregation, in January 1972, the Special General Chapter gave charge to the General Direction to assume its administration while moving it to the "Centro Missionario Scalabriniano" at Piacenza, under the direction of Fr. Silvano Guglielmi.

At the close of 1975, the directional staff was once again moved to Rome with Fr. Luigi Favero as its director since 1976, and then Fr. Bruno Murer. The assembly of Major Superiors of 1978 decided that the direction of the "L'Emigrato Italiano" should be made the responsibility of the European Provinces represented by the European Inter provincial Secretariat. Fr. Umberto Marin became its director as of September 1978. The internal information of the Congregation used to be one of the scopes of the "L'Emigrato Italiano". Since 1930 a few columns of it had been set aside for this purpose under the headings of "Cronaca Intima" and "Vita Scalabriniana" as an integral part of the periodical, or use was made of another monthly: "Il Piccolo Messaggero del Bambino Gesù" of Piacenza.

In the years 1951 to 1963, the General Superiors had circular letters appear in it at irregular intervals dealing with particular problems and supplying brief news summaries. Following the General Chapter of 1963, the General Government began publications of the "Bollettino Ufficiale" reaching number 21 as of December 1978. At the same time provincial bulletins also started to appear. In 1970 the General Administration started a quarterly of reflections and discussions, "Note e Discussioni", of which only four issues were sent out. In December of the same year it began to publish the "Notiziario C.S.", of a purely informational nature; in December it was replaced with the "ICS" (a monthly: "Informazione della Congregazione Scalabriniana"), to which DCS ("Dialogo e Documentazione della Congregazione Scalabriniana") was added in April 1977 on a quarterly basis. Edited by the General Secretary, these two publications began

in mimeographed format and were sent out through the Provincial Governments.

### THE "SCALABRINIAN SECULAR MISSIONARY WOMEN"

In connection with the Scalabrinian Apostolate, a Secular Institute was born at Solothurn in Switzerland, known precisely as the "Pia Unione delle Missionarie Secolari Scalabriniane" ("Pious Union of Scalabrinian Secular Missionary Women". Adelia Firetti, its first superior, was its first member. She had been invited to Solothurn in July 1961 by Fr. Livio Zancan to take charge of a school that should have been opened at Gerlafingen for Italian immigrants. Although the school did not open, the young teacher decided to stay in Switzerland to devote herself to migrants. At the same time, she made her own the idea Fr. Zancan and other missionaries were contemplating of associating to the missionaries lay cooperators as "consecrated persons", who would be given charge of the social, catechetical and charitable activities, etc. Miss Firetti was soon joined by three other young ladies and, in 1962, they began at Solothurn their preparation for the "consecrated" life.

The idea of Fr. Zancan and the provisional "Rule" of 1964 envisioned a strong dependence on the Scalabrinian Congregation both as to responsibility over the apostolic initiatives and to the internal set-up of the group. But the young ladies opted for a greater autonomy in their internal discipline and external activities, as well, though holding on to the idea of collaboration in the apostolic field and to the "Scalabrinian" inspiration. They proposed, therefore, that their Administrative Council should be elected by them, without the intervention of the missionaries, to whom they entrusted their formation, and preservation of the "Scalabrinian spirit". They sought also the moral support of the General Council of the Scalabrinians to secure the decree of approval from the Bishop and the presentation of a Scalabrinian as the Bishop's delegate who should be their direct ecclesiastic superior.

Complying with the petition of the Superior General Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo, Bishop Francis Von Streng of Basel and Lugano, with the episcopal decree of May 14, 1967, Solemnity of Pentecost, erected the

“Pious Union” with seat near the Jesuits church of Solothurn, and approved the Institute and its “Statutes” on a trial basis of five years, while naming Fr. Gabriele Bortolamai as his delegate. By then the missionaries were eight: four of them made their religious vows at Piacenza on October 1, 1967. In 1968 they began to expand: two moved to the Scalabrinian Mission of Stuttgart in Germany, and two more to that of Grenoble in France, while another two fixed a residence at Limbiate (Milan) in 1969. In 1971 they settled at the “Missionary Center” of Gerlafingen, near Solothurn.

On April 22, 1973, Bishop Hanggi of Basel approved the new “Statutes” and confirmed the episcopal decree for another five-year period. On September 29, 1978, he appointed Fr. Davide Angeli as their new Delegate. In the same year the Secular Missionary Women, who by then had increased to 15, expanded to Brazil with a residence near the Scalabrinian parish of São Jose at Vila Nova, in a suburb of Porto Alegre, RS.

In 1969 the General Administration left Hotel Adler, where the Pious Union was born, and moved first to 10 Schulhausstrasse, and then to 65 Holunderweg, still in the city of Solothurn.

## PART II

PROVINCE OF ST JOSEPH  
ARGENTINA - CHILE – URUGUAY



# CHAPTER I

## THE PROVINCE

### STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE PROVINCE

The “Missio sui juris” of Argentina was constituted on February 2, 1946: Fr. Oreste Tondelli was named its first superior. On July 12, 1952, it was made a Province.

Provincial Superiors: .Fr. Oreste Tondelli, 1952-1955

Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello, 1955-1961

Fr. Antonio Mascarello, 1961-1967

Fr. Ernesto Milan, 1967-1973

Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello, 1973-1976

Fr. Ernesto Milan, 1976 -

Chronological Order of the Foundations:

Argentina

1940 - Pergamino: Parish of St. Rocco

1946 - Saenz-Peña: Parish of St. Therese of the Child Jesus (given back to the diocese in 1977.)

1946 - La Plata: Parish of Saint Paul

1948 - Mendoza: Parish of Christ the Worker 1948 - Bahia Blanca: Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii

1949 - Baradero: “Arturo Figueroa Salas” Agricultural School discontinued in 1960.)

1951 - San Martin: Parish of Our Lady of Lebanon

1956 - Rosario: Italian Catholic Mission

1957 - San Nicolas: Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii

1958 - Haedo: Parish of St. James, the Apostle

1959 - Buenos Aires: Parish of Our Lady, Mother of Migrants

1960 - Pergamino: “Scalabrini” Family School

1962 - Munro (Villa Adelina): Parish of Mary, the Queen

1964 - Mendoza: Parish of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary

1965 - Merlo: Saint Giuseppe Seminary

1965 - Buenos Aires: Apostleship of the Sea

1967 - Rosario: Parish of Saint Mary de la Rocca

1971 - Cordoba: Parish of the Immaculate Virgin of the Mountain  
 1978 - Gonzales Catán: Missionary Community of Our Lady of Fatima

Chile

1952 - La Reina: Parish of St. Charles (returned to the diocese in 1972)

1953 - La Serena: Chapel of San Ramon (discontinued in 1956)

1954-- Santiago: Italian Catholic Mission

Uruguay

1962 - El Dorado: Parish of St. Adolph and Our Lady of Pompeii (given back to the Diocese in 1969)

1967 - Montevideo: Italian Catholic Mission

1974 - Montevideo: Apostleship of the Sea

### Migration Movement in Argentina following World War II

Year	Expatriates	Repatriates		Balance
1946	749	95		654
1947	27,379	2,963		24,416
1948	69,602	4,904		64,698
1949	98,262	7,456		90,806
1950	78,531	15,308		63,223
1951	55,630	13,487		42,143
1952	33,366	8,611		24,755
1953	21,350	8,147		13,203
1954	33,866	6,899		26,967
1955	18,276	6,380		11,896
1956	10,652	4,263		6,389
1957	14,928	4,403		10,525
1958	9,523	4,564		4,959
1959	7,549	3,606		3,943
1960	4,405	4,487	+	82
1961	2,483	2,955	+	472
1962	1,817	2,316	+	499
1963	945	2,758	+	1,813
1964	621	3,693	+	3,072



1965	436	1,268	+	832
1966	592	610	+	18
1967	794	650		144
1968	723	866	+	143
1969	1,389	1,294		95
1970	1,179	1,399	+	220

In 1965 Fr. Luciano Baggio wrote:

“Emigration, reduced to a minimum during the fascist regime, exploded after the war reaching its peak in 1949 with 98,262 expatriates. The great outflow of workers came to an end by 1954. From 1946 to 1954 there were 418,956 expatriates and 67,536 repatriates, with a net balance of 351,420 emigrants. Many families were reunited since 1955, while the repatriates exceeded the expatriates from 1960 to 1964 because of the persistent inflationist crisis. During the period between 1946 and 1963, 386,266 Italians had definitely settled down, to whom must add a good number of our fellow countrymen who had entered with a tourist visa and then remained.

Based on statistics supplied by the consuls and consular agencies, the Italian Foreign Ministry has given notice that as of December 31, 1963, 430,620 Italians were living in Argentina. From migratory information and indications of the Argentine census of 1960, however, we estimate the total number to 1,200,000 and more respondent to the truth.

In the years 1946-1964, only 40,000 Italians became citizens.

If it is more problematic to present statistics on Italians in Argentina, it is even more difficult to give an idea of the degree of their cultural, moral, and economic influence. There is a persistent talk about a crisis within the community, and indeed the end of the migratory in-flow, the progressive disappearance of the old migration, and the aging process of the new one certainly mark a decrease in vitality. While witnessing the value of their most central real estate going sky high, the old and glorious mutual societies experience a steady decrease in members, and so they try to survive by amalgamating or grouping together. A marked Argentinization is effected, instead, within the Italian institutions scattered around the various neighborhoods. On the other hand, a substantial progress has been made in the fields of education and sports.

During the last war the four schools of Buenos Aires have disappeared, and so the community had to start all over again. This way, life was given to the “Cristoforo Colombo Institute” with elementary and high school, and college, accredited to grant degrees valid for both Argentina and Italy. The

“De Amicis School” was put back in operation this year by the “Unione e Benevolenza Society”, while the elementary and high school of the Cultural Center at Olivos, and the elementary school “Alessandro Manzoni” at Villa Adelina have been functioning for many years already.

Other similar Italian schools sprang up by the abnegation of a few generous fellow countrymen in the main cities of the hinterland. The “Dante Alighieri Society” also is carrying on a splendid cultural program with special courses as likewise are doing the “Italian Cultural Centers”, functioning by the various consular residences. A good cultural and informative work is being done by the Italian press, as well. Founded in 1856, “La Regione Agricola” was the first Italian periodical in Buenos Aires. Since then other newspapers are born and die out at least every five years. “La Patria degli Italiani” was the most glorious newspaper of the community (1876-1931). Four Italian dailies were being published in Buenos Aires in 1955. The following publications are now in operation: “Il Giornale d’Italia”, a daily; “Il Corriere degli Italiani”, a biweekly; “Italia d’oltremare”, “L’Italia del Popolo”, and “Voce d’Italia”. Other periodicals are also being circulated, such as: the “Italica Review” by the Italian hospital; the “Bollettino” by the Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1884; “La Voce dei Calabresi”; “Voce Trentina”, etc. Though still numerous especially on Sundays, Italian broadcasting activities suffered a drawback .

The new immigration has shown greater interest in sport, in soccer, especially. The “ACIA” (Associazione Calcio Italiano of Argentina) was founded in Buenos Aires after World War II. In 1958 it could boast 28 Italian teams and now has a good second-degree team, that is, the “Sportivo Italiano” successful enough to draw thousands of Italians to its two weekly games.

Even though Italian manpower may have thinned down to a few hundred specialized workers, industrial investments have not diminished while trades continued full scale, thus placing Italy in first place of importing countries , and second in exports only to the U.S.A., due also to the fact that about 60% of the Argentine industrial production comes from firms of Italian origin.

Besides the hospital, at 450 Gascon, and the schools, among the most deserving institutions we mention the “San Justo Rest Home” founded in 1922, and the “Patronato Italiano”, at 4184 Congallo, born in 1876 for the assistance of fellow-countrymen in need. Of the hinterland we recall the Italian hospitals of Rosario, Santa Fé, La Plata, Cordoba, and Bahia Blanca. By the initiative of a certain Attilio Massone the FEDITALIA was founded in 1918 to coordinate the activities of the numerous Italian associations. It must be

given credit for presenting various petitions of the community to the Italian government, as, for example, the project of the double citizenship.

Similar coordinating committees exist also in other cities, such as Rosario, Cordoba, La Plata and Mar de La Plata. According to statistics by the FEDITALIA, there are 50 societies with headquarters of their own; a number of them, however, have already become "Argentine", due to the rapid assimilation of Italians in this country. There are in addition many other associations without headquarters of their own as proven by FACIA.

With the rapid weakening of Italian cultural sentiments among our fellow countrymen one notices also a marked decrease of religious practice, fostered by the indifferentism of the environment, scarcity of clergy, and concern over working on Sunday for the construction of their own house in the shortest time possible.

Through the steady action of Catholic institutions, the anticlerical spirit, which had been encouraged by the old offshoots of masonry, often joined by marxist elements, has abated. As the Spanish priests say, Italians of Argentina have kept a stronger faith than immigrant Spaniards, who sharing the same language could find it easier to benefit of a religious assistance."<sup>1</sup>

## FROM 1940 TO 1952

The first three missionaries in Argentina, Frs. Oreste Tondelli, Lino Ceccato and Bro Eugenio Fagher, had to remain for the whole period of World War II.

In 1945, Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini arrived from Brazil, and in 1946 Frs. Giuseppe Favarato, Giuseppe Fabbian, Antonio Mascarello, and Mario Pegorin joined them. On July 16, 1946, the group was detached from the Brazilian Province of Río Grande do Sul, and so the Saint Joseph "Missio sui juris" of Argentina was constituted with Fr. Oreste Tondelli as Superior, and Frs. Lino Ceccato and Giuseppe Favarato as councilors. Frs. Oreste Tondelli and Lino Ceccato were reappointed on July 29, 1949, and Fr. Antonio Mascarello was named second councilor. Two missions were opened during that same year, Santa Teresa of the Child Jesus at Saenz Peña, a suburb of Buenos Aires, and San Paulo at the outskirts of La Plata; the missions of Our Lady of Pompeii, at Bahia Blanca, and of Christ the Worker in the periph-

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<sup>1</sup> P. L. Baggio, "Gli Italiani in Argentina", "25° Misioneros Scalabrinianos para los Migrantes" (Buenos Aires, 1965), pp. 7-8.

ery of Mendoza had been founded in 1948; the school of agriculture of Baradero began functioning in 1949; the parish of Our Lady of Lebanon at San Martin was accepted in 1951. Already in 1946, immediately upon the arrival of reinforcements, thought was given to the port of Buenos Aires as to the ideal center of action:

“Another project is very much in the heart of all: a place at the port of Buenos Aires in close cooperation with the Consul, the Government, and migration offices, in order to direct and assist all the new immigrants from Italy.”<sup>2</sup>

But this project was to be harder than foreseen because of the opposition from the Chancery of Buenos Aires, convinced as it was that the Religious Congregations caring for Italians in the capital were even too many already. Fr. Tondelli had thus to abandon the idea of setting up a Secretariat for Italians in Buenos Aires. The presence of a priest at the “Emigrants’ Hotel” - his other project - was not deemed opportune, because it hosted immigrants of all nationalities and the possibility of contrasts were viewed likely with civil and religious authorities. There were even people who were questioning whether a Secretariat were indeed needed, as Italians did not find big problems on their arrival in Argentina: they were entering it with a request papers from relatives, firms, or of the Argentine government, and were given immediate employment. And so, Scalabrinians limited themselves to the opening of parishes, formed mostly of Italians, of their children and descendants.

This system presented the advantage of a stable basis for action, but it had the drawback of not allowing the care of the new immigrants.

The first years were very difficult. The parishes were located in humble suburbs; originally, the churches were simple halls or pavilions fitted for this purpose; the missionaries lived in great poverty, quartered in rented or prefabricated small rooms with inadequate facilities. Even the pieces of land they had bought in the beginning were very small and they had to work many years afterwards to purchase the space needed for the institutions of the parish.

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<sup>2</sup> Letter of four Missionaries to Fr. A. Corso, Pergamino, July 29, 1946. (Arch. G. S., 301/2).

The parish of Christ the Worker, at Mendoza, was entrusted to Scalabrinians “ad nutum Sanctae Sedis”. Argentine bishops were not inclined to grant parishes to religious for keeps, though being willing, on the other hand, to sell them real estate at convenient prices payable free of interest in 25 or 30 years. By the end of 1950 the sacred Congregation of the Council decreed that the parishes be granted to religious “pleno jure et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis” (with full rights and at the discretion of the Holy See”), with use and usufruct, with no right to sell, and with exemption from taxes or contributions to the dioceses.

Procedures were then started to obtain “ad nutum Sanctae Sedis” the parishes of San Rocco at Pergamino; San Pablo at La Plata; Our Lady of Pompeii, at Bahia Blanca. The church, the land, and the house of the parish of Santa Teresita at Saenz Peña, as well as a 13 hectars piece of land at Pergamino, were the property of the Congregation. The property of Pergamino was purchased in view of a future seminary. The idea to open a seminary figures, in fact, among the projects expressed by Fr. Tondelli in 1951 when the Scalabrinian group of Argentina included 12 priests and two brothers:

“To strengthen the present positions; establish flying missions for Italian Migrants when more priests will be sent from Italy; take new positions because our mission has a great future in all respects here in Argentina; arrive as soon as possible at the day when we can build a formation school, a seminary.”<sup>3</sup>

#### FR. ORESTE TONDELLI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1952-1955)

On July 12, 1952, the Scalabrinian mission was made a Province named after St. Joseph. Fr. Tondelli was appointed Provincial Superior, and Frs. Antonio Mascarello and Giuseppe Favarato were named councilors.

In 1952, Pius XII issued the Apostolic Constitution “Exul Familia”; the way seemed open for a more direct assistance to Italian migrants. Scalabrinians called on Mons. Mensa, in charge of migrants in Argentina, on the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Fietta, and lastly on Card.

<sup>3</sup> Report Tondelli to Card. Piazza, Pergamino, March 19, 1951. (Arch. G.S., 301/2).

Capello, Archbishop of Buenos Aires. Mons. Mensa said that they could only be permitted to hold flying missions for the time being in Buenos Aires; times were not ripe for contemplating a fixed residence there as yet. Archbishop Fietta mediated his services with Cardinal Capello who gave an interlocutory answer. With the help of Mons. Mensa, the new Nuncio Archbishop Zanin, obtained a little more. The Episcopal Commission for Emigration was constituted in 1953. It appointed Fr. Tondelli as spiritual director of the Italian community; on November 26 the Sacred Consistorial Congregation officially named him "Vice-Director of the missionaries of Italian migrants in Argentina". This marked the beginnings of a more systematic assistance to about 400,000 Italians of recent immigration.

"As the assistance to Italians (and to migrants in general) is now being organized on a truly committed form, we have deemed it proper to make the following changes: together with a Salesian Priest, Fr. Ernesto Milan will take care of the assistance to the Italian Immigrants of the Republic's Capital of Buenos Aires with Masses and sermons in Italian in the various parishes, by visiting migrants at home, and organizing other forms of apostolate for them. For the time being, Fr. Milan will reside with us here at Saenz Peña, and then we shall see whether it will be possible to have a house in the Capital (...) Fr. Mario Tessarolo will move into Fr. Mascarello's residence at La Plata to take assiduous care of Italian immigrants of that city and the region around it together with Mons. Trotta (an Italian priest), rector of the Major Seminary of La Plata. Mons. Trotta shall be the Director, and Fr. Milan the Vice-Director. Likewise for the assistance of Italians in the Capital, Buenos Aires, the Salesian Fr. Daparo will be the Director and Fr. Milan the Vice-Director.

In like manner, Mons. Albino Mensa, Director for Immigrants of the various nationalities, will present to Rome the Salesian Fr. Sutera (proposed by the Cardinal) as National Director for the assistance to Italian migrants, and Fr. Oreste Tondelli as Vice Director. Mons. Mensa has told us that we have to be contented with being Vice-Directors for now, and to take our rightful positions later on (....). Both Ecclesiastical authorities and pastors seem to be genuinely interested. Imagine about 4,000 Italians enter the country each month."<sup>4</sup>

In 1952, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Mario Zanin asked the Scalabrinian Missionaries to provide assistance for the first two

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<sup>4</sup> Tondelli to Prevedello, Sáenz Peña, Sept. 18, 1953. (Arch. G.S., 302/2).

Italian colonies of Chile. These were to settle at San Manuel (Parral), 400 km south of Santiago, and at La Serena, 500 kilometers north of the Capital. In March 1952, Fr. Tondelli sent the first two missionaries, Frs. Vittorio Dal Bello and Giuseppe Favarato to Chile. But the Nuncio insisted that a missionary should have his fixed residence at San Manuel, and so Fr. Silvano Onor was assigned to it. Fr. Dal Bello remained in Santiago as assistant of a parish (so to be in a position) to tend to the Italians of the city. Card. José M. Caro, Archbishop of Santiago, would have willingly entrusted a parish to the Scalabrinians, but in the suburbs.

In fact, in 1953 they had to accept the suburban parish of Saint Charles at La Reina in order not to leave in isolation the mission of San Manuel, and that of La Serena, directed by Fr. Favarato. Though devoting his attention to the new parish of St. Charles, Fr. Dal Bello kept in touch with the Italian community of Santiago until 1954, when by the effective good services of the new Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Sebastian Baggio, he obtained from the Archbishop the creation of the "Missione Cattolica Italiana" of Santiago together with the use of the old but most centrally located church of Las Agustinas.

In 1955 and 1956 respectively, the missionaries withdrew from the colonies of San Manuel and La Serena that almost all the Italian families had abandoned, especially those of the regions of La Rimonada and of San Ramon, reduced to destitution by droughts and the barrenness of the land, and by the breach of the contracts by the colonizing companies.

#### FR. VITTORIO DAL BELLO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1955-1961)

Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello was appointed Provincial Superior on July 1, 1955, with Fathers Oreste Tondelli and Antonio Mascarello as Councillors in the first three year term, and Fathers A. Mascarello and Mario Pegorin in the second.

The Perón government fell in 1955. With his reforms he had provoked the serious inflation that was mostly responsible for the strong reduction of Italian immigration. Scalabrinians had just started on their "flying missions" for Italians of recent immigration for whom they were establishing in the various zones the "Centri Cattolici Ital-

iani”, which they kept visiting once or twice a month. The first “Centro Cattolico Italiano” had been founded in Buenos Aires in 1952 by Mons. Mensa and Mr . Carlo Carretto. This extraparochial work was conducted for several years by the Provincial Superior, Fr. Dal Bello who wrote in 1957:

“It’s practically a year and a half since they began here in Argentina, to open up to the “Exul Familia”, and to create, therefore, national and diocesan commissions for emigration. Our work as Scalabrinians marks its beginning from that date: one could not even speak of an organized assistance to Italians before then, and neither Catholic nor Political Authorities understood the need for it. We must point out, however, that one year was lost to the revolution which made it dangerous for priests to do missionary work. Our presence in the field of migration is then just beginning, though already playing an important part within the national organization. Fr. Oreste Tondelli is the Director of the Catholic Commission for Italians, but it is Fr. Milan who practically represents and does the work of Fr. Oreste (...). Fr. Milan is well liked by the President of the National Commission for Emigration, Mons. Albino Mensa, and he acts as secretary to the internal meetings of the national directors. Besides, Fr. Milan was the first and the only one to begin work for immigrants in Buenos Aires. Fr. Berti used to come in to help on Sunday (...). Many pastors of Greater Buenos Aires request us to help them and to form the Italian Catholic centers (...). If we say no today, tomorrow may be too late. We must have three priests, at least, who may devote themselves to the Italians of Buenos Aires, where 600,000 of them have entered since after the last war.

A similar situation to that of Buenos Aires is found in Rosario . Both times I had the occasion to see him, Card. Caggiano asked for five priests, because he wants to give us full responsibility over the diocesan commission for immigration (...). Fr. Lino Ceccato, present pastor of Pergamino, has been appointed “Immigration Director” for the diocese of San Nicolás, and he too will need a priest to replace or help him. The region of Zarate, Campana, is full of recently arrived Italians.”<sup>5</sup>

It was not possible in Argentina to apply the norms of the “Exul Familia” by creating national or personal parishes, or missions “cum cura animarum”. Scalabrinians had, therefore, to continue carrying

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<sup>5</sup> Dal Bello to Prevedello, Sáenz Peña, April 4, 1956 (Arch. G.S., 303/2) .



out their action from territorial parishes. But they sought to turn them into operational bases for the “flying missions” and especially for the assistance to the “Centri Cattolici Italiani”. These can be defined as groups of Catholic Action with religious and social functions: the leading animator was always represented by the priest who visited the families, stimulated the activities, and said Mass once a month at the meetings that were ordinarily held at the local parishes. In 1961, there were 15 such centers in Greater Buenos Aires, and others at Rosario, Mendoza, Bahia Blanca, San Nicolás, La Plata, and Pergamino.

In 1957, Mons. Mensa went back to Italy and Bishop Serafini of Mercedes succeeded him as President of the Catholic Commission for Emigration of Argentina (C.C.A.I.), to be replaced later by Mons. Aducci. In 1962, Fr. Antonio Mascarello was named Vice President of C.C.A.I.

The Italian Catholic Mission of Rosario had its beginnings in 1956; in 1957 the Scalabrinians took the parish of Our Lady of Pompeii at San Nicolás and in 1958 the parish of Santiago the Apostle, at Haedo. In 1959 they could settle in the capital, at last, giving life to the parish of Our Lady Mother of Migrants at La Boca, the most popular section of Buenos Aires. In 1960 the “Bishop Scalabrini Family-School “ was moved from Baradero to Pergamino.

#### **FR. ANTONIO MASCARELLO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1961-1967)**

On August 31, 1967, the responsibility of Provincial Superior was entrusted to Fr. Antonio Mascarello, who had Frs. Vittorio Dal Bello and Ernesto Milan as Councilors until 1964; in the second three-year term he was given as councilors Frs. Ugo Cavicchi, Ernesto Milan, Adelino De Carli, and Luciano Baggio.

In his capacity as Vice President of the Catholic Commission for Immigration of Argentina, as National Director of the Italian community, and as assistant of the Central Commission of the Italian Catholic Centers, Fr. Mascarello sought to provide a better organization and coordination for the Catholic Centers and the various Italian Catholic Associations of Argentina (F.A.C.I.A.). To this same end an équipe of four missionaries was set up with the task of visiting and

providing religious assistance to the many Italian families of the Buenos Aires metropolitan area.

The Italian community, however, was undergoing a change: in the years 1960-1966 those returning to Italy exceeded those living, with the resulting aging of all the remaining community. The "Italian Centers" were thus progressively losing vitality for lack of young people and of continuity on the part of the missionaries. In the annual report of the Province of 1965 we read:

"The work of spiritual assistance of Italian migrants has been reduced to the following activities: 1) about ten missions were preached in the region of Buenos Aires and La Plata by a group of four priests and 3,300 families were visited in the months of April, May and June; 2) besides this, the priests have worked in parishes while only continuing to say one Mass at other five different places; 3) we have provided assistance to, and participated in, some fifty celebrations of the Italian Catholic organizations associated with our Federation.

In the cities of Bahia Blanca, Mendoza, Rosario, La Plata work has been continued through the action of C.C.I."<sup>6</sup>

In the report we read a concern over how to answer to the objections levelled from some quarters to a type of apostolate that was defined as fragmentary and dispersive as opposed to the pastoral care of a parish that would make much easier the integration of migrants in their new environment and could offer a better opportunity for a more complete and steady section. This idea was rejected by those who viewed the work of a parish as an employment of forces in an apostolate not specifically for migrants, especially the recent ones, whom no one was providing for if they did not belong to parishes directed by Italian priests. Indeed, they objected that few were there even in the parishes who took an interest in a specific assistance to migrants.

According to statistics drawn up by the Superior General in his official visitation of 1965, the 39 missionaries of the Province of St. Joseph, those of Chile and Uruguay included, were caring for some 220,000 people, 60,000 of them Italians. The same period was marked by the opening of parochial schools and kindergartens. In 1965, the schools of Scalabrinian parishes were attended by 1,600 pupils. An

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<sup>6</sup> Annual Report of Saint Joseph's Province, Jan. 21, 1965 (Arch. G.S., 304/5).

impulse was also given to the teaching of religion in Italian schools, to radio programs, and to the press. As to this last sector, we must point out the periodical publication of "La Voce d'Italia".

In 1950 Mons. Albino Mensa and Roberto Benvenuti had founded the "Messaggero d'Italia". In October 1957, Fr. Fabio Baù and the directors of the Italian Catholic Center of San Justo had given life to the monthly "Campane Nostre". In 1952, the two periodicals merged with the "La Voce d'Italia", with Fr. Luciano Baggio as editor. With a circulation of about 3,000 copies, this monthly keeps in touch with the Italian families visited by the missionaries especially in the "barrios".

Among the foundations of the years 1961-1967, the Seminary of St. Joseph, opened at Merlo in 1965, deserves a special mention. In the same year the Scalabrinians assumed the Apostleship of the Sea at the port of Buenos Aires; in 1962 the parish of Mary the Queen in Villa Adelina (Munro); in 1964 the parish of the Assumption of the Virgin in Mendoza and in 1967 the parish of St. Mary of the Rocca in Rosario.

In the course of this same six year term, the Scalabrinian Congregation extended into Uruguay by accepting in 1962 the parishes of San Adolfo and of Our Lady of Pompeii in El Dorado and the founding in 1967 the Italian Catholic Mission at Montevideo.

#### FR. ERNESTO MILAN, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1967-1973)

Fr. Ernesto Milan was named Provincial Superior on July 24, 1967; Frs. Luciano Baggio, Ugo Cavicchi, Luciano Sciarra, and Livio Dalla Paola were his Councilors until 1970, while from 1970 to 1973 they were Frs. Stefano Tedesco, Luciano Sciarra (replaced by Fr. Giulio Rubin in 1972), Alex Dalpiaz, and Paolo Piron.

The presence of Scalabrinians continued in the Catholic Commission for Migration of Argentina: in 1968 Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello replaced Fr. Antonio Mascarello as Vice President. There emerged meanwhile in Argentina the problem of immigrants from Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and a few from Uruguay, drawn to it by its relatively higher standard of life: the majority of them went to live in shantytowns of "Villas miseria" or "Villas de emergencia" on the outskirts of big

cities, together with the many internal immigrants from the poorest regions of Argentina (Corrientes, Chaco, etc.). According to a study by Mons Georges Rochau of the "Secours Catholique Français", Fr. Lino Pedisic, General Secretary of C.C.A.I., and Dr. Sozef Perridon, of the C.I.M.E. General Secretariat, in 1969 about two or three million immigrants from Bolivia, Chile, and Paraguay were thought to be living in Argentina.

Anywhere between 50% and 70% per cent of them had entered as tourists or clandestine: they lacked, therefore, documents and so, deprived of residence permits, they could not legally either work or own land or house. For this reason and because of totally insufficient salaries, they could not remain in the agricultural regions just inside the boundaries, and so they all moved into the "bidonvilles" of Buenos Aires. The normalizing of their status was difficult and costly: they were forced, then, to accept odd jobs, at unjust salaries, and without any social benefits or protection.

The C.C.A.I. conducted a campaign to "sensitize" the Bishops and the Catholic Associations of interested nations and regions.

"There is a need for qualified personnel that may study such enormous problems. If the Scalabrinian Congregation could only provide the Argentine Episcopate with something like a "Study Center", it would certainly render a remarkable service to the local church. The assistance to the immigrants from the continent is sure an ideal that is attractive to our seminarians of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay."<sup>7</sup> (7)

This much we read in the 1969 report, in which a résumé is also given of the work Scalabrinians were doing for Italians and were about to begin for immigrants of other nationalities:

"The hierarchy of Argentina does not grant jurisdiction over immigrants. Work for them was actually initiated in conjunction with the territorial parishes. Our twelve parishes of Argentina, with a population averaging between 6,000 and 20,000 each, are all located in suburbs inhabited by a minimum of 40 to a maximum of 2,000 Italians and should serve as headquarters for assisting the Italians of the city and surrounding area, who amount (excepting San Martin) to a minimum of 1,000 and a maximum of 300,000 (Buenos Aires).

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<sup>7</sup> Report of Saint Joseph's Province to the General Chapter, 1969 (Arch. G.S., 305/4).

(...) Should they only want so, due to affinity of language and social context (one third of Argentineans are of Italian extraction), the majority of Italians, who have been here 15 years and over, would not find it difficult to avail themselves of the spiritual assistance provided by their own territorial parishes. Our missionary action is necessary, however, not only for scarcity of Argentine clergy but also as a special stimulus for Italians that have abandoned or weakened their religious practice and as a Christian witness and to energize the numerous Italian cultural and social institutions of Argentina.

By the Shrine of La Boca in Buenos Aires there is a Brazilian center with a monthly Mass, as well as a Paraguayan one. Fr. Alex Dalpiaz serves the English-speaking Catholics, mostly North Americans, with weekly Masses and catechism classes.”<sup>8</sup>

The very existence of parochial schools began to be quite a problem in 1968. By the solicitation of the Episcopate, which in 1960 had launched a program with the slogan “a school to every parish”, all our parishes and missions had their schools already. The efforts of the missionaries for the functioning and maintenance of schools and kindergartens had exhausted all financial resources and great part of their energies and time. By then the Argentine government had ceased to supply the grants it had promised, and neither could they expect much from the people, who though declaring themselves 95% Catholic attended church only in the amount of 5%.

In 1971, the schools of Scalabrinian parishes of Argentina had an attendance of 3,000 students. But their effectiveness for a Christian formation and their meaning for the specific mission of the Congregation were called into question. For this reason, it was decided to avoid expanding any further this sector and to seek to have them depend on societies autonomous from the parish.

The parish of the Immaculate Virgin of the Mountain at Cordoba was accepted in 1971. In 1972 a community of Philosophy and Theology was initiated on a “trial basis” in the seminary of Merlo with seven students. In 1969, the parish of El Dorado in Uruguay was returned to the Bishop, and that of Saint Charles at La Reina in Chile in 1972. The problem came up in 1973 about the restructuring of our positions in view of a more specific presence in the field of migration:

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<sup>8</sup> Ibidem.

“In the last ten years, the flow of immigrants into Argentina from surrounding countries has turned into a mass phenomenon. There is talk of 600,000 Bolivians, 450,000 Chilean, and 650,000 Paraguayans: a total of 1,195,000 people. Bolivian, Chilean, and Paraguayan immigrants are in all respects the most in need of help in their process of integration. Even though they reached a decent financial position, Italians, Portuguese and Brazilians are the immigrants who still remain in a worse poverty of faith and religious practice than the poverty of material goods itself.”<sup>9</sup>

By that time, besides the work carried on for the Italian communities of Buenos Aires, Rosario, Bahia Blanca, Cordoba, La Plata, Munro, Santiago in Chile, and Montevideo, assistance was being provided already for Chileans at Bahia Blanca, Bolivians at Mendoza, Brazilians at Buenos Aires and Montevideo, and for Portuguese at Buenos Aires. Scalabrinians were present in the “Immigration Commissions” of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, and were the Bishop’s delegates for migration at Bahia Blanca, Cordoba and Mendoza.

On February 11, 1971, Fr. Claudio Ambrozio was named chairman of the Department of Pastoral Care of the C.C.A.I. He had been appointed director of the new Center of Studies of the Scalabrinian Province (C.A.D.E.M.S.:Centro Argentina Documentación Estudios Migratorios Scalabrinianos).

#### FR. VITTORIO DAL BELLO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1973-1976)

On May 25, 1973, Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello was named Provincial Superior, with Frs. Alex Dalpiaz, Stefano Tedesco, Lorenzo Bosa and Claudio Ambrozio as Councilors. By the close of 1975 the Province consisted of 44 priests and two brothers, distributed in three regions:

Andes: Santiago in Chile

Mendoza: Parishes of Christ the Worker and O.L. of the Assumption.

San Martin: Parish of O.L. of Lebanon.

Coast: Cordoba: Parish of Our Lady of the Mountain,

Rosario: Parish of O. L. of the Rocca, and the Italian Catholic Mission.

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<sup>9</sup> Report of Saint Joseph’s Province to the General Assembly of Major Superiors, 1973 (Arch. G.S., 305/9)

Pergamino: Parish of St. Rocco and Family-School.

San Nicolás: Parish of O.L. of Pompei.

Center: Buenos Aires: Parish of O.L. Mother of Migrants and the "Apostleship of the Sea".

Sáenz Peña: Parish of Santa Teresa of the Child Jesus.

Munro: Parish of St. Mary, the Queen.

Haedo: Parish of Santiago.

La Plata: Parish of San Pablo.

Bahia Blanca: Parish of O.L. of Pompeii.

Merlo: the Seminary.

Montevideo (Uruguay): Italian Catholic Mission

And so there were 14 parishes, 2 Italian Catholic Missions, 1 Seminary, 1 Family-School, and the Apostleship of the Sea: 19 residences in all.

One priest was the diocesan delegate for migration and had charge over the Chilean immigrants of Bahia Blanca. One missionary was responsible for Portuguese and Brazilian immigrants at Haedo; another one was the Archdiocesan delegate for immigrants from Bolivia, while another was given charge of the same in Mendoza. There was one delegate for English-speaking immigrants of Buenos Aires, and an Archdiocesan delegate for immigration and tourism in Cordoba. The secretary for the pastoral care of the Catholic Commission for Immigration of Argentina (C.C.A.I.) was also a Scalabrinian. Two more Scalabrinians were members respectively of the Catholic Migration Institute of Chile (INCAMI) and of the Migration Commission of Uruguay. In all these three nations the Scalabrinians function also as delegates for their respective Italian communities. One of them is the delegate for the Portuguese and Brazilian communities of Argentina.

Scalabrinian chaplains assist the Italian communities of Buenos Aires, Rosario, Santiago in Chile, and Montevideo in Uruguay. The group of Missionaries was recomposed with the task of devoting themselves full time to the assistance of Italians in the region of Buenos Aires.

## FR. ERNESTO MILAN, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR SINCE 1976

On May 14, 1976, Fr. Ernesto Milan was again called to assume the direction of the Province. He took office on August 3 with Frs. Claudio Ambrozio, Angelo Girardi, Luigi Serena, and Eduardo De Gaudenzi as Councilors.

In 1971, there was place an interesting exchange of missionaries with the Australian Province. The latter needed someone who with his knowledge of the Spanish language and of the mentality of South Americans might be in a position to assist Spanish-speaking immigrants, especially in Wollongong.

The small community of theology and philosophy of Merlo was reopened in March 1977, while novices continued to be sent to the Novitiate of the Province of St. Paul at Osasco, SP, Brazil. Beginning with July 1978, greater impulse was given to the promotion of vocations with the assignment of another priest for work full-time among the youth of Buenos Aires. This way Fr. Stefano Tedesco joined Fr. G.B. Baggio, who kept caring for boys by establishing a vocational center at Pergamino, in the "coastal" region.

A remarkable effort was made to reconsider the apostolic positions in view of employing more personnel in the assistance of most needy migrants, not only Italians but the "neighboring ones" as well, that is, those coming from bordering countries. They could give back the parish of Sáenz Peña to the diocese of San Martin and so they were able to establish a "missionary community" for Italians, Portuguese, and Bolivians at Gonzales Catán in the diocese of San Justo, a region around Buenos Aires teeming with immigrants but with very few priests.

The other parishes directed their efforts to an internal renewal that might transform them into centers of action for the most recent and needy immigrants of their surrounding regions, though always mindful of the scarcity of personnel.

The internal life of the Province was strengthened by means of regular prayer and reflection meetings and of community exchange between groups of relatively nearby communities. By the end of 1978 the Province had 44 priests, two brothers, three religious students, 25



seminarians, distributed throughout 19 residence, with 14 territorial parishes (averaging some 15,000 people each), 9 parochial schools attended by 3,757 pupils, 2 centers for the apostleship of the sea, one "missionary community", one home for the aged, and four periodicals.



## CHAPTER II

### THE MISSIONS OF ARGENTINA

#### BAHÍA BLANCA: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

“The city of Bahía Blanca came into being in 1828 as a bulwark against the Indios of the south. To the defense of this outpost, the Italian community of Buenos Aires sent in 1856 its famous “Legione Agricola”. It is now a city of 160,000 people. It has three ports: Belgrano, for the Navy; Galvan, for oil tanks; Ingeniero White, the most important one of Argentina for the wheat and fruits of the Rio Negro. The parish of Our Lady of Pompeii had its beginnings on September 10, 1939 as a humble chapel, completed in 1942, by the pastor of Santa Teresa of the Child Jesus, Fr. Mesquida!”<sup>10</sup>

The invitation to take a parish in the diocese of Bahía Blanca came from Bishop Germiniano Esorto when he was still the Auxiliary Bishop of La Plata, but already appointed to Bahía Blanca. Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini was sent there on March 2, 1948, to take charge of the chapel of Our Lady of Pompeii, a modest construction, 18 meters long by 9 wide, with a small piece of land, on the outskirts of the city. The parish counted between 8,000 and 10,000 people, 60% or 70% percent of Italian extraction, mostly laborers. The population was divided and somewhat adverse to the priest. The chapel was made a parish on the June 24, 1951. With the help of Fr. Angelo Girardi, Fr. Guadagnini took care of the spiritual organization of the parish, bought another piece of land, and built the rectory that was dedicated on December 2, 1951. Fr. Oliviero Manni was pastor from July 5, 1952 to January 1, 1956, when he was succeeded by Fr. Angelo Girardi, who built the parish movie house, and on March 9, 1957 was appointed diocesan delegate for emigration. Fr. Luciano Marangoni became its pastor on December 8, 1963. He enlarged the church in 1964 and in 1968 began the construction of the parochial school, inaugurated on

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<sup>10</sup> 25° Misioneros Scalabrinianos para los emigrantes (Buenos Aires, 19 65), p. 54

May 11, 1969. Fr. Luigi Lovatin took possession of the parish on May 14, 1972.

An intense apostolic work was started in 1955 for the Italian community of some 20,000 immigrants in Bahía Blanca. An Italian Catholic Center was opened for them that extended its activity to as far as Punta Alta. In 1972 Fr. Sylvan Onor was named diocesan delegate for immigration and devoted his care to the 30,000, Chileans who had recently settled in the region of Bahía Blanca. Fr. Luiz Portolan was named pastor on March 26, 1977.

### BARADERO-PERGAMINO: "SCALABRINI" FAMILY-SCHOOL

In 1948 the Chancery of La Plata asked the Scalabrinians to take the direction and administration of a four thousand hectare farm with a huge villa in it, at a distance of 150 km northwest of Buenos Aires and 15 km west of the town of Baradero. The property had been donated to the Diocese by a certain Arturo Figueroa Salas to the end of establishing a school there for the education of youth. The Scalabrinians accepted the charge of the institution on February 10, 1949, and Fr. Giorgio Berti and Bro. Alcide Marin took possession of it on the following June 7. Operation began with 12 orphan and abandoned boys, who were given a religious, scholastic, and agricultural education. By May 1950 there were 30 of boys, several of whom were the children of immigrants. The work of the Scalabrinians was difficult and poorly paid; the widow of Arturo Figueroa Salas had the usufruct right on the property, of which only 40 hectares had been set apart for the support of the Institution; following the death of the widow, with the approval of the Holy See, the Archbishop of La Plata, who held in trust the legacy, turned the property of Baradero over to the Catholic University of Buenos Aires for its faculty of Agronomy, that took full charge over the whole property. For these and other reasons the Provincial Council decided in 1957 to move the institution to Pergamino. The transfer was actually done only in 1960.

The parochial hall of Pergamino was adopted for the purpose and on April 3, 1960 the premises were dedicated under a new title. It used to be known as "Hogar Agrícola Arturo Figueroa Salas", but from then on it went under the name of "Hogar Escuela Mons.Scal-

abrini", and it was thus presented as an orphanage for boys with internal school programs fully accredited by the State. On May 2, 1962, Fr. Paolo Piron was appointed to direct it. In 1967, the institution was again entrusted to Fr. Giorgio Berti. As he found that building too miserly and small, in 1969 he began construction on new headquarters which were dedicated on May 29, 1971, on a property owned by the Congregation. On March 13, 1972, Fr. Angelo Girardi was named its director. The Sisters of St. Martha arrived on April 16, 1972, and they were given care especially of children of the smaller classes. As of now in fact, the school hosts children of the primary grades, all orphans or neglected by their parents. Fr. Mario Pegorin is in charge of the institution since March 12, 1977. In 1978 there were 70 boys in it.

#### **BUENOS AIRES: PARISH OF OUR LADY, MOTHER OF EMIGRANTS**

Scalabrinians had tried right from the beginning to fix a residence at the crucial point of the Italian immigration, Buenos Aires, but the answer had always been that there were even too many religious Congregations already in the capital taking care of Italians.

In 1954, when Cardinal Copello decided that after the institution in 1953 of the Catholic Commission for Emigration of Argentina the assistance to immigrants be reorganized, the Scalabrinians also were summoned to preach "missions" to the Italians of the capital; but they had to face the difficulty of two daily trips from Sáenz Peña to Buenos Aires. Card. Piazza, the Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, made known to Card. Copello the desire of Scalabrinians to have a residence in the capital; the Archbishop gave assurance he would "study the proposal with the greatest benevolence". A short while afterwards, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires prospected to the Provincial Superior the possibility of acquiring on Avenida Almirante Brown, in the neighborhood of the Boca, the house of the Diocesan Priest Workers who were about to move into the new parish of Saint Pius X.

The Provincial Superior thus wrote in 1956:

"The new Buenos Aires 'Apostolic Administrator' has promised to give us a place by the port (Barrio La Boca), where a new parish will be established under the title of Our Lady of Migrants whose image

will arrive here from Milan for the first Sunday of Advent. We hope to have a wooden chapel by then, and a modest house.”<sup>11</sup>

The idea of a painting of Our Lady of Migrants to donate to the Italians of Argentina had been first launched in 1953 by the capuchin priest Fr. Erminio da Treviglio: the Icon had been crowned in 1955 by Archbishop Giovanni Battista Montini by charge of Pius XII, who composed a prayer to Mary, Mother of Migrants. It arrived in Argentina in December 1956, and was kept under custody in a chapel of the metropolitan cathedral of Buenos Aires.

The plan was to ask the government for a piece of land on which to erect a social institution for immigrants with a shrine dedicated to the Blessed Lady; the institution would have been entrusted afterwards to the Scalabrinians. But considering that the negotiations with the government would have been too long, the missionaries decided to accept the proposal of the Apostolic Administrator, Msgr. Lafitte, willing to create the new parish of La Boca as soon as the Scalabrinians could find a house to live in.

But it was only by the end of 1958 that the Provincial Superior could report having purchased from the Diocesan Priest Workers the two small houses on Avenida Almirante Brown:

“The houses are small, nearly falling apart. We paid only for the land. And now we live across from the property on which the new church will be built. It will also be the seat of a parish. It was erected ten years ago by Card. Capello, but which it had never functioned for lack of a church building. It was to be titled to the Vera Cruz, because tradition tells us that the first immigrants have landed at that very spot. But we will have also the title of ‘Our Lady of Emigrants’ added to it because we will set up in our chapel the image arrived from Italy.”<sup>12</sup>

Fr. Joseph Guadagnini took possession of the parish “Vera Cruz y N.S. Madre de los Emigrantes”, on February 1, 1959; Card. Caggiano blessed the chapel on December 8, 1959; the Icon of Our Lady of Emigrants was brought there on November 27 of the same year. Fr. Adelino Carli was appointed its pastor on February 27, 1961. He enlarged the chapel and began work on the institution of the Parish

<sup>11</sup> Dal Bello to F. Prevedello, Sáenz Peña, August 17, 1956 (Arch. G.S., 303/2)

<sup>12</sup> V. Dal Bello to F. Milini, Santiago, December 6, 1958 (Arch. G.S., 303/5)

Commission and on the visitation of the families. Then he bought a house and had it turned into a parochial school which was dedicated on April 28, 1962: it included the kindergarten, the elementary school and a professional night school for young men and adults.

To the old section, made up of small houses, where many families originating from the provinces of Naples and Bari were living, was already being replaced by larger buildings of Catalinas Sur district which were being occupied by the young families of Argentine professionals and white collar workers. In 1963 the parish numbered 12,000 people; there was urgent need, therefore, for soliciting City Hall to lend enough land for the new church and parochial institutions. Following laborious negotiations, a piece of land of 3,000 square meters was allocated in the district of Catalinas Sur. A committee was set up in 1965 for the "Institutions of the Shrine", headed by Major Eduardo Oliviero, who on the 10th anniversary of the crowning of the image led a pilgrimage to Rome. On October 2 that year, Pope Paul VI blessed the foundation stone of the Shrine.

The following year, upon the death of Major Oliviero, the chairmanship of the committee was assumed by Dr. Oberdan Sallustro, General Manager of the "Fiat Concord" of Argentina (he was kidnapped and then killed by rebels in 1972), and actual work was begun on the project which included, besides the Shrine, a kindergarten, elementary and high schools, a gymnasium, and a center of social assistance. The foundation stone was laid on November 27, 1966. The Shrine was inaugurated on December 3, 1967, and the school and assistance building on December 1, 1968. Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello was named pastor in March 1971 and was succeeded by Fr. Paolo Piron on March 31, 1974. The parish now numbers some 25,000 people. The school is attended by 340 students, frequenting elementary and secondary classes, and a technical school supported by the FIAT of Argentina. The complex is opened to all nationalities and is affiliated with UNESCO.

## **BUENOS AIRES: THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA**

The present seat of the "Apostleship of the Sea" was built in 1897 by the English Committee "The Victoria Sailor's Society", presided

by the Anglican minister J.W. Heming. Catholics also organized in 1923 their assistance to seamen. Guided by the Passionist priest Fr. William Cushing, the Knights of the Cross gave start to the Apostleship of the Sea, quartered in various premises, especially at 666 Viamonte.

The Passionists relinquished the post in 1952 and were replaced by the Fathers of the Irish Foreign Missions Society of Saint Columba, among whom Fr. Giovanni McFadden deserves special mention. In that same year, the Catholic organization rented the seat of the Anglicans, then in a phase of decline, and so the two institutions were joined into one. In 1963, the Columban Fathers also left that position.

Two years later, the Apostolic Nunciature and the Chancery of Buenos Aires offered the place to Scalabrinians who accepted it in 1965 and entrusted it to Fr. Alex Dalpiaz from North America. The residence of Scalabrinian religious was erected on January 16, 1966, in the "Stella Maris" building of the Apostleship of the Sea at 20 Avenida Independencia. With the help of Fr. Peter Bennett, also a North American, Fr. Dalpiaz had to start from the beginning, because everything had been neglected both spiritually and materially. He began visiting merchant ships arriving at the port (about ten of them a day), thus establishing his first contacts with seamen and officials, supplied them with a variety of recreational activities at the "Stella Maris" club attended every night by around 100 seamen, visited them in hospitals and prisons, and said Mass on board ships on Sunday. On December 1, 1966, Cardinal Caggiano blessed the partially remodeled premises.

The present activities, carried on by two missionaries with a group of 12 ladies, who organize them and of 40 young ladies who take turns in helping out, may be seen in the report of the social year 1972-1973:

"I. Spiritual Assistance. Director Fr. Alex Dalpiaz, and his present assistant, Fr. Luigi Serena, continued to provide seamen with their religious assistance aboard ships by the celebration of the Holy Mass on all Sundays and days of obligation, on anniversaries of the deceased, etc. Special attention was accorded, as usual, the seamen in hospitals (...). Spiritual assistance was provided in full cooperation with ministers of other faiths always careful to insure best service and deepest respect for the seamen, regardless of race



or creed. There has always been a Sunday Mass at 7:30 P.M. in the chapel of the Center attended by the ladies of the 'Stella Maris' club and by seamen. A spiritual retreat was held for the Lady associates.

2. Cultural Assistance. As in previous years, we could rely on the collaboration of official and private institutions in securing books and periodicals for the library of the center. We continued to distribute books and magazines free of charge to the sick seamen in hospitals. The reading and television rooms on the ground floor are always open for the convenience of seamen. Fr. Luigi Serena was in charge of the instructions for the formation of the lady associates."<sup>13</sup>

The Center has 36 beds at the disposal of seamen. The missionaries' most important work was carried on through personal interviews. Fr. Bennett was replaced as assistant by Fr. Aloys Knecek and then by Fr. Luigi Serena, who became director on March 9, 1977. Since 1973, the building is also home to the "Associazione Nazionale Marittimi Italiani" (A.N.M.I.) residing in Argentina with 400 members. On January 1, 1976, the Anglican mission closed down and its chaplain now works with the Scalabrinians.

#### CORDOBA: PARISH OF IMMACULATE VIRGIN OF THE MOUNTAIN

Already in 1959, the Archbishop had expressed the desire to offer to Scalabrinians a parish in the city or in the suburbs. The same desire was made formulated in 1962 by the directors of F.I.A.T. of Argentina, whose factory at Cordoba was employing several hundred Italians. The lack of personnel did not allow the carrying out of the project until the missionaries could relinquish the parish of San Carlos at La Reina, in Chile, as not respondent to the scope of the Congregation. In 1970, Archbishop Francesco Primatesta of Cordoba offered the opportunity of creating a parish in the "Barrio San Pablo", a section inhabited by FIAT employees, with the responsibility, at the same time, for the religious assistance of the Italian community of Cordoba. In that region, there lived about 80,000 Italians, 20,000 of them in the city, and quite a few Chileans, Bolivians, Peruvians, and Paraguayans.

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<sup>13</sup> "Apostolado del Mar - Hogar y Mision para Marineros. Memoria del ano 1972-73". (Arch. G.S., 311/5)

On April 6, 1971, Fr. Adelino De Carli took possession of the parish of the Immaculate Virgin of the Mountain, called so because in the small chapel of the "Barrio San Pablo" a statue of Our Lady of the Mountain was venerated, which had been donated by the workers of the FIAT in Turin to those of the FIAT of Cordoba.

Inaugurated on July 9, 1971, the kindergarten marked the first institution of the parish. On September 3 of the same year, Fr. De Carli was named Archiepiscopal Delegate for all immigrants and Chaplain for the Italian community, and on September 4, the decree of erection of the new parish was made public. Fr. Giulio Rubin became pastor in April 1972, assisted by Fr. Edoardo De Gaudenzi, the new Archiepiscopal Delegate for Immigrants. The foundation stone of the parish social institutions was laid on November 12, 1972. Now numbering some seven thousand souls, the parish has been under the direction of Fr. Costanzo Tessari since April 1975. In 1973, Fr. De Gaudenzi, Archiepiscopal Delegate for Immigration and Tourism, opened an emigration and tourism center in downtown. On March 19, 1977, Fr. Guido Bergonzi succeeded Fr. De Gaudenzi in the care of immigrants of Cordoba.

### GONZÁLES CATÁN: MISSION OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Negotiations began in 1977 with the chancery of San Justo that had been requesting Scalabrinian missionaries for immigrants from Italy, Portugal, and Bolivia. On July 10, the Superior General, Fr. Giovanni Simonetto, had a meeting with Bishop Carreras and his Vicar General Mons .A.F. Gatti, who submitted to him the situation of that diocese; 1,200,000 people, 800 thousand of them entered from other regions and countries drawn in by its four thousand industries. The diocese had only 36 parishes, three of them had no priests.

Scalabrinians accepted the new position, choosing however to remain free of parochial structures to be able to devote themselves full time to the missions for migrants. On April 1, 1978, Frs. Claudio Ambrozio, Elio Martinello, and Sergio Geremia gave life to a "Missionary Community" with residence at about 40 kilometers from the city on Ruta 3. At the same time, a short distance away the Scalabrinian Sisters had their first mission in Argentina.

## HAEDO :THE PARISH OF SANTIAGO, THE APOSTLE

Grown out around the station of the same name of the "Ferrocarril Sarmiento Co." that runs through the west side of Buenos Aires, the city of Haedo had its first church in 1902. Due to the increase of population through internal and European immigration, a chapel was built after World War II, dedicated to Saint James the Apostle, in the north side of the city on a piece of land donated by the Italian family Gravino.

In 1957, when the new diocese of Moron was created, Bishop Miguel Raspanti entrusted the oratory to the Scalabrinians, and on March 2, 1958, Fr. Fabio Baù took charge of the new parish.

Fr. Baù had been residing, for some time already, in the nearby parish of Cindadela, whose pastor had offered his rectory as the seat of the "Italian Mission" for the centers previously founded by Fr. G. Berti at Ramos Baja, Merlo, Hurlingham, and Villa Tesei; by Fr. Baù at San Justo; and by the Franciscans at Cindadela, in the western suburbs of Buenos Aires, where there lived 80,000. With the help of a good group of lay people, Fr. Baù organized the parish activities and the Associations of Catholic Action; he bought four lots of land with three houses; in March 1960 he started construction on the kindergarten; in 1961 he built the first classrooms of the parochial school. In October 1964, he was succeeded by Fr. Ernesto Milani.

In 1965 the parish numbered about 25,000 people. Only a thousand of them attended the wooden chapel, seat of the parish, and the two oratories of Mary Immaculate and of the Sacred Heart. The school and kindergarten, together, they had an attendance of 400 students. By 1972 they will have grown to 837. From 1967 to 1974, the parish was directed by Fr. Paolo Piron, and by Fr. Santo Pan from March 24, 1974 to 1976. On the same date, Fr. Sergio Calza was given charge over Portuguese-speaking immigrants of the region.

Fr. Francesco Scapolo took over the parish on March 6, 1977. He began immediate construction of the parish church and prepared the projects for the future church of Saint James. The parish has now become also the headquarters for the assistance to the Italian immigrants of the west regions of "Greater Buenos Aires": Fr. Italo Serena has charge of it since April 1977.

## LA PLATA: THE PARISH OF SAN PABLO

Located on the outskirts of La Plata, the Chapel of San Pablo began to function in 1932 under the direction of the diocesan clergy. It was entrusted to the Scalabrinians in 1946. Its first missionary, Fr. Giuseppe Favarato, arrived there on December 8, 1946, the day on which the chapel was declared a "parochial chapel".

On January 24, 1947, he was given the help of Fr. Antonio Mascarello, who was to replace him later on, and of Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello from September of the same year. In 1948 the Catholic Action was organized and a vocational evening school was opened for 300 students. On August 7, 1949, the chapel of San Pablo was erected into a parish, and Fr. Mascarello took possession of it as first pastor on October 16. The new parish numbered then, as now, about 15,000 people. The Sister Apostles of the Sacred Heart arrived there in 1950 and opened a kindergarten first and then a large boarding school. The rectory was purchased in the same year and in 1951 the movie house. Fr. Mario Pegorin became its pastor on January 16, 1955, and Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini took possession of it on October 16, 1956. The seat for the Vocational School and Catholic Action was acquired in 1957. Fr. Stefano De Giovanni was named its pastor on January 22, 1958, and Fr. Stefano Tedesco on August 11, 1960. The "Bishop Scalabrini" elementary school was opened on March 9, 1963. Fr. Luciano Sciarra became pastor on October 7 of the same year; while Fr. Luciano Baggio was given charge of the parish on April 9, 1972. In 1977, he completed the construction of the school and of the rectory near it, by the church side, on a piece of land owned by the chancery of La Plata. Since March 27, 1977, Fr. Luigi Lovatin is responsible for the assistance to Italian immigrants of the city and countryside around it, with particular attention to foreign university students from Peru, Japan, etc., who take the premises of the parish of San Pablo as their gathering point.

The Italian community of La Plata and of the nearby centers of Berisso and Ensenada numbered in 1965 50,000 immigrants or children of immigrants. Scalabrinians had been interested in them since 1947 with the institution of the "Cenacle San Rafael", that in the years 1948 and 1951 used to group together hundreds of newly arrived

Italian workers and professionals, mostly unmarried or unaccompanied. Within this group was born a choir that became famous all over the city. Many pilgrimages were organized to the national Shrine of Our Lady of Lujan and a periodical of the mission began publication under the heading "Triumfantes". Various Italian Catholic Centers sprang up at Berisso, Santa Rosa, San Joachim, etc., in the suburbs of the city that supplied the opportunity for regular contacts with hundreds of families.

#### MENDOZA: PARISH OF CHRIST THE WORKER

In February 1948, Fr. .Vittorio Dal Bello took a trip to Mendoza and had an audience with Archbishop Alfonso M. Buteler, who showed himself willing to admit Scalabrinians into his diocese. On the following May 17, Fr. Giuseppe Favarato began taking care of "Barrio Dorrego", in the department of Guaymallén, inhabited by about 13,000 working class people. The first lots of land were donated to the future parish by Mrs. Georgina DeCicchetti, nee Frugoli, whose house served as church and rectory for the missionary for three years. The parish was canonically erected on November 14, 1948, with the title of "Christ the Worker". In February 1950, construction began on church and rectory that were inaugurated by the Archbishop on July 1, 1952.

Fr. Favarato and Fr. Oliviero Manni, his assistant since November 1948, were caring also for the nearby "Barrio Presidente Peron" and began to construct a church there. Including that district, the parish resulted in having 22 thousand souls. On March 16, 1952, Fr. Giuseppe Fabbian was named pastor. He continued the construction of the church of the Assumption in the "Barrio Presidente Peron" and opened the parish school in 1960. Fr. Giuseppe Favarato returned to the helm of the parish on April 15, 1962; the construction works and the direction of the school became the responsibility of Fr. Giorgio Berti. On November 1, 1964, the parish was divided in two and this gave life to the parish of the Assumption. In the meanwhile, the parish was temporarily directed for a few months by Fr. Ugo Cavicchi; on February 28, 1965 it was entrusted to Fr. Oliviero Manni. Fr. Luiz Portolan succeeded him on March 1, 1971.

From the very beginning the missionaries took an interest in the Italians of Mendoza, more than 20,000 of them. The Italian Catholic Center was born in 1957. Its members met for Sunday Mass at the church of the Franciscan Sisters on the Avenida San Martin. Fr. Manni took a particular care of the numerous Chilean refugees who crossed the Andes to find refuge at Mendoza following the fall of President Salvador Allende of Chile. On the other hand, Fr. Tarcisio Rubin devoted himself especially to the Bolivian immigrants of the periphery and of other centers of the Archdiocese of Mendoza. The two priests were joined by Fr. Sergio Geremia on March 19, 1977, who intensified the missionary activities for Bolivians but with residence in the parish of the Assumption.

#### **MENDOZA: PARISH OF THE ASSUMPTION**

As seen above, the parish of the Assumption in the suburb of Dorrego was born of a division from the parish of Christ the Worker on November 1, 1964. It is located at the "Barrio Presidente Peron" which after the revolution of 1955 took the name of "Barrio Ejercito de los Andes". The new district was born in 1950. Fr. Favarato secured a piece of land from the Government and gave start to the construction of the church on August 22, 1954. This was practically completed in 1964. The new parish numbered about 2,000 families, and it has now double that number. Fr. Stefano Tedesco was its first pastor, and was succeeded by Fr. Giuseppe Favarato on June 22, 1975. The missionaries conduct their programs in close collaboration with those of the parish of Christ the Worker. The parish is made up mostly of professionals, and then of white collar employees and of workers. It is, in fact, in a residential district.

#### **MERLO: SAN JOSÉ SEMINARY**

The first attempts at giving life to a Seminary in Argentina go back to 1952. By that year's end, Fr. Tondelli had projected the possibility of starting it with two college students and five freshmen, who would have to reside at Sáenz Peña and attend classes at the Devoto Seminary, upon a previous agreement with Card. Capello and the rector. But the General Council did not authorize the experiment. In

May 1953, three candidates, two Italians and one Argentine, began studies at Baradero, on the premises of the Agricultural School; but this experiment died out quickly. In 1958, there was thought of giving life to an "Apostolic School" at Pergamino, and in 1963 of making use of the parish school of La Plata. Finally, a five hectare piece of land and a house in it were bought on May 9, 1964, at Merlo, a suburb of Buenos Aires in the diocese of Moron. The house was remodeled for use as a seminary.

On March 8, 1965, the seminary welcomed its first six seminarians: two each from Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. Fr. Fabio Baù was appointed first rector. The seminarians went for classes to the nearby Franciscan college of Paso del Rey. The official dedication took place on June 1, 1965, with the blessing of the premises by Mons. Carlos Carreras, President of the Catholic Commission for Immigration of Argentina.

In the beginning of 1966, work was started on the construction of the new seminary. The first section was inaugurated on June 1, 1967, and it could host 19 minor seminarians and two clerics called in from Brazil as their assistants. In 1968 the new building was completed, while work was again carried out in 1973 to enlarge it. From 1967 to 1968 the seminary was directed by Fr. Edoardo De Gaudenzi; then came Fr. Giovanni B. Baggio from 1968 to 1970, followed by Fr. Stefano Tedesco from January 2, 1971. Besides 18 minor seminarians, age 12 to 17, in the 1971 school year there were also four clerics, three of them frequenting their courses of theology at the Massimo University. In February 1972 the General Administration authorized, on an experimental basis, the establishing of a community of philosophy and theology that began functioning in the following March with six clerics from Brazil and an Italian-Uruguayan student, a graduate from the seminary of Merlo. All of them continued to attend classes at the "Massimo" College of the Jesuits at San Miguel. At the end of 1974, this community was suspended because priestly ordinations had reduced it to a very small number of members. It was not being supplied in fact with new ones from the seminary of Merlo. There remained in 1975 only the minor seminarians, about 40 of them. In March 1977, the General Council gave permission that a community of theology and philosophy be reopened with three religious students



and two seminarians preparing for the novitiate. Fr. Stefano Tedesco remained as rector of both groups, Fr. Thelmo Balbinot was named Vice Rector in February 1977, and in the following June, Brother Eugenio Fagher was appointed treasurer. In 1978 the students of philosophy and theology began attending the "El Salvador" University of San Miguel, while the other seminarians frequent the Salesian Seminary of Ramos Mejia.

#### MUNRO: PARISH OF ST. MARY THE QUEEN

For several years the Scalabrinian missionaries of Sáenz Peña had been giving assistance to the many Italians of recent immigration of the Northern districts of Greater Buenos Aires and had founded the Italian Catholic Centers of Olivos, Munro, Florida, Villa Martelli, and Villa Adelina. It was decided in 1962 to fix a residence there for the purpose of carrying on a better organized and more continuous apostolic work. Already in 1960 the Bishop of San Isidro had been asked for permission to take charge of a church being built by immigrants from Friuli (among whom the Monterosa family deserves a special mention), located at a place equally distant from these five centers. The Bishop did not deem it opportune at first to surrender that church, but then he gave in to the insisting pleas of the immigrants and entrusted to the Scalabrinians the piece of land at 4221 Avenida Mitre where which the church was under construction.

Fr. Ennio Ruffato began residing there, as a "Vicar Economus", with an Italian family near the church, and celebrated Sunday Mass in the mess-hall of the factory. He immediately organized the raising of funds for the completion of the church. Works were resumed in 1963 and completed in 1964 under a provisional roof, so that the first solemn Mass could be celebrated in it on November 22 of that year. Early that same year a group of immigrants from Brescia built a small house for the missionary and a kindergarten began functioning on May 4. The bishop, who had been waiting to see how things would turn out, on March 22, 1965, officially erected the parish of St. Mary the Queen, and on May 30 he installed the first pastor, Fr. Ennio Ruffato, with Fr. Luigi Serena as vicar and assistant to the Italian Catholic Centers of the region.



The new parish numbered then about 15 thousand people, most of them workers, and half of recent immigration from Italy. Fr. Fabio Baù was named pastor on February 15, 1969. The inauguration of the new classrooms took place on June 1 and so the parish school could now hold 300 students. Fr. Piergiuseppe Bianco was named pastor on December 18, 1875. He had been in the parish already since January 1973, in charge of the Italians of the Northern region of the metropolis as far as Virreyes. The new pastor distinguished himself for his activities for the boy scouts and for the promotion of vocations.

### PERGAMINO: PARISH OF SAN ROCCO

Following an early period of great difficulties<sup>14</sup>, the chapel of Saint Rocco was completely remodeled and that of Santa Teresa of the Child Jesus was endowed with a bell tower and a front portico. Several associations of Catholic Action were organized and frequency to the Sacraments began to increase. The Archbishop of La Plata granted therefore the decree of erection of the parish on December 22, 1941. Fr. Tondelli took possession of it as pastor on January 1, 1942. In 1945, a piece of land was bought on which to build a social institution. The church was enlarged and in 1946 a steeple was built. In 1949, the property at the corner of Velez Sarsfield and Bahía Blanca Streets was purchased on which several classrooms and the parish hall were set up, and, in 1960, the "Scalabrini" Family-School. The succession of pastors is here reported: Fr. Oreste Tondelli, 1942-1952; Fr. Giuseppe Favarato, 1953-1954; Fr. Lino Ceccato, 1955-1958; Fr. Oreste Tondelli, 1959-1960; Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini, 1961-1968; Fr. Francesco Scapolo since March 1, 1969.

Numbering about ten thousand people in 1945, the population of the parish had almost doubled by 1965, and is three times as much today. The community stands out as a mixture of laborers, especially rail workers, and farmers; 30% of them of Italian extraction, just as many of Syrian-Lebanese origin, and the rest of Hispanic or Creole origins.

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<sup>14</sup> M. Francesconi, "History of the Scalabrinian Congregation", Vol. V (Rome, 1975)

In 1962, Fr. Guadagnini completed the construction of the rectory, and in 1965 opened the kindergarten. Church and rectory were remodeled and inaugurated in 1968.

A chapel to the Sacred Heart was opened in 1972 in the Ameghino district where a Sunday Mass used to be said in a house on a piece of property bought by Fr. Scapolo. In 1975, construction was completed on the "Casa dell'Apotolato Sociale" (Social Center), a two story building, with halls and classrooms where specialization courses are offered to parishioners.

Fr. Giuseppe Favarato took charge of the parish on March 13, 1977.

#### ROSARIO: PARISH OF O.L. OF THE ROCCA AND THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Already in 1954 Fr. Tondelli had asked Card. Caggiano for permission to open a secretariat or a missionary center in the city of Rosario, second in importance in Argentina, and home to the largest Italian community after that of Buenos Aires with about 70 thousand members. The Cardinal answered he would gladly welcome the Scalabrinians on condition that they should accept a parish, but they would have to buy the land and build the church on it, because the diocese did not have any to offer. The missionaries preferred to establish an "Italian Catholic Mission", the likes of those in Europe, to devote all their activities to migrants.

On February 1, 1956, Frs. Oreste Tondelli and Luciano Sciarra began work at the chaplaincy of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, offered to them by the Cardinal to give them the opportunity to study ways and means for the erection of a new parish at Calle Laprida 2785. In 1957 the missionaries moved into a sufficiently big house they had bought on 1563 Calles Buenos Aires and gave life to the "Italian Catholic Mission" still existing still operating today. On June 1, 1958, Card. Caggiano blessed the new chapel dedicated to Saint Charles. Fr. Luiano Sciarra had been director since March 1958. Fr. Mario Pegorin replaced him from August 1958 to April 1959, and was in turn succeeded by Fr. Leo Valente and then again by Fr. L. Sciarra in August 1959. Fr. Mario Tessarolo was named its director at the end of September 1962. With the help of the Archconfraternity of Our

Lady of the Rocca of the Sicilian immigrants, he obtained from City Hall the land for the parish and there he said Mass on Easter Day of 1963. On June 30 of the same year Archbishop Guglielmo Bolatti blessed the foundation stone of the institutions of the parish. A kindergarten was opened in 1964 in a wooden house; the feast of the patron saint was celebrated for the first time on September 13, and work was begun on a new building of a school and chapel combination. While Fr. Luigi Lovatin continued directing the Catholic Mission, in September 1966 Fr. Tessarolo was replaced by Fr. Giorgio Berti, who inaugurated a provisional chapel and completed the school and the rectory. It was thus possible to erect the parish in October 1967.

Fr. Vittorio Beschin was pastor from October 1, 1967 to 1973. Begun in 1970, the new parish church was completed on May 9, 1973. In September of this year, Fr. Giorgio Berti was again named pastor. He gave the final touches to the church and built a hall for the activities of the parish and the school. Fr. Elio Martinello was appointed pastor in 1977.

By 1978 about 60 thousand immigrants with an Italian passport were living in Rosario. In 1967, the "Italian Catholic Center" for Italian immigrants was established. In its first years it enjoyed a flourishing life at all levels, religious, social, and recreational. But it began to dwindle in 1962 when new immigration ceased. Religious assistance was continued for the 30 Italian societies of the city, but, like all Italian societies of this kind, they do not succeed in attracting the young. A university student hostel functioned in the parish from 1964 to 1969. Fr. Livio Dalla Paola is the director of the "Italian Catholic Mission" while serving as assistant at the same time at the parish of St. Mary of the Rocca. He succeeded in forming a closely knit group of young people who are the life of all celebrations, were in charge of the page set aside in the monthly "La Voce d'Italia" for the city of Rosario, and organized prayer meetings for the youth, camping, and various other activities.

#### SÁENZ PEÑA: PARISH OF ST. TERESA OF THE CHILD JESUS

The community of Sáenz Peña is delimited by the outer belt highway General Paz of Buenos Aires and by the railroad tracks of San

Martin and Uргуiza. It belongs to Greater Buenos Aires but it is a part of the Archdiocese of La Plata. Its first houses were built in 1906. In 1946 when the Scalabrinians first set foot there, it numbered about 20 thousand inhabitants, most of them employees of the railroads. At first they depended on the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes directed by the Assumptionist Fathers of Santos Lugares. A committee was formed on May 23, 1944, that opened the oratory of Santa Teresa of the Child Jesus at 1960 Calle Juan B. Justo in a rented old storehouse, six meters long by three. Archbishop Chimento of La Plata called in the Scalabrinians for the religious assistance of that suburb. The first two mission's aries, Frs. Lino Ceccato and Mario Pegorin took possession of that tiny oratory on September 20, 1946. They were able to purchase a small piece of land at 2156 Calle San Martin. With the help of a few volunteers, Frs. Ceccato and Giuseppe Fabbian themselves built a chapel-hall combination, 20 meters long by nine, and the rectory. The foundation stone was laid on May 16, 1948. The parish was canonically erected on November 9, 1949. On January 15, 1950, Fr. Lino Ceccato was installed as its first pastor by Fr. Francesco Tironola, delegated by the Archbishop. On October 2, 1951, Mons. Manuel Maria Cabo de Montilla, Vicar General, blessed the church. Fr. Mario Pegorin was appointed pastor on March 10, 1952. On January 2, 1955 the parish was entrusted to Fr. Giuseppe Favarato who together with Fr. Mario Tessarolo gave life in 1956 to a kindergarten. In January 1958 he was succeeded by Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello as acting-pastor; Fr. Lino Ceccato returned as pastor on March 9, 1959. In 1960, work began on the Saint Charles Borromeo parish school. The last building was started in 1955 by Fr. Mario Pegorin, again pastor since March 15, 1963. The chapel of Our Lady of Loreto and Saint Rocco of the suburb "Villa Raffo" was inaugurated on October 25, 1964. Fr. Angelo Girardi became pastor on February 28, 1971, was succeeded by Fr. Costanzo Tessari in 1972, and then by Fr. Luciano Marangoni in 1975. Sáenz Peña served as the place of residence for the Provincial Superior from 1952 to 1960. From there the religious assistance radiated to the Italian immigrants of Greater Buenos Aires, especially in the North Western region through the action of the "Centri Cattolici Italiani" of Sáenz Peña, San Martin, and Caseros.

The parish was always characterized by its very low attendance at Sunday Mass, equal to 1% to 2% at the most. In 1917 the parish was given back to the diocese of San Martin, both for scarcity of personnel in the Province and for the reorganization of the apostolate among immigrants of the metropolitan area, for whose assistance all activities are now originated from the seats of Haedo and Munro, while the parish of the Boca covers the suburbs to the south of Buenos Aires, such as Avellaneda, Quilmes, Ezpeleta, Florencio Varela, etc.

### SAN MARTIN: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON

Situated 44 kilometers east of Mendoza, San Martin had only one parish, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, founded in 1869. In 1910, the Lebanese Society founded a Maronite College and a chapel. The direction of the school passed in 1940 into the hands of the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul. When they left, the "Lebanese Society" donated the property to the Archbishop Alphonse M. Buteler, who invited the Scalabrinians to found the second parish of the city. On Christmas day of 1951, Fr. Giuseppe Favarato celebrated the first Mass there and prepared the ground for the first pastor, Fr. Lino Ceccato, who took possession of the parish on February 24, 1952.

At that time, it had 9000 people; half of them were of Italian extraction. Almost all offices of the government of the city were within its territory.

The church, which had belonged to the Oriental Catholic Rite, was small and falling apart. As in many other places of Argentina, the rectory was a hovel. Fr. Luis Conte was named pastor on October 24, 1954. On August 11, 1957, he laid the foundation stone of the new church which was dedicated, although still incomplete on August 15, 1954, together with the rectory, by Archbishop B. Buteler. Fr. Angelo Girardi had been pastor since October 1964.

Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini took over the parish on February 14, 1971. In December 1971 he started the construction of the parochial school (the first building had been opened in 1962), which was continued by Fr. Angelo Bontacchio, pastor since July 9, 1972, and was directed by a group of parents united to form the legal "Association of Our Lady of Lebanon".

## SAN NICOLÁS: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

The city of San Nicolás de Los Arroyos began its industrial revolution about 20 years ago with the installation of a great metallurgic plant that attracted many workers and immigrants. Fr. Mario Pegorin was visiting and assisting Italians from his residence of Pergamino. In order to spare him such frequent trips, on January 1957 the Bishop of San Nicolás made him Chaplain of the "San Felipe" hospital and of a community of five thousand immigrants with an Italian passport for whom he celebrated Mass at the church of Saint Joseph. On January 25, 1959, the Bishop dismembered from the Cathedral the parishes of St. Mary Help of Christians, and of Our Lady of Pompeii, entrusting the first to the Salesians and the other to the Scalabrinians. In September 1958, Fr. Pegorin was replaced by Fr. Giuseppe Zarpellon. With the help of a committee and of a group of Italians, he built a chapel on a property with a house donated by Mrs. Desolina Grisetti at 575 Calle Mitre. Fr. Zarpellon was appointed pastor on May 7, 1960, when the chapel began to function. A house at 573 Calle Mitre was bought on March 30, 1962.

Fr. Vittorio Beschin became acting pastor in 1963. He built the upper floor of the rectory. Fr. Ugo Cavicchi took charge of the parish on September 27, 1964, and directed it for ten years. Fr. Aloys Knečik became pastor on March 31, 1974. The parish now numbers about 10,000 people; half of them are of Italian extraction; 1000 our poor immigrants from Bolivia. Immigrants from Paraguay are living in better conditions. Started by Fr. Cavicchi, the new church was solemnly dedicated on October 31, 1976 by Bishop Carlos Horacio Ponce de León of San Nicolás. Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini was named pastor on March 20, 1977.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MISSIONS IN CHILE

#### LA REINA: THE PARISH OF SAINT CHARLES BORROMEIO

In July 1951, Archbishop Mario Zanin, Apostolic Nuncio in Chile pointed out to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation the need for providing religious assistance to the new Italian immigrants and asked that two Scalabrinian missionaries be sent there. The Nuncio had particularly in mind a group of families recently arrived from Trent at two agricultural colonies in the Archdiocese of La Serena. Upon request from Card. A.G. Piazza, Fr. Francesco Prevedello, Superior General, charged Fr. Tondelli to pay a visit to Chile to explore the field. After visiting La Serena, Fr. Tondelli reported to the Nuncio that the new mission, at a distance of 400 kilometers from Santiago would be accepted, but he had need of a point of reference in the capital. The Nuncio suggested that he ask the Card. Archbishop for a parish in Santiago. Card. Caro offered one of the three new parishes he was about to create. Fr. Tondelli questioned the Nuncio whether he could form in Santiago a national parish for Italians; the Nuncio replied that the Salesians had charge of one already. In any case, the Scalabrinians should come to Santiago first, and then they would see what could be done. Mons. Zanin requested also a missionary for the colony that was to be opened at San Manuel, 400 kilometers south of Santiago. Following a visit to San Manuel and a meeting with the Italian Ambassador in Chile and with the president of Italo-Chilean Company that had organized the agricultural communities of La Serena and San Manuel, Fr. Tondelli agreed with the Nuncio that he would send two missionaries within two months, one for Santiago and one for La Serena. In fact, on March 18, 1952, Fr. Victor Dal Bello arrived in Chile for the capital, and Fr. Giuseppe Favarato headed for La Serena.

Fr. Dal Bello spent the first months trying to open a residence in the capital for the assistance of the Italian community. But Card. Caro could not give him anything in downtown; he immediately offered,

instead, a new parish in the suburb of La Reina, with a small church, a house, and a piece of land, in a new neighborhood of about 7000 people including a few Italian families. At the same time he named Fr. Dal Bello as Vice-Pastor of the city-parish of Saint Philomena: from here the missionary began organizing the new parish of La Reina while periodically visiting the Italians of the colony of San Manuel until January 1953 when a missionary was assigned to reside there permanently.

In May 1953, after completing a small rectory, Fr. Dal Bello moved to La Reina to take charge of the parish canonically erected on April 7, 1953, under the title of Saint Charles Borromeo. By suggestion of Card. Caro, he began work, first of all, on the construction of a parochial school.

Its cornerstone was blessed on November 6, 1953, by the new Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Sebastiano Baggio. Construction began on March 25, 1954. In April 1955, the Superior General, Fr. Francesco Prevedello inaugurated the first section of the building which immediately opened its doors to first graders. The school hall served as provisional church.

Named Provincial Superior in March 1956, Fr. Dal Bello was replaced by Fr. Oliviero Manni who was able to place the roof on the parochial school in the same year and then put the final touches on it in the following ones. In 1960 he purchased a 1,500 square meter courtyard. In 1965, including the kindergarten, the school, had an attendance of 600 pupils.

Since all attempts to secure from City Hall a piece of land across from the school on which to build the parish church had failed, it was decided to construct it on land bought for the school yard, for which another property of 5,000 square meters was purchased. The foundation of the church was laid in 1962. Fr. Silvano Onor was appointed pastor on May 15, 1965. He devoted himself wholeheartedly to the construction of the church. On June 24, 1970, Fr. Giulio Rubin became pastor. The parish passed into the hands of the diocesan clergy on March 12, 1972, when the Scalabrinians decided to relinquish it as not responding any more to the scope of the Congregation.



## SAN MANUEL

As mentioned above, since September 1952 Fr. Dal Bello used to visit periodically the Italian colony of San Manuel in the province of Linares. He had gone personally to welcome the families from the Abruzzi at the port of Valparaiso, and had accompanied them to the farms allotted them by the "Italian-Chilean Colonization Co." (CITAL). The Apostolic Nuncio and the Company insisted that a missionary be assigned there permanently. Fr. Silvano Onor was sent in January 1953, but he stayed at first in the small city of Paral, 35 kilometers from San Manuel where he went to say Mass on Sunday. He moved to San Manuel when church, rectory, and school, of which he was the director, were ready. He could not remain for long, however, so isolated for only 200 Italians. He returned to Santiago and continued to visit periodically the colony until that unfortunate experiment of colonization went bankrupt in 1956.

## LA SERENA: CHAPEL OF SAN RAMON

A like fate befell the colony of La Serena. Fr. Giuseppe Favarato was a guest of the Archbishop of La Serena, at first, who made him the offer of the parish of San Isidro on which the colony of Peñuelas would be depending later on, where the twenty Venetian families just arrived from Italy were settling the "Caja de Colonización". In early 1953 100 families were added that had taken up residence at San Ramon, five kilometers from Peñuelas and seven from La Serena, and another 20 families from Trent that formed the colony of Rinconada, 8 kilometers farther away. For this reason, Fr. Favarato, after residing a short while with a Tridentine family at Peñuelas, moved to Ramon also in view of according his moral support to those immigrants who had received the house but not yet the land to till. In February 1953, Archbishop Cifuentes of La Serena blessed the foundation stone of the church of Ramon, dedicated to the Assumption and to Saint Vigilus.

Named Provincial Councilor, Fr. Favarato had to return at that time to Argentina, and his place at Ramon was taken over by Fr. Mario Tessarolo, who surrendered for a time the colony of Peñuelas to the Barnabites in order to better attend to the more difficult commu-

nities of San Ramon and Rinconada. In June 1953, Fr. Tessarolo was substituted by Fr. Giuseppe Guadagnini and Bro. Alcide Marin. Fr. Guadagnini had to play the parts of pastor, director of two schools, mailman along roads that could be traveled only by tractors or on horses, and to keep up with the construction of church and rectory.

Meanwhile, the situation of Italian immigrants was getting worse. In 1954, 96% of the hundred "parcelas" or allotments in the district of San Ramon and Rinconada did not yield enough profit to pay on the annual mortgage and to meet the expenses for running them. They represented, instead, liabilities equal to between ten and ninety percent below the profit warranted by the contract on account of barrenness and drought. An attempt was made to get Italian and Chilean authorities to supply needed remedies, but it was all in vain. By the end of 1955, 17 families went to Brazil, and another 5 returned to Italy. In the course of 1956, the dissolution grew larger. In the month of August, Fr. Dal Bello reported that only 14 Italian families still remained there, and that the president of the "Caja de Colonización" had written him that he no longer needed the services of the missionaries: who had resisted to the last to share and alleviate the miseries of the colonists, and that he would take them out of there that very month.

#### SANTIAGO IN CHILE: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

The chaplaincy of Saint Philomena, and the parish of Saint Charles at La Reina later, as said above, had been accepted in expectation that Card. Caro would assign us a residence in the capital to enable the missionaries to provide assistance to the Italian community estimated to number about 20,000 immigrants. Assistance to Italians had been entrusted to the Salesians in 1915 and it was carried out in their parish of "Gratitude Nacional". The Salesians themselves had suggested to the Cardinal and the Apostolic Nuncio to place the mission for the Italians in the hands of Scalabrinians because they hardly had sufficient personnel for their own schools and found it increasingly difficult to understand the mentality of new immigrants.

In January 1954, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Sebastiano Baggio obtained from the Cardinal that the mission for Italians. As

their temporary residence, the Cardinal gave to the Scalabrinians the most centrally located and imposing church of "Las Agustinas" at 1054 Moneda Street. Fr. Victor Dal Bello was called to assist the Italian community and began his work in March 1954. On May 1, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation issued the decree for the creation of "Italian Catholic Mission" according to the "Exul Familia". On July 18 of the same year, Card. Caro suppressed the personal parish for the Italians, and erected in its place the "Missio Cum Cura Animarum", granting all the faculties of a pastor to Fr. Dal Bello assisted by Fr. Silvano Onor. Besides Sunday Mass, the first activities included 13 weekly classes of religion at the Italian school "Vittorio Montiglio", sick calls, visitation and census of the families, a radio program, office hours, and nearly daily meetings of Catholic Action.

In 1955, Fr. Anthony Mascarello took the place of Fr. Dal Bello, who had to attend to the new parish of Saint Charles at La Reina. There was only one room available at first near the church of "Las Agustinas". Fr. Mascarello was able to secure the use of the premises, previously belonging to the Clergy Residence attached to the same church, and he fixed in them his offices and residence on April 23, 1955. Brother Eugenio Fagher arrived there to help him by the end of 1955, and Fr. Paolo Piron in February 1956. The old residence, however, was put up for sale in 1957 and in 1959 the missionaries had to leave it and they moved into a few rooms they rented at 1849 Moneda Street.

In April of the same year a meeting was held at the Nunciature to form a committee with the task of finding a place where to fix the permanent residence of the mission. A property of 2,700 square meters was bought on October 7, 1959 at 180 Avenida Bustamente.

In the first five years, the "Missione Cattolica Italiana" had developed the following activities: organization of the various branches of Catholic Action, the Circle of Italian Catholic Professionals, and the Christian Family Movement; cultural and recreational promotion through a choir, a theatrical group, lectures, and sport activities; the founding of a permanent Office of Social Assistance (it had been born for assistance to colonists of San Manuel and San Ramon) and of a free Medical Consultation Office; the teaching of religion classes in the "Vittorio Montiglio" school, an almost total census of the Ital-

ians of Santiago, Quillote, Quilpué, Villa Alemana, Talagante, Curicó, Lantué, Molina, Talca; periodical visitation of those in other districts.

In 1960, the debt contracted for the purchase of the land on Avenida Bustamante was paid off; following a public consultation, the name of "Our Lady of Pompei" was chosen for the new church on August 29. On September 7, 1961, work started on the construction of the rectory, a four story structure including the residence of the missionaries, parochial offices, an assistance secretariat, a library, meeting and amusement halls, a medical clinic, a dentist studio, and a temporary chapel. On December 19, 1961, Fr. Mascarello was named Provincial Superior and the direction returned to Fr. Dal Bello who completed the construction, which was inaugurated on April 8, 1962 by the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Gaetano Alibrandi.

In August 1964, construction began on the crypt of the church, with a capacity of 500 seats. The church was built in 1966 and inaugurated on December 18 of the same year by Card. Archbishop Raul Silva Henriquez of Santiago and the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Egano Righi-Lambertini. On March 19, 1968, Card. Silva Henriquez signed the decree with which he created the Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii with jurisdiction over the Italian immigrants of the Archdiocese.

In March 1969, Fr. Antonio Mascarello took possession of the parish. The monthly "Presenza" began publications in the same year for Italians of Chile under the direction of Fr. Edoardo De Gaudenzi, succeeded by Fr. Luciano Dalla Valeria, and presently by Fr. Giuseppe Tomasi.

Besides continuing his action for Italian migrants, whose number is now decreasing greatly, the parish, a territorial one, devotes its services to the people, in great part of Chilean nationality of its territory, which includes about 9,000 people. In 1976, the Chilean Catholic Institute for Immigration (INCAMI) has set up its offices in the premises of the Italian Catholic Mission and Fr. Mascarello has entered to be a part of the Directional Committee with the title of General Secretary. The "INCAMI" has been revived by the organization of meetings between bishops on an international level and by the creation of sub-committees in Northern Chile for assistance to Bolivians, and in Southern Chile for Chileans crossing into Argentina. In the

same 1976, by initiative especially of Frs. Mascarello and Tomasi, the periodical "Migrantes" began publication, intended to sensitize by a circulation of 1,500 copies church and civil authorities on the problem of migration.

In the years between 1976 and 1977 some improvements were made on the church. The Scout movement of the mission has enjoyed since 1970 a remarkable growth so as to reach the present membership of 170. The missionaries have always been in close touch with the "Casa di Riposo Italia" (Italia Rest Home), where about 100 Italian elderly are hosted, by saying Mass for them every day and in taking part in the social activities of the Sisters. A steady assistance is devoted to Italian associations. A hall of the Mission is offered for use by the "Istituto Italiano di Cultura" (Italian Cultural Institute) for the teaching of Italian.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE MISSIONS OF URUGUAY

#### EL DORADO: THE PARISH OF SAINT ADOLPH AND OUR LADY OF POMPEII

In the years between 1946 and 1970, 22,514 Italians immigrated into Uruguay and 5,695 returned to Italy: a balance of 18,819 remained. With the addition of Italians of earlier migrations, the Italian community of Uruguay was deemed to amount in 1965 to 29,000, 25,000 of them were in Montevideo and suburbs.

Separated from that of Argentina by the Rio de La Plata, the capital of Uruguay, had already been considered by Scalabrinians as a position to take for the assistance of an almost forgotten Italian community. But as it had happened with Buenos Aires and Santiago of Chile, they had to proceed in a roundabout way before they were able to get in.

Negotiations were first started by the Superior General, Fr. Raffaele Larcher and Frs. Dal Bello and Mascarello at a meeting with the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Raffaele Forni, on July 12, 1961. They were offered the chaplaincy of the "Hogar del Liberado", an institution for ex-convicts in the small city of La Paz, nearby the capital. The priest would have sufficient time to devote himself to the Italians of Montevideo.

On December 23, 1961, Fr. Livio Dalla Paola took possession of the chaplaincy and so began his apostolate for Italian immigrants. In January 1962, Bishop Nuti Sanguinetti took charge of the new diocese of Canelones, under whose jurisdiction La Paz had also been included. The Nuncio asked the Bishop to entrust the Scalabrinians with the parish of La Paz or with a new parish to be created in Las Piedras, a city of 80 thousand people with an only one parish administered by the Salesians.

The last option was chosen since Fr. Dalla Paola had to leave the "Hogar del Liberado" in March of the same year. The Apostolic Nuncio himself asked the Bishop to place in the hands of Scalabrinians the new parish of Saint Adolph on the outskirts of Las Piedras at a

district called "El Dorado". Fr. Dalla Paola took possession of it on June 23, 1962.

Only a still unfinished small chapel was standing there at that time, which had been built by Archbishop Nuti himself with a small school attached to it. The sacristy, 3 meters by 3, served as living quarters and office for the pastor. The Nuncio stood by the missionary and secured for him the help of the "Lamaro Company", of the Architect Mercuri and the engineer Gambini. The rectory was constructed with their contributions and through the free work of ten Italians on their own time away from their jobs, under the direction of builder Mario Dal Bello; it was inaugurated on May 5, 1963, a week before the arrival of the first assistant, Fr. Giovanni B. Baggio. With a contribution secured from Germany through the good offices of Archbishop Nuti, it was possible to start the construction of the school which was dedicated on June 19, 1964, by the newly elected Bishop Quaglia Martinez of Minas. The church was then set free of the school, and in November of the same year it was officially acknowledged as the personal parish for the Italians of the diocese of Canelones. Fr. Stefano Tedesco, who had arrived there as a temporary substitute for Fr. Dalla Paola, contributed effectively to the construction and reorganization of the school, which welcomed 200 students. On August 2, 1964, the Apostolic Nuncio and the "Associazione Nazionale Alpini" of Uruguay of which Fr. Dalla Paola was the chaplain, dedicated one of the six classrooms to the memory of "Don Carlo Gnocchi". Besides acting as chaplain of the "Alpini" and of the "Veterans", in March 1965, Fr. Dalla Paola assumed the chaplaincy of UNUCI, and, in April, the teaching of religion at the Italian school of Montevideo. At the same time he was looking around where he could find a piece of property in the capital on which to set up the mission for Italians. On October 10, 1965, a statue of Our Lady of Pompei arrived, whom the Bishop named as the co-Patroness of the parish and a new altar was blessed.

In 1967, it was finally possible to open the "Missione Cattolica Italiana" in Montevideo, thanks to the support of the new Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Bruniera, who had secured a loan from the Holy See for the purchase of the building, while on January 31, 1969, the parish of El Dorado, then counting 9,000 people, was returned to the Diocese of Canelones.



## MONTEVIDEO: "MISSIONE CATTOLICA ITALIANA"

On September 20, 1891, the Italian Masons of Montevideo had staged a hubbub against the Pope at the cry of the slogan: "There are no Italian Catholics in Rio de la Plata". As a reaction to the anticlerical campaign, on September 27, Italian Catholics formed a "Committee for the Promotion of Catholic Institutions among Italians of the La Plata", presided by Knight Ferruccio Pasini and approved by Bishop Mariano Soler. The Committee's appeal was sent also to Bishop Scalabrini who made a stop at Montevideo on November 13, 1904, on his way back from Buenos Aires. On that occasion he was presented the following address:

"The new born 'Lega Patriottica Italiana' of Uruguay dares greet in his visit through Montevideo the Father to Italian Migrants. We also, Your Excellency, have united together in order to promote the moral and material good of the Italians living in this country. Poor and few, as of now, we hope, however, that the help of God will supply us with the means that will honor our distant fatherland and aid the moral growth of Italians residing in Uruguay. On behalf of all members of the League we plead with Your Excellency for a special blessing that may secure us from Heaven the strength and constancy we need for carrying out the work we have begun." (Address of the Lega Italiana of Uruguay to Bishop Scalabrini, Montevideo, November 13, 1904. Arch. G.S., 329/1).

Amongst the promoters of the address there was also a Salesian priest. As in other places, the religious assistance to the Italian migrants of Montevideo was first cared for by Salesians of Italian extraction as their commitments allowed them. Scalabrinians began taking it, as we have seen above, in humble forms, in 1962. At the first negotiations, the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Raffaele Forni had suggested to accept the offer of "Hogar del Liberado" as a place where an "Instituto de Inmigracion" could have been set up that, differently than other "Institutes" directed by Uruguayans and practically left on paper, might finally give way to an effective apostolic action amongst the Italian community.

Archbishop Forni added that Cardinal Barbieri had expressed his wholehearted consent and offered a place at the Nunciature itself. Mons. Curis, charge d'affaires of the Nunciature, who had been the first to establish contact with the Scalabrinians, insisted that the pro-

posals of the Nuncio be accepted. When the General Administration accepted as a first step, the chaplaincy of the "Hogar del Liberado", Archbishop Forni asked that more than one religious be sent, so as to be able to organize right away the spiritual assistance of Italian immigrants.

Fear that the difficulties of the early years of the Scalabrinian mission of Caracas in Venezuela might recur, the relatively limited number of Italian migrants and, above all, scarcity of personnel, led the General Council to use caution.

In January 1962, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation granted permission to erect a Scalabrinian religious house "in the city of Montevideo". But it concerned actually the residence of La Paz in the "Hogar del Liberado". It is a known fact, instead, that the acts of Cardinal Barbieri, Archbishop of Montevideo proved him to be opposed to a Scalabrinians' entry into his city. As mentioned above, while continuing to be pastor of El Dorado, Fr. Dalla Paola, used to spend the greater part of his time in the capital where he taught religion at Italian schools and was often sought after by the numerous Italian societies. But the distance of 25 kilometers from the city made his work too hard and rather ineffective. In 1965, Cardinal Barbieri was succeeded by the Apostolic Administrator Mons. Antonio Corso, who immediately showed a keen interest in the presence of Scalabrinians in Montevideo. He invited the Provincial Superior and brought him to visit a parish of the outskirts, and since it presented conditions like those of El Dorado he singled out the city's districts that were most in need of parishes, for which, however he did not have any land to offer. At that, Fr. Dalla Paola began looking around and found eight months later a property of 2,100 square meters on Avenida Italia in downtown, near the Italian hospital, with an eight-room old house on it. In December 1966, the General Council gave permission for the purchase. Fr. Dalla Paola remodeled the house so as to provide room for another missionary, a chapel, and an office. In a short while, he became the "Chaplain of the Italian Community", with Fr. Giuseppe Tomasi as his assistant.

In 1968 works were started on enlarging the mission, the chapel was made larger, a medical clinic was opened and life was given to a radio program and various social activities. In 1970, the idea took

hold of distinguishing the mission through an institution of a social character by founding a rest home for the neediest Italians. To this end, an apartment building was bought near the church, and free hospitality began to be offered to six poor old people, who increased to 9 later on. The house did not allow room for more. Fr. Lorenzo Bosa is now serving as Director of the Mission since March 1, 1971, properly assisted by Frs. Giuseppe Tomasi, Aloys Knečik, and Giacomo Stocco. The missionaries provide religious assistance to nearly all the 42 Italian organizations of Montevideo, mostly with an aging membership; they teach religion to about 1000 students of Italian schools, have placed a "polyclinic" at the disposal of the community, that is an ambulatory for a free medical assistance, and a kindergarten; they visit the homes and the sick, with the collaboration of lay people, organized in three groups of prayer and apostolate.

1972 statistics report the presence in Uruguay of 208,680 foreigners so distributed: 72,754 Spaniards, 35,672 Italians, 28,956 Argentines, 17,921 Brazilians, and 9,343 Poles.

In 1974, Scalabrinians assumed the religious direction of the Maritime Club of the Sea Apostolate at the port of Montevideo. It was previously in the hands of the English priests of the "Mill Hill" Society. The port had lost of late much of its importance. The "Mill Hill" did not deem it opportune, therefore, to leave there one priest alone isolated from the rest of the Congregation and not committed full time. So, they asked the Scalabrinians to take over the task. These accepted the request and placed Fr. Giacomo Stocco in charge of the chaplaincy, while the financial administration of the club remained with the lay committee, which was the legal owner of the "Stella Maris" building at 274 Calle Washington. Fr. Vittorio Dal Bello is now in charge of the "Apostleship of the Sea" as of January 11, 1977.

In early May 1977, the Catholic Mission moved its quarters into a building formerly owned by the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary. It was remodeled to make room not only for a religious community and to provide halls for the Mission's activities, but also for "Bishop Scalabrini Rest Home", which had been functioning a few years already in a building acquired for this purpose, distant one kilometer from the old seat of the mission, with about 15 old ladies as guests (they number 45 now). Endowed with a new church dedicated

to the Assumption of Mary, the new seat has become the center for all the religious activities of migrants of Italian and other nationalities living in the Archdiocese of Montevideo.

PART III

THE PROVINCE OF AUSTRALIA  
“ST. FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI”



## CHAPTER I

### THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

#### EMIGRATION IN AUSTRALIA. AN OVERALL VIEW OF THE PROVINCE

The discovery of gold in 1851 occasioned the early mass migrations of Europeans, especially English and Irish, to Australia. The Irish brought along their priests and nuns: thus were born their parishes, dioceses, hospitals, and Catholic schools. Church institutions and structures still clearly show their Irish roots today. As of now, Catholics represent one-fourth of the fourteen million people of Australia. Three-fourths of the Catholics are of either Irish or English or Maltese extraction; the remaining one fourth - or even one-third, according to others - is made up of people of languages other than English. Only these are considered "immigrants" in the strict sense.

Italians represent 10% of the three million immigrants that entered Australia between 1945 and 1975. Among the participants in the "gold rush" of 1852 we find a few Italians, but it was only by the end of the past century that sufficiently numerous contingents of them arrived there, such as the group that was a part of 1000 Europeans led by the French adventurer Marquis de Ray to an imaginary Paradise Island, and then resettled in Sydney; or as that other group that colonized a locality close to Lismore, New South Wales, called "Little Italy" at first. Following a commercial treatise between Italy and Australia in 1890, a certain number of Italian workers were drawn to Australia for the construction of railroads. The Australian census of 1947 showed the presence there of 36,000 Italians, nearly all immigrants of the years between the two World Wars.

The inflow of Italian emigrants resumed on a much wider scale after World War II, as we can see from statistics supplied by Italian authorities for the period between 1946 and 1969.

Year	Expatriates	Repatriates	Balance
1946	4	6	+ 2
1947	50	1	49
1948	2,047	304	1,743
1949	10,939	193	10,746
1950	13,516	258	13,258
1951	17,453	466	16,987
1952	26,802	1,132	25,670
1953	12,865	1,940	10,925
1954	16,960	1,623	15,337
1955	27,689	1,819	25,870
1956	25,631	2,437	23,194
1957	17,003	2,773	14,230
1958	12,375	3,420	8,955
1959	14,149	2,586.	11,563
1960	19,606.	1,312	18,294
1961	16,351	671	15,680
1962	14,406	521	13,885
1963	11,535	708	10,827
1964	10,888	880	10,008
1965	10,320	559	9,761
1966	12,523	743	11,780
1967	13,667	479	13,188.
1968	14 , 505	1,161	13,344
1969	8,740	3,679	5,061
Totals	330,024	29,671	300,353

The 1971 Australian census shows that 366,711 Italians had immigrated into Australia between the years 1945 and 1971. In 1971 283,705 Italian born migrants were living there, 153,225 of them naturalized citizens. If one considers also their children born in Australia,



the people of Italian extraction must be thought to exceed half a million. This means that about one-fourth of the Catholic population is still actually made up of Italians.

According to the same 1971 census the largest concentration of Italians is found in the State of Victoria with 113,805, followed in this order by New South Wales (80,006), Western Australia (34,214), South Australia (32,970), and Queensland (17,607). The majority of Italians settled around or within the great cities like Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Fremantle, Wollongong. Important communities are found also in agricultural districts such as Riverina, North Queensland, Lismore, Murray Valley, Goulburn Valley, and in other industrial centers as Latrobe Valley, Newcastle, Whyalla, Darwin, and Gove. Remarkable is the phenomenon of the mobility of immigrants from state to state, or from suburb to suburb.

As to religion, the great mass of immigrants has fallen in general into a state of alienation or of marked weakening of the religious practice, due to cultural, and even social lack of integration into the local communities, concern over a quick financial position, dispersion over farmlands in distant places or under the influence of a society in rapid evolution and of the religious and moral relativism of urban communities. In the early post-war years, religious assistance to Italians was rather limited. Fr. Ugo Modotti, a Jesuit who had gone to Australia in 1938 to devote himself to the pastoral care of Italians wrote in 1945:

“On my arrival in Australia I found nothing but discouragement on all sides. Time and again people were telling me: we have tried it already, it’s no use! Nothing can be done with the Italians.

I studied the problem carefully. What frightened me most was the fact that even the majority of Italian children attending Catholic schools abandoned all religious practice, like their parents, soon after graduation (...). The bad example and indifference of their elders underestimated soon afterwards what had been stressed in the Catholic school (...). On the other hand it is very easy to understand why so many families have lost their sense of responsibility in regard to the practice of their religion. Grown in Italy at the critical period when religion was held in contempt especially in the schools, old immigrants were ‘baptized’ Catholics but with no personal conviction by which they could resist unscathed the many religious and moral difficul-

ties they had to face in a foreign and protestant country. Should one add to all this their ignorance of the English language and consequent lack of religious instruction, he would easily see why these masses, deprived for so many years of the Grace of God, were led to live like lost people."<sup>15</sup>

The letter was addressed to the Italian American Augustinian Fr. Alfredo Natali who had gone in 1945 to the diocese of Cairns whose clergy belonged almost entirely to the Augustinian Order, to devote himself to the religious assistance of Italian immigrants. At the same time, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Panico, had succeeded in securing the Capuchin Fr. Centauro for the nearby diocese of Townsville. There lived in those two dioceses thousands of Italians (25,000 in 1952), employed in the hard but lucrative work of sugar cane plantations. Yet in the State of Queensland, there lived in the capital Brisbane about 4000 Italians for whom Archbishop Duhig had invited in 1945 the Italian-American Capuchins entrusting them with the parish of Wynnum. In Brisbane the Capuchins opened also the "St. Francis" House, the seat of the "Committee of Assistance" to Italians.

In 1946, the Capuchins took residence in Sydney, in a suburban parish, almost entirely of Australians, but extending their activities to the Italian community of the metropolis (about 12,000 Italians in 1952). They established for it the St. Francis Catholic charitable Association and an Office of Assistance to Italian-Australians, and took the direction of the weekly "La Fiamma", founded by order of the Apostolic Delegate and Cardinal Gilroy. In 1952 there were already 28 Italo-American and Italian Capuchins, distributed throughout Australia in Queensland (Brisbane, Halifax), New South Wales (Sydney, Riverina), South Australia (Newton) and Western Australia (Balcatta). The Oblates of Mary Immaculate are also engaged in Freemantle for the 25,000 Italians of Western Australia. To them one must add the Jesuits, Salesians, Passionists, Benedictines of St. Sylvester, and the Congregations of the Sisters known as Canossiane, Pastorelle, Daughters of St. Paul, Daughters of the Divine Zeal, Franciscans of the Lily, Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, and Ursulines. We must also credit those Diocesan priests who could speak a more or less fluent Italian because they were born in Italy or had studied in Rome.

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<sup>15</sup> Letter Modotti to Natali, Hawthorn, October 5, 1945 (Arch. G.S., 330/1).

In 1947, the Australian Bishops' Conference erected the Federal Commission for Catholic Immigration, which worked perhaps more on the technical and practical level rather than a pastoral one, by helping thousands of immigrants in their bureaucratic procedures and early stages of integration.

The Scalabrinians arrived in Australia in 1952. Their "foundations" are reported here in chronological order:

- 1952 - Unanderra, N.S.W., Parish of the Immaculate Conception
- 1952 - Silkwood, Queensland, Parish of St. John
- 1955 - Wollongong, N.S.W., Italian Center
- 1956 - Hobart, Tasmania, St. Charles' Mission
- 1956 - Carrington-Newcastle, Parish of St. Francis Xavier
- 1957 - Hamilton-Newcastle, N.S.W., Scalabrini Center
- 1957 - Sydney - Surrey Hills, N.S.W., Parish of St. Francis of Sales
- 1958 - Goolmangar-Lismore, N.S.W., Parish of St. Patrick
- 1959 - Walkerston, Queensland, Parish of St. John
- 1959 - Fitzroy-Melbourne, Victoria, Parish of All Saints
- 1960 - Broadmeadow-Newcastle, N.S.W., St. Lawrence O'Toole, in place of the parish in Carrington
- 1960 - North Lismore, N.S.W., Parish of the Holy Family, in place of the Parish in Goolmangar
- 1961 - Adelaide, S.A., Parish of the Mater Christi
- 1962 - Sheperton South, Victoria, Parish of St. Mel
- 1963 - Red Cliffs, Victoria, Parish of St. Joseph
- 1965 - Sydney - Dee Why, Parish of St. Kevin
- 1965 - Launceston, Tasmania, Italian Catholic Mission
- 1967 - Mosman-Sydney, N.S.W., Provincial Residence
- 1968 - North Fitzroy-Melbourne, Victoria, Parish of St. Brigid
- 1970 - Lalor-Melbourne, Vic., Parish of St. Luke in place of All Saints Parish of Fitzroy
- 1974 - Austral-Sydney, N.S.W., Scalabrini Village
- 1976 - Liverpool, N.S.W., Scalabrinian Mission
- 1977 - Melbourne, Victoria, Center for the Coordination of the Italian Apostolate
- 1978 - South Morang, Victoria, "G. Vaccari" Village for the elderly
- 1978 - Melbourne, Victoria, Mission of West Preston

The following positions were later on abandoned in successive order: Walkerston, 1965; Launceston, 1968; Silkwood, 1968; Hobart, 1970; Broadmedow, 1977; Unanderra, 1977; North Lismore, 1978.

In the years between 1958 and 1973, a Scalabrinian Missionary was employed at the Apostolic Delegation in Sydney.

#### List of Superiors

1952-1957: Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, Provincial Superior of the Province of St. Charles Borromeo (Eastern USA) on which Australia was then depending.

1957-1959: Fr. Dante Orsi, first Superior of the new "Missio Sui Juris".

1959-1962: Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, Superior "Missio Sui Juris".

1962-1964: Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, first Provincial Superior

1964-1967: Fr. Aldo Lorigiola, Provincial Superior

1967-1973: Fr. Giorgio Baggio, Provincial Superior

1973--- Fr. Joseph Molon, Provincial Superior

#### EARLY YEARS OF THE SCALABRINIAN PRESENCE (1952-1957)

In the years 1946-1948, 2,101 Italians migrated to Australia and then in 1949 all of a sudden their number climbed to 10,939. In May of the same year, the General Administration of the Scalabrinians decided to send some missionaries and made it a formal proposal to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation the following July. By July 30 Pius XII authorized the opening of the mission. Negotiations were started with the Apostolic Delegate and with the Bishops of Australia. Some favored the idea, but others did not with the excuse that many diocesan priests knew Italian. To overcome the difficulty, the Apostolic Delegate asked the Scalabrinians in 1951 whether they would be willing "to accept the exercise of the ministry independently of the assistance to Italians."<sup>16</sup> The Superior General Fr. Francesco Prevedello answered that the Congregation accepted "ministerial positions connected with the assistance to Italians or in places representing centers of attraction or immigration of Italians."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Card. A. Piazza to Prevedello, Rome, August 9, 1951 (Arch. G.S., 330/1).

<sup>17</sup> Prevedello to Piazza, Rome, December 10, 1951 (Arch. G.S., 330/1).

In December 1951, the Superior General had a meeting at the same time with the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Paolo Marella, who informed him that the assistance to Italian migrants was organized by the Australian Bishops by making use of Italian members of Religious Orders already present in Australia and of Australian graduates from the "Propaganda Fide" College in Rome (Australia depends on the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of peoples), and finally by soliciting the entry to Australia of new religious institutes from Italy. The Apostolic Delegate pledged to find the right position for Scalabrinians. He deemed it necessary, therefore, that a General Councillor be sent to oversee the situation, as had been planned. In January 1952, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation requested the Scalabrinians to supply some missionaries to assist emigrants on their trips to Australia. This occasioned the sending there of Fr. Raffaele Larcher, General Treasurer, who embarked on a migrants' ship as Chaplain on February 20, 1952. As it was necessary that the first missionaries had a commanding knowledge of English, the Superior General turned in the meanwhile to the two Provincial Superiors of North America to request some volunteers for the new mission that would be dependent at first on the North American provinces. In April 1952, Bishop Thomas Cahill of Cairns in North Queensland invited the Scalabrinians to his diocese, offering them the small parish of Silkwood, made up in great part of Italians, as an operational base from which they could reach the many Italians of the region with the preaching of missions. Contacts with that Bishop had been made by Fr. Larcher. Other Bishops had told him that the Capuchins were enough. The Bishops of the North, instead, where the new dioceses with parishes where one had to start from scratch and the damp climate of the tropics created difficulties, were better disposed to receive the Scalabrinians. But Bishop Thomas McCabe of the new diocese of Wollongong, in New South Wales, also offered a parish at Unanderra, three miles away from the industrial and mine center of Wollongong, about 50 miles south of Sydney. Following the information and the negotiations of Fr. R. Larcher, the General Council decided to begin immediately with the two parishes of Silkwood and Unanderra. Of the 20 missionaries of the United States who had volunteered for the new mission the Superiors chose Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello and Br. Giovanni

(Nino) Setti for Unanderra, and Frs. Dante Orsi and Ignazio Militello for Silkwood. They received their missionary crucifix from the hands of Bishop Griffith, Auxiliary of New York, on October 19, 1952, in the church of Our Lady of Pompeii. The rite was repeated in Chicago at the parish of St. Frances Cabrini by Auxiliary Bishop William O'Brien. On October 30 they departed from San Francisco arriving in Sydney on the November 20. Respectively on the 9th and 12th of the same month they took charge of the parishes of Unanderra and Silkwood. From the very beginning the action of the Scalabrinians had to evolve within bounds of territorial parishes even in cases where their people were made up mostly of Australians. This was the only way possible and acceptable to the Bishops by which the Scalabrinians could become a part of the diocesan structures. In Australia the Apostolic Constitution "Exul Familia" was never implemented, no personal parishes or even missions "cum cura animarum", except for a very few instances, were ever granted. From the parishes, their only sure point of action, the missionaries were able to reach out, with the more or less cordial approval of bishops and pastors, to the surrounding district or even to the whole diocese and preach periodical missions to the various communities of Italians, visit their families, hospitals, and industrial plants. In the early years at Silkwood one of the two missionaries devoted himself exclusively to the care of the parish, while the other was moving week after week from town to town to visit the Italians scattered throughout the sugar cane plantations. In the industrial center of Wollongong, instead, together with the religious assistance, the missionaries developed also a program of social action, and so in 1955 they opened the "Sacred Heart Center" as a meeting place for Italians (most of them unmarried or far from their families), where they were offered a place for their religious and recreational activities. In this regard, mention must be made of the intense action carried on by the missionaries with authorities and public opinion to obtain the revision of the restrictive immigration laws so as to allow the reunification of the migrants' families.

As a result of these early experiments, in the months between the end of 1955 and the beginning of 1956 a few bishops showed an interest in having the Scalabrinians in their dioceses, and so the Bishops of Hobart in Tasmania, of Maitland and Lismore in New South Wales,

of Rockhampton in Queensland, and of Bunberry, all made the request for them at the same time.

It was not possible to satisfy all of them, but in October 1956, the Scalabrinians opened the mission of St. Charles at Hobart and accepted the parish of St. Francis Xavier at Carrington-Newcastle, in the diocese of Maitland and later, in 1960, they moved from this parish to that of St. Lawrence O'Toole at Broadmedow.

### “MISSIO SUI JURIS” (1957-1962)

In 1957 it was the turn of the “Scalabrini Center” in Hamilton-Newcastle and of the parish “St. Francis de Sales” in Surry Hills, Sydney. In 1958, the Scalabrinians were given charge of the parishes of St. John in Walkerstone, in the diocese of Rockhampton and of St. Patrick in Goolmangar, in the diocese of Lismore. In 1960, the Scalabrinians moved from this last parish to that of the Holy Family in North Lismore. In the vicinity of Silkwood, diocese of Cairns, Scalabrinians took care also, as parochial vicars of Silkwood, of the parishes of South Johnstone from 1954 to 1958, and of Mourilyan in the years 1956-1958.

With the increase of the religious to 17 and of the residences to eight, on October 7, 1957, Australia was made a “Missio Sui Juris” with the name of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. This way that group of missionaries became independent of the Provinces of the United States to which they were until then attached. Fr. Dante Orsi was named Superior and Frs. Luciano Bianchini and Ennio Ferraretto, Councilors. Fr. Corrado Martellozzo became the Superior on August 20, 1959, with Frs. Dante Orsi and Ennio Ferraretto as Councilors. Consequent to the successful experiments of Wollongong’s “Sacred Heart Center” other ones were opened

“at times in appropriate buildings and at others in less suitable premises. The first ones were those of Wollongong, Newcastle, Sydney. But, even in places where they have no fixed residence, the missionaries organize everywhere associations and committees made up mostly of Italians. The “Italian Centers” spontaneously spring up wherever there is a numerous and sufficiently concentrated community. When organized by the missionaries, they represent the effort for imprinting a religious inspiration in the various activities about which our immigrants are so nostalgic. “Italian Centers” are at times



just simple recreation halls, which do not degenerate, however, in to shady coffee parlors frequented by dubious characters, but which remain instead friendly places because of the presence of the priest and of the trustworthy persons in charge of them (...). The "Centers" offer language and working classes, and classes are imparted not only of English to our new arrivals but of Italian as well to the many Australian sympathizers attracted by the validity of the organization. At the Centers initiatives are taken for radio programs that irradiate even to the remotest Italians the warmth of their faith a word of comfort together with the melodies of the most beautiful Italian tunes. At the Centers the immigrant finds above all that social assistance which is born of charity and concern for all those about whom no one cares; which accords personal attention and not just a bureaucratic help."<sup>18</sup>

In 1958, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Romolo Carboni and Archbishop Mannise of Melbourne repeatedly asked the Scalabrinians to enter the State of Victoria where 45% of European immigrants lived and 50% of the Italians. About 12 priests had been already taking care of the assistance to Italians, but they were not enough. In 1959, the Archbishop entrusted to the Scalabrinians the parish of "All Saints" in Fitzroy, a suburb of Melbourne. Fr. Aldo Lorigiola took charge of it on September 5, 1958. One of the missionaries of Fitzroy was placed at the disposal of the neighboring diocese of Sandhurst. Following a short stay at Bendigo, Fr. Tito Cecilia did apostolic work for five months among the Italian communities of Wangaratta and Myrtleford. In 1960, he moved on to Tatura, where he remained two years until April 22, 1962, when Bishop B. Stewart gave the Scalabrinians the parish of St. Mel in South Shepparton. Bishop M. Beovich of Adelaide, South Australia, had been insisting since 1958 to have the missionaries in his diocese. They could be sent there only in August 1961, and they were given the temporary administration of the parish of Our Lady Help of Christians in Lower North Adelaide and the direction of the new parish of Mater Christi in the suburb of Glen Eagles. On December 11, 1960 the "Italian Catholic Federation" was founded in Fitzroy-Melbourne: it is an organization of Catholic Action, at the dependence of the Hierarchy with the task of promoting the religious, social, and cultural welfare and the integration process

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<sup>18</sup> Bianchini, "I Centri Italiani Scalabriniani", Dieci anni al servizio degli emigrati Italiani in Australia (Fitzroy, Victoria, 1962).



of Italian immigrants. It was founded to meet the need for securing the fruits of the "flying missions" and for organizing the lay people who were interested in contributing their apostolic cooperation, thus taking them out of their isolation and individualism while encouraging them also to continue the work of the missionary by establishing contacts between Australian pastors and migrants, especially the new arrivals. Its first annual "National Convention" was held in 1962.

The also attended were the five "branches" of Melbourne and those of Wollongong and Sydney, founded immediately after that of Fitzroy. The monthly "Il Messaggero" began publications in 1962 as the official organ of the Federation. At the present time, the Federation has a membership of 600 distributed throughout 15 branches scattered around the states of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, and Tasmania.

#### FRS. CORRADO MARTELLOZZO AND ALDO LORIGIOLA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIORS, (1962-1967)

With ten parishes, three Italian Centers, and 22 Missionaries, the "Missio Sui Juris" was raised to the rank of a Province on November 28, 1962. Fr. Corrado Martellozzo was appointed first Provincial Superior with Fr. Dante Orsi and Fr. Giovanni Raccanello, who had replaced Fr. Ferraretto in 1960, as Councilors. In 1962, the Bishop of Ballarat, Victoria, offered to the Scalabrinians the parish of St. Joseph at Red Cliffs which was accepted in 1963. On July 1, 1964, the Provincial Government was changed: Fr. Aldo Lorigiola was made Superior with Councilors Frs. Giorgio Baggio and Mario Volpato. In 1965 the parish of Walkerston was relinquished, and that of St. Kevin in Dee Why near Sydney was assumed in its place, while a Mission was opened at Launceston in Tasmania. Of the same year we are in possession of the first complete report on the "flying missions" preached to Italian groups of parishes not directed by Scalabrinians. There were 53 missions held: 28 in Victoria, 15 in New South Wales, 8 in Queensland, 5 in South Australia, one in Tasmania, 3 in the Northern Territory, and 3 in New Zealand. The missionaries visited 9,558 families and contacted 37,083 persons, 13,131 of whom had actually attended missions.

### FR. GIORGIO BAGGIO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1967-1973)

A new Provincial Government was set up on August 16, 1967 with Fr. Giorgio Baggio as Provincial Superior, and Frs. Giovanni Raccanello, Dante Orsi, Mario Volpato, John DiVito (replaced by Fr. Giovanni Pagnin in 1969) as Councilors. In 1970 the Council was renewed with the appointment of Frs. Giovanni Pagnin, Giuseppe Molon, Corrado Martellozzo and Giovanni Mello. A new residence was purchased at the close of 1967 in Mosman Sydney and the mission of Launceston in Tasmania was closed.

In January of 1968 the Scalabrinians were entrusted with the parish of St. Bridget in North Fitzroy, near Melbourne, Victoria, where a Missionary had been working a year already. In May of the same year, the Scalabrinians withdrew from the first parish assigned to them in Australia in Silkwood which had become too isolated from the rest of the Province. In 1970, the mission of St. Charles at Hobart in Tasmania and the parish of All Saints at Fitzroy were abandoned to assume the parish of St. Luke at Lalor. With the purchase of a property at Austral on the outskirts of Sydney, a project began to take shape in the same year for the construction of a rest home for aging immigrants, spoken of a few years before already and revived in 1968 with the formation of a lay committee charged with the collecting of funds. The first wing was inaugurated on May 12, 1974.

### FR. GIUSEPPE MOLON, SUPERIOR PROVINCIAL SINCE (1973---

Fr. Giuseppe Molon was made Provincial Superior on May 24, 1973. Frs. Mario Volpato, Giovanni Pagnin, Antonio Paganoni, and Francesco Lovatin were appointed his Councilors. On April 24, 1976, Fr. Molon was reappointed for a second term while his Council was renewed with the appointment of Frs. Domenico Ceresoli, Nevio Capra, Savino Bernardi, and Emilio Vaccaro as Councilors. In 1973, the missionaries of Newcastle assumed the chaplaincy of the "Stella Maris" quarters of that port for the religious assistance to seamen, while those of Wollongong began taking an interest in the numerous Spanish speaking immigrants, newly arrived to Australia. The first wings of the "Scalabrini Village" of Austral, near Sydney, were opened in 1974 to Italian elderly. In October 1977 work began on ad-

ditions that might increase its capacity to 150 residents. A "Vocation Committee" was set up in 1975, to which much impulse was given by the priestly ordination of two young immigrants to Australia: Fr. Giovanni Iacono (Drummoyn, 1976) and Fr. Lauro Rufo (Hamilton, 1977).

In the years 1976-1977, a research was conducted on the Scalabrinian presence in Australia; as a result of it, the 1977 Provincial Assembly saw the need of closing down certain positions that had already fulfilled their purpose, and of promoting other initiatives more respondent to the realities of the new emigration. Thus, in 1977 the parishes of Broadmedow and Unanderra and in 1978 that of North Lismore, were given back to their respective dioceses. In 1976 a new type of missionary was, instead, set up in Liverpool, in the Sydney metropolitan area: a missionary residence no longer attached to a territorial parish, but devoted to the assistance of Italians residing in the different parishes making use of existing parish structures. A like initiative was begun in 1978 in the city of Melbourne. In this same diocese, a Scalabrinian, in 1977 Fr. Giuseppe Visentin, was named by Archbishop F. T. Little to serve as coordinator of the diocese's pastoral care for Italian immigrants.

At the end of 1977, a missionary, called in expressly for this purpose from Argentina, began a regular assistance to Spanish and Portuguese-speaking immigrants of the diocese of Wollongong. In the years 1975-1978 the Scalabrinians brought to completion the project of the Italian community of Melbourne for the establishing of an institution for Italian elderly at South Morang, a suburb of Melbourne; in 1977 they took up full responsibility for the monthly "Il Messaggero".



## CHAPTER II

### THE SCALABRINIAN MISSIONS OF AUSTRALIA

UNANDERRA, NEW SOUTH WALES: PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

WOLLONGONG: SACRED HEART ITALIAN CENTER

The first two Scalabrinian missionaries, Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello and Bro. Giovanni (Nino) Setti arrived at Unanderra on the November 9, 1952. Unanderra was at that time a small group of homes inhabited by workers employed at Wollongong, then a city of 80 thousand people including the towns around it, with 258 factories and 12,500 workers, mostly employed in metallurgy. 4000 Italians lived at South Coast, about 40 miles from Sydney, also employed in greater part in steel mills, while other groups were engaged in fishing and trading. There was no church yet in Unanderra nor any rectory, or school; and neither was there a piece of land for the parish. For the first two months the missionaries had to be contented with improvised living quarters:

*“After much insistence and many letters to civil authorities, by God’s help, two days before Christmas (...) we were finally given a small home to rent by the government. This is indeed a missionary place. For the most part Catholics are either Australians or of Irish extraction and they are few, very few, and very poor, besides. There is neither church nor school... in a word, nothing.*

Bishop Thomas McCabe of this new Diocese of Wollongong expects us to begin by building a hall for use as a Church, a school, or a place for social activities according to needs.

We are now dealing with the government for the purchase of a three acre piece of property on which to begin our work (...). At about six miles from Unanderra there are the most important steel mills of Australia, and the plans of the government are that this city should serve as a place of residence for the workers’ families. These plants are still in a process of growth as is Unanderra itself. And so about 400 bungalows were built in the last twelve months and new ones are

springing up every day. About 18% of the people are Catholics, some 200 of them, at the present time (...). Connected with Unanderra there are 3 more locations: Mount Kembla, with a little wooden chapel and 32 Catholics, the hostels of Berkeley, and Unanderra' s mission for migrants. About 60 Italian immigrants live at the first location and about two hundred at the other, most of them employees of the steel plants of Port Kembla. Ninety five per cent of our immigrants are young unmarried people ....with a mind of their own ...., and except for some sixty of them, the others, as of now at least, care little for priest or religion.

Besides, they are always on the move .... here today, and gone tomorrow (...).

I secured permission to say three Masses on Sunday: one in a small local theatre of Unanderra; another in the wooden chapel of Mount Kembla; and a third one for the immigrants of the hostels of Unanderra. At Berkeley I hear confessions and say Mass every Saturday morning. " (Letter P. T. Prevedello, Unanderra, January 1, 1953, Arch. G.S., 351/1).

A property was purchased in April 1953 for the parish institutions, and on December 8 of the same year the construction of the church was begun. Its cornerstone was laid on March 28, 1954, and it was inaugurated with the title of the Immaculate Conception by Bishop McCabe on November 21. In March 1955, Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello had to leave Australia because of ill health. Just a while earlier he had been sent Fr. Luciano Bianchini and Fr. Aldo Lorigiola to help him; Fr. Lorigiola succeeded him as pastor. The two young missionaries had started to extend their activities to the neighboring region especially to the city and the suburban area of Wollongong, wherever Italians were. These disappeared from Unanderra almost entirely just a few months after the arrival of the Scalabrinians. It was thus decided to open an "Italian Center" in Wollongong. The land was bought in May 1955; on July 3 a provisional wooden structure was opened. Inaugurated on March 13, 1960, the final building included an assistance office, a branch of the "Italian Catholic Federation", classrooms of English for Italians, Italian classes for children and for Australians, the "Scalabrini" choir, and various sports programs. The new rectory was inaugurated on May 19, 1957, while on June 1, 1958, the corner stone of the parochial school was laid. Fr. Giovanni Rac-

canello became pastor of Unanderra on August 18, 1958. The school, dedicated to St. Pius X, was blessed on February 8, 1959, but it could admit the first 125 pupils only in February 1960 upon the arrival of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. In March 1963, a new parish was opened in Berkeley, detached from that of Unanderra, because of its rapid growth that had reached a population of 7,000. Unanderra had also grown. In 1963 it had 7,000 inhabitants, 2,000 of them Catholics; the parochial school had about 400 pupils. Only 15 Italian families resided in the parish, but many of them lived in the immediate vicinity, and so a Mass was said for them at Unanderra. Named Chaplain of the Italians in the district, in 1959 Fr. Giovanni Raccanello was granted by the Bishop the faculties as their personal pastor. In 1961, upon insistence by the missionaries, the Bishop decreed that an annual mission be held in every parish where a group of Italians lived. Fr. Mario Volpato took possession of the parish on August 15, 1964. The construction of the school was completed on February 21, 1965. It could thus admit 417 students. In 1970 the direction of the parish was entrusted to Fr. Corrado Martellozzo and in 1973 to Fr. Vittorio Basso. In 1976 it had 2,500 Catholics out of a total population of 10,000 inhabitants. There were 60 Italian families in the midst of Yugoslavs, Maltese, Poles, and other nationalities. The parish was given back to the diocese on July 3, 1977.

In the years between 1955 and 1961, the Italian Center of the "Sacred Heart" in Wollongong had a long succession of directors: Frs. Bianchini, Silvano Molon, Birollo, Bertapelle, Dal Bello, Lovatin, Pagnin, Capra. From 1961 till 1965 it was directed by Fr. Ennio Ferraretto, and by Fr. Giuseppe Molon between 1965 and 1973. In 1965, work was begun on the construction of the Center's chapel which was inaugurated in 1966. A residence was built in the same year for the missionaries who had continued to live until then at Unanderra. Since 1973 the Center is under the direction of Fr. Bruno Morotti assisted by Fr. Nazzareno Frattin. The old Center was demolished in September 1975 to make room for a new one inaugurated on December 12, 1976, better fitted for the assistance, and the social and recreational activities of the Italian community of the district of Wollongong-Unanderra estimated to host, according to the various surveys, between 17,000 and 22,000 immigrants.

In addition to that offered at the chapel of the Center, religious assistance is also given on a weekly basis at Corrimal and Fairy Meadow. By the end of 1977, a third priest was assigned to the Center for Spanish and Portuguese-speaking immigrants through an exchange with the Scalabrinian Province of Argentina from which Fr. Giacomo Stocco went to Wollongong, and Fr. Giovanni Pagnin left Australia for Argentina to study Spanish. In this way the repeated request for help by Bishop W. Murray of Wollongong was finally met.

### SILKWOOD, QUEENSLAND: PARISH OF ST. JOHN

The parish of St. John the Evangelist in Silkwood, North Queensland, diocese of Cairns was founded in 1947 by the Augustinian priest Fr. A. Natali. The first Mass had been said in that place in 1924 in the police barracks. On his arrival from the United States in 1945, Fr. Natali had built, beside the small church constructed a short while earlier by an Irish committee, the school and the convent for the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, and had started building the rectory. In 1952, when the Scalabrinians arrived, the little town of Silkwood had hardly 200 people at the center and about another hundred in the surrounding countryside. Half of them were Catholics and 50% of these were Italian. The school with a staff of three Sisters was attended by 50 pupils including also those from neighboring towns. It was perhaps the poorest parish of the Diocese. In April 1952, Bishop Thomas Cahill of Cairns invited the Scalabrinians to take the direction of that parish, partly made up of Italians, like almost all the parishes of the diocese. Besides taking care of the parochial activities for the few hundred immigrants of the parish and of the surrounding countryside, the missionaries could give religious assistance by means of periodical missions to thousands of Italians scattered all over the diocese. In the whole state of Queensland there lived in 1952 about 13,000 Italians almost all of them employed in the sugar cane plantations. More than half had arrived between 20 and 30 years before and had achieved a good financial position. 1,500 of them owned their property. Those who had come in after World War II had to resign themselves to the exhausting work of cutting the sugar cane. Wages were high, however, and made it possible for many to



move south, buy a house, and settle down with lighter jobs. The great majority of Italians originated from Sicily; there were also many from Malta; the rest from Piedmont and the Veneto.

The religious situation of Italian migrants was not a consoling one. A large portion of them were indifferent; others, the Sicilians, limited themselves to folkloristic celebrations, such as the feast of the "Three Saints" Alfio, Cirino and Filadelfo, carried over from Sicily. It attracted, once a year, thousands upon thousands of Italians to Silkwood from all over the state of Queensland. The parish attendance at Sunday Mass amounted to 30%; only 10% contributed to the support of the church; 80% of children were sent to the parochial school. The first two missionaries, Frs. Dante Orsi and Ignazio Militello, arrived at Cairns on November 7, 1952, and on the 12th they took possession of the parish. Fr. Silvano Bertapelle joined them by the end of 1953. Up until that time, in addition to using the church of St. John, the missionaries used to say Mass on Sunday in two other chapels: El Arish, 7 miles away, with 350 people, 200 of them Italians; Japonvale, also distant 7 miles, with 200 people, 60 of them Italians. In early 1954, the Bishop entrusted to the care of Scalabrinians also the parish of St. Rita at South Johnstone, neighboring Silkwood with 600 people, 260 of them Italians. It had the school, the convent with four nuns, and two chapels: Wangan with 150 people, 80 of them Italians; and Mena Creek, with 200 people, 60 of them Italians. Shortly afterwards the Bishop entrusted to the Scalabrinians also the parish to be erected at Mourilyan, detached from South Johnstone. Mourilyan had 600 people, 400 of them Italians, and two chapels: Cowley, with 100 people, all Italians; and Moresby with 250 people, almost all of them Italians. Juridically there remained only one pastor, that of Silkwood, while the two priests of South Johnstone and Mourilyan directed those parishes as parochial vicars. Following some early moments of indecision, the Bishop ordered all pastors of the diocese to call in the Scalabrinians to preach the annual missions to Italians. Some fifteen of them were usually held throughout the diocese in the course of the year, and a few of them also in the neighboring diocese of Townsville.

The parish church was enlarged during Fr. Orsi's term, while other chapels were respectively built at Wangan, El Arish and Mena

Creek. In 1956, Fr. Alex Dal Piaz restored the rectory of Mourilyan and began residing there in October of that year until December 1958. Also one or two missionaries resided in South Johnstone until about the same date. In this same month the Bishop took back the two parishes and entrusted them to the diocesan clergy. In November 1958, a changeover took place in the parish of Silkwood and Fr. Alex Dal Piaz became the new pastor. He gave the finishing touches to the church of Silkwood and to the chapels of Cowley and Japonvale. From July 1961 to September 1963, Fr. Silvano Bertapelle was pastor of Silkwood while Fr. Alex Dal Piaz returned to take charge of the parish in September 1963. At that time the parish had 966 members, most of them of Italian extraction, though only very few of them could still speak the language. There was an annual average of 27 baptisms, 19 first communions, 7 marriages, 4 funerals, 3,000 communions, and 100 students in the parochial school. Fr. Antonio Dal Bello was named pastor at the end of 1964. In May 1967, following a retrenchment of positions demanded by the reduction of personnel, it was decided to abandon the most distant and isolated mission, and so ended the Scalabrinian presence in Silkwood.

#### HOBART, TASMANIA: ST. CHARLES MISSION

In January of 1956 Archbishop J. Young of Hobart, on the island of Tasmania, asked the Scalabrinians to assume the care of the 2,000 Italians residing in that State. The largest group lived in Hobart employed in the Hydro-Electric Project; a smaller group of them had settled at Launceston, 120 miles north from Hobart. Fr. Ennio Ferraretto arrived at Hobart on October 25, 1956; he was assigned to the group of assistants at the Cathedral and began saying a Mass on Sunday for the 600 Italians of the capital and visiting those of Launceston and of the three stations of Central Tasmania where they were working on the construction of dams. In June 1957, Fr. Ferraretto was assigned to Sydney; his place at Hobart was taken in November by Fr. Giovanni Pagnin, who continued the plans for the construction of a residence at North Hobart. In the beginning of 1959, Fr. Pagnin was replaced by Fr. Remigio Birollo; in April of that year, on a piece of property placed at his disposal by the Archbishop, work began on a house

into which he moved in September 1960 with Fr. Aldo Montanari who had been sent to assist him. On April 1, 1962, Archbishop Young laid the foundation stone of a new building for the "Italian Center" and the church, dedicated to St. Charles Borromeo. The building was put up with the help of the Cathedral's administration. This way the clergy of the Cathedral could take advantage of the church for the Australians of the district, while the hall remained the exclusive domain of the Scalabrinians for the activities on behalf of Italians. In the meantime they continued the religious services for Italians in the Cathedral and devoted themselves to the assistance of the sick, of the families in need and to anyone for whom their work as missionaries of migrants should be requested. One priest used to go to Launceston on all feast days. In August 1962, Fr. Birollo was succeeded by Fr. Alex Dal Piaz. The hall was inaugurated on November 11, 1962; the church was opened for services in December and solemnly blessed on March 3, 1963. Fr. Birollo returned to Hobart in September 1963. In the meanwhile, the Italian community of Hobart had grown with new young families and with others moving in from the stations. In 1964 the Catholics of Italian language or origin and of other nationalities placed by the Archbishop under the jurisdiction of Scalabrinians amounted all together in Tasmania to about 4,000, of whom 2,000 lived in the capital. In 1965, an exchange took place between Fr. Birollo and Fr. Ferraretto. A period of stagnation was beginning with fewer Italian immigrants coming, others moving to the Australian mainland and others yet progressively integrating into the local parishes. By 1967 the validity of the personal parish for Italians was called into question. Fr. Giovanni Mello was named director of that mission in September of the same year, and then Fr. Tiziano Martellozzo in May 1969. The mission of Hobart was closed on July 12, 1970, and the Scalabrinians withdrew from Tasmania in order to assist the much more numerous communities of immigrants of the continent. In the years between 1965 and 1967, a missionary, Fr. Aldo Montanari had fixed his residence at Launceston to assist the Italians of that city and of the northern section of the Island. A property had been purchased in 1966 on which to build a kindergarten and a parish center, but the project was abandoned in 1967 and the Scalabrinians reverted to periodical visits from Hobart.

**NEWCASTLE, N.S.W.: PARISHES OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER IN CARRINGTON, ST. LAWRENCE O'TOOLE IN BROADMEADOW, THE ITALIAN CENTER IN HAMILTON**

At the close of 1955, Fr. Corrado Martellozzo had offered the services of the Scalabrinians to the diocese of Maitland, N.S.W., and in 1956 Auxiliary Bishop J. Toohey gave them a parish at Carrington, in the slums of Newcastle. Small but free of debts, the parish of St. Francis Xavier was endowed with a modest church, a wooden school, and a convent with four nuns. It had just been dismembered from the parish of the Cathedral, and on October 12, 1956, Fr. Luciano Bianchini arrived at Newcastle as its first pastor. The parish numbered about 500 Catholics. The Italians were quite distant. Fr. Bianchini promptly thought of an "Italian Center" in a central location; providing, in the meantime, that a bus should transport Italians into Carrington for their Sunday Mass. With contributions from Italian restaurants and stores, he gave life to a weekly radio program. In 1958 he succeeded in finding and acquiring a centrally located property in Hamilton. The "Scalabrini Center" was set up in that modest wooden structure that became the actual center of all the missionary activities for some 3,000 Italians living in the district of Newcastle. No permission was granted, however, for the opening of a chapel.

Fr. Tiziano Martellozzo was named pastor in August 1960. He obtained from the Bishop the parish of St. Lawrence O'Toole at Broadmeadow, a district better accessible by Italians, in exchange for that of Carrington. The parish had its beginnings in 1904 as a subsidiary chapel of the parish of Hamilton: in 1917 it was transferred under the jurisdiction of the parish of Varatah; a new church had been inaugurated in 1933 and it had been made a parish in 1939. The new school was built in 1956. The parish numbered 300 families, only 30 of them Italian, with 160 pupils in the school. The Scalabrinians took possession of it on December 7, 1960. They restored the church and in 1963 went ahead with the construction of a new parochial hall, inaugurated by the Bishop on May 10, 1964. Fr. Dante Orsi became its pastor in 1967, Fr. Luigi Astegno in 1970, and again Fr. Orsi in 1972. In 1977, the parish numbered 900 Catholics, mostly old people, living on their pensions as former employees of the railroads and steel plants, al-

most all of them of Irish extraction. Italian and Polish families were very few and the school pupils had decreased by more than half. The church had been cut off from an expanding industrial district by a railroad. On May 22, 1977, it was returned to the diocese. The new headquarters and chapel of the Bishop Scalabrini Italian Center were built in 1966, on the same property of the old one, to which another piece had been added that was purchased in 1961. Fr. Tito Cecilia directed the center from January 1965 until 1971. He was succeeded by Fr. Savino Bernardi. In the year 1973, the Center became also the seat for the "Stella Maris" of Newcastle for the assistance of seamen going through that port in numbers amounting to 20 thousand a year. This work had its center, at first, in a building by the port, owned by the St. Vincent De Paul Society and was carried out by a diocesan priest.

Fr. Savino Bernardi was first succeeded by Fr. Luigi Bertinato, and then by Fr. Tiziano Martellozzo since 1974. Due to its distance from the port and to the lack of facilities for seamen, the Scalabrini Center proved to be inadequate for the assistance of seamen. Thought was given then to an experiment of collaboration between the Catholic and Anglican chaplains with the use of the Seafarers Center owned by the Church of England, well equipped and very close to the port. Initiated in January 1975, with the approval of both the Catholic and Anglican authorities, the experiment resulted satisfactory as it provided a more efficient service for seamen frequenting the center at an average of about 15,000 a year. As to the religious and social activities, the Catholic section has the collaboration of the "Stella Maris" Club and of the "Legion of Mary", whose members take turns in the daily visitation of the ships. Since November 1977 the Italian Center is directed by Fr. Emilio Vaccaro who restructured it, moved its headquarters to 15 Bennet Street, and built a new chapel.

#### **SYDNEY, N.S.W.: PARISH OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - "SCALABRINI VILLAGE" - THE LIVERPOOL RESIDENCE**

In the early months of 1957, negotiations were started for a Scalabrinian parish in the metropolis of Sydney. On July 4 of that year, Cardinal N.T. Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, offered to the Superior Provincial, Fr. A. Lorigiola, the parish of St. Francis de Sales in Albi-

on Street, with the request for a priest to take care of the Australian faithful and for another one to work for the Italians of the city and its suburbs. The Italians of the other districts would have continued to remain in charge of the Capuchins of the parish at Leichhardt.

The parish of St. Francis de Sales had been one of the largest and most important in Sydney. It had its beginnings in the nineteenth century on Elizabeth Street; because of the subway's construction its location was transferred to a former Protestant church on Albion Street, in the district of Haymarket and Surry Hills. In 1957 the Chancery foresaw it would eventually become mostly Italian. But the unsafe and slum like environment forced Italians and others out of there in ever greater numbers, especially when a part of it was declared "Industrial Zone B".

The parochial school which once had as many as 600 students, now in 1965 it had only 60 of them and it had to be shut down in 1968. The parish was entrusted to the Scalabrinians on July 5, 1957. Fr. Ennio Ferraretto took possession of it on July 17. He undertook some initial adaptations, turned three small rooms of the basement into the "Italian Recreation Center", opened an assistance office and put the stage hall back into use. Fr. Dante Orsi was its pastor from November 1, 1962 to January 1963, followed by Fr. George Baggio until 1967. By 1964, Catholics had dwindled down to 500. The missionaries devoted themselves especially to the Italians of the section entrusted to them by the Archbishop including about half of the 80,000 Italians of Sydney by means of flying missions, the Italian Catholic Federation, the administration of the Sacraments, the celebration of Sunday Mass at Paddington, Mascot, Rockdale, Liverpool, the assistance office, and the recreation center. In 1968, the missionaries offered a special assistance to 1,800 Sicilian earthquake survivors immigrants to Sydney. The parish was directed by Fr. Tiziano Martellozzo in the years 1967-1968, and by Fr. Francesco Lovatin in the years 1968-1972. Fr. Tito Cecilia is pastor since 1974. At the present time the parish has less than 400 members; only three Italian families are left. Located nearby the railroad station, the church is frequented, however, by a number of Catholics going through Sydney. Above all, activities continue to be carried out in the 73 parishes entrusted to the Scalabrinians as a field of work for Italians, whose number, including

their children, comes to about 50,000. The Spaniards of the district gather in the church for their Sunday mass said by a chaplain of their own. On February 14, 1976, two Scalabrinian missionaries moved from Albion Street and fixed their residence at Liverpool, a suburb of Sydney, continuing from there the work began in 1968 in a district that covers seven parishes with about 5,000 Italian families in great majority from Calabria, Abruzzo, Sicily, and The Marches. With the wholehearted approval of the Archbishop Card. J. Freeman and the collaboration of the local clergy, the missionaries make use of the existing parish structures for the periodical Sunday Masses and other activities among which a special part is played by the Italian Catholic Federation and Youth Associations. The priests residing on Albion Street continue their regular assistance, instead, to the Italians in the parishes of Mascot, Rockdale, Arncliffe, and Punchbowl.

In the parish on Albion Street the idea was born of an institution of assistance to the elderly of the Italian community in the New South Wales. In 1969, a committee was formed for the planning of the "Villaggio Scalabrini". During his visit to Australia, Pope Paul VI blessed, on December 1, 1970, the corner stone which was then laid, on September 12, 1971, by Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio on a 27 acre property acquired in the locality of Austral, distant 8 miles from Liverpool and 30 mile west of Sydney. Construction began on the first wing on May 18, 1973 for 49 beds. It was inaugurated on May 12, 1974 by Cardinal J. Freeman, in the presence of the Apostolic Delegate and - exceptionally- given of Prime Minister Whitham together with the opposition leader Snaddon. The complete project, of which Fr. Nevio Capra is the animator, foresees 174 beds and is under construction. The patients are assisted by the Sisters of Blessed Magdalene of Canossa.

#### LISMORE, N.S.W. - PARISH OF ST. PATRICK AT GOOLMANGAR - PARISH OF THE HOLY FAMILY AT NORTH LISMORE

In November 1955, Bishop P.J. Farrelly of Lismore offered to the Scalabrinians the parish of St. Patrick at Goolmangar, founded in 1928, six miles from the city, with 550 Italians and 450 Australians; other groups of Italians resided in neighboring parishes mostly engaged in growing bananas. The first Scalabrinian missionaries ar-



rived there on February 18, 1958. On that occasion the Bishop extended the boundaries of the parish so as to include the localities where Italians were found over a radius of 30 miles around. Italians had been previously contacted only through the quick and sporadic visits of the Capuchins and of the diocesan priest, Fr. McGrath. As their first job, the missionaries had to group together in parochial communities the Italians, who previously belonged to various neighboring parishes. For the Italians of Lismore they opened an office in the city, reserving one day a week at their disposal and saying for them a weekly Mass. On November 1, 1960, the Bishop gave the missionaries permission to move their location closer to the city, in the suburb of North Lismore at the parish of the Holy Family, which was thus made to include also the parish of Goolmangar, in a territory of 600 square kilometers. An Italian-Australian club was opened alongside the church. The parish had a membership of 500 families, half of them Italian and Australian the rest. Besides at the headquarters, the missionaries used to say Mass every Sunday at the closest localities and once or twice a month at the farther ones.

Its first pastor, Fr. Antonio Miazzi, died in an air crash near Bombay in India, on July 7, 1962. He was succeeded from 1962 to 1963 by Fr. Giovanni Pagnin, by Fr. Luigi Astegno in 1963, by Fr. Francesco Lovatin in 1964, Fr. Giovanni Raccanello from 1964 to 1967. Later Fr. Francesco Lovatin returned again with Fr. Antonio Dal Bello for a few months, and by Fr. Leo Silvestri served it from 1970 on. By 1968 the population of the parish had decreased to 180 Italian and 170 Australian families, respectively. This was due to the lack of industries and to the recession in the trade of bananas and in cattle prices. And so Italians tended to move towards the cities of the south. In 1971 the parochial school was incorporated with the Cathedral school due to the lower number of students. The missionaries continued their activities outside the parish by taking care of the 200 families of the city of Lismore, and less regularly the other 80 of Casino, Ballina, and Mullumbimby. With the annual missions, they reached the more distant Italian communities of Coff Harbour, with 90 families; Stanthorpe, with 400 families; Texas, with 65 families; and Wallangarra with 40 families. All together they thus kept in touch with about 1,000



Italian families. Fr. Francesco Lovatin was appointed Pastor on January 1, 1977. On June 4, 1978 the parish was given back to the diocese.

#### WALKERSTON, QUEENSLAND: THE PARISH OF ST. JOHN

In December 1955, Bishop A.G. Tynan of Rockhampton in Queensland asked the Scalabrinians to take charge of the parish in the district of Mackay, where there were hundreds of Italians and Maltese working in the sugar cane plantations. Only at the close of 1958 was it possible to comply with his request, and on January 1, 1959, Fr. Charles La Verde took official possession of the parish of St. John in Walkerston, distant 8 miles from Mackay. The parish numbered about 1,000 Catholics out of a total population of 3,000. Very few Italians resided in the parish, but it had to serve as a central quarter of the apostolate for the migrants scattered all over the city of Mackay, in the district around it, and also for those residing in the neighboring diocese of Townsville. Fr. Mario Volpato, recently arrived at Walkerston in February 1959, was given the assistance of the Italians. A definite plan of action was promptly organized for the four parishes with more than 100 Italians: St. Patrick at Mackay, where it was possible to gather the Italians of the city; St. Josephs at Beloela, with about 50 Italian families; and the parishes of St. Mary and of the Holy Rosary at Bundaberg, distant a good 800 kilometers from Walkerston, where there lived about 700 Italians. Fr. La Verde's first concern was the construction of a convent for the five Sisters of Mercy who had been teaching for years in the parochial school in conditions of great inconvenience. The church of Walkerston was then restored and a chapel built at Homebush. A new church, a memorial to the fallen of war, was constructed on "Calvary Hill", where a Passion play was staged every year. The church of Holy Cross was inaugurated on January 13, 1964.

In 1964, the parish numbered 1,054 Catholics; 87 students attended the parochial school and there were 22 Italian families. Only about 20 families had remained in each of the four neighboring parishes. The Italians residing at Mackay knew English and, therefore, did not feel the need for a particular assistance any longer. For these reasons the Scalabrinians decided to discontinue the mission of Walkerston

and surrendered the parish to the diocesan clergy in January of 1965. Frs. Mario Volpato (1962-1963) and Giovanni Di Vito were the last two pastors.

**MELBOURNE, VICTORIA: PARISH OF ALL SAINTS IN FITZROY, MELBOURNE  
- PARISH OF ST. LUKE IN LALOR, MELBOURNE**

“Until 1959, the suburb of Fitzroy, bordering on the City Melbourne, depended directly on St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Two assistants from the Cathedral served Fitzroy but only on the religious level. Given that it is one of the oldest suburbs, if not the oldest one, Fitzroy was never a parish. It was never thought to have the qualifications to be one. The district is indeed densely populated, but famous all over Australia for its gangster activities, moral depravation, poverty, a den for alcoholics and vagrants. To reform Fitzroy there was the need, perhaps, of an upheaval or of a daring city administration with sufficient funds and vision. Though of a slow character, something new began to emerge in 1955 as an effective remedy for Fitzroy: a numerous infiltration of Italian immigrants, attracted by its central location and the low cost of its old and dirty houses. As had happened at another nearby district (Carlton), Italians began work on a steady interior and exterior cleaning of their newly acquired homes and properties! And so anyone could tell in this district where an Italian family lived. The arrival of Italians at Melbourne gave rise on the part of the Archdiocese to the urgent and serious problem of a religious and social assistance fitting them. Various Italian priests had resided in Melbourne. Some of them excelled for the enormous work they did as individuals. Carlton was considered as the parish of Italians for quite a few years. The coming in of the Capuchins to Hawthorn (1949) changed things a little. They lacked a parochial center, however, and felt limited and being able to offer social assistance. It is not easy to serve a community of 75,000 Italians from a poor convent outside of the city proper. In 1959, Archbishop Mannix decided to try another course: to entrust a predominantly Italian parish to Italian priests. With a pastor and assistants of their own, the Italians could thus have a religious and social assistance fitting their character, traditions, and new needs. His choice fell on the Scalabrinians. On September 4 of the same year they took possession of old Fitzroy as a newly created parish. The experiment produced magnificent results, as was immediately noticed by the attendance to Sunday Mass, to the confessional, to Holy Communion, and the weekly devotions in Italian. All this was openly seen the last year when a new parish school for girls was inaugurated which cost liras 44.000.

A first attempt at building the school had been made in 1939. No need to wonder then if many people considered the completion of this first great project in a depressed and forlorn district full of poor Italians and of people given to all kinds of misdeeds, "the Italian miracle of Fitzroy."

This much we gather from the book, "Dieci anni al servizio degli emigrati in Australia", published at Fitzroy in 1962.

The Scalabrinians were invited to Melbourne by Archbishop Manix in 1958. He did not have a pre-existing parish to offer them, but he had intention to create a new one at Fitzroy where the diocese owned a former presbyterian church, purchased in 1934 and made a chaplaincy of the Cathedral in 1937; a former hotel, serving as rectory; and a warehouse, transformed into a parish hall.

Fr. Aldo Lorigiola was the first pastor: he had arrived in Fitzroy in early September 1959. In a certain sense, the Archbishop wanted to put the new arrivals to the test by confronting them with the construction of a large and costly girls' school for 380 students. The religious revival of the district gave cause for good hopes. In fact, construction began the following year on a school dedicated to the Sacred Heart, which was inaugurated on June 4, 1961. The school for boys, with 200 students, and the kindergarten with fifty children, were in existence already. In 1964 the parish numbered 2,850 Catholics; 55% of them Italians, 25% Australians, and 20% of other nationalities: Maltese, Spaniards, Yugoslavs, Hungarians, and Poles. In the first five years, fifty missions had been preached outside the parish in the diocese of Melbourne and in others of the State of Victoria. Fr. Giovanni Di Vito was named pastor on December 15, 1965. The people of the parish were rapidly diminishing following the demolition of old buildings: the new ones were not being occupied by immigrants, who gradually disappeared almost entirely from Fitzroy. A petition was therefore made to Archbishop Knox to take back the parish or to incorporate it in the Scalabrinian parish of St. Brigid. The Archbishop wanted to wait until 1970 to see how the demographic situation would evolve. In May of that year, he allowed the Scalabrinians to withdraw from Fitzroy entrusting to them, at the same time, the parish of Lalor, a suburb north of Melbourne, in the immediate vicinity of the industrial zone. The Scalabrinians of either Fitzroy or North Fitzroy had already been saying a Sunday Mass for Italians now and then at the

parish of St. Luke in Lalor, created in 1964, where they made up about 40% of the Catholic population. There were in all 6,200 Catholics; 570 students attended the parochial school, while 700 more Catholic children frequented public schools. The Church and hall combination building had been constructed in 1965. The Scalabrinian priests Fr. Remigio Birollo, as pastor, and Frs. Dante Orsi and Giovanni Mello, as his assistants, took possession of the parish on August 15, 1970. Fr. Giovanni Raccanello resided in that parish from January 1971 until March, 1973 while a member of the "planning committee" of the 40th International Eucharistic Congress for the sector of the renewal of the pastoral care for migrants and as Vice-President of the Diocesan Commission for Migration. In 1950 there were only 25 Catholic families, and now they still number 2,000 even after the dismembering in 1976 of the parish of St. Claire at West Thomastown. 1,200 of them are Italian, predominantly from Calabria and Sicily, followed by some from Lucania, Puglia, and Veneto, etc. The rest are in greater part from Malta, and originate also from Ireland, England, Spain, Germany, and other countries: 25 nationalities all together. The strictly Australian families amount to about 15% of the total. There were 83 baptisms in 1964, 220 in 1970, 320 in 1975, and 298 in 1978.

The school of St. Luke has over 500 pupils. In another part of the parish was built the school of St. John, attended by 240 students; while a third one, St. Clare of Assisi, was constructed in the years 1976-1977. The weekly classes of Italian are very well attended. Sisters of the Good Samaritan and the "Pastorelle", who form also the teaching staff of St. Luke's school, take care of the catechesis in the public schools. They have the collaboration of a large group of lay catechists. The Scalabrinians supply on Sunday the religious assistance for about 500 Italian families in East Preston. Fr. Antonio Paganoni is the present pastor since January 1, 1977. The new parish church was inaugurated by Archbishop F.T. Little on November 11 of the same year.

#### ADELAIDE, S.A.: MATER CHRISTI PARISH

Archbishop M. Beovich of Adelaide, South Australia, invited the Scalabrinians into his diocese in 1958. In 1959 the Archbishop showed

the Superior General, Fr. Raffaele Larcher, the district of Gleneagles, a suburb of Adelaide: there was a church and school combination building made of plate sheet and asbestos. The families were few and poor, but the place was to become a residential zone. Foreseeing no source of a livelihood, another parish was obtained from the Archbishop so as to insure the support of the priests until the parish of Gleneagles would become self-sufficient. Scalabrinians began working at Adelaide in August 1961 with the preaching of two missions to the Italians. In September 1961 they were entrusted with the temporary administration of the parish of Our Lady Help of Christians at Lower North Adelaide, in the vicinity of downtown, endowed with church, school, convent for the Sisters, and rectory for the priests. It was one of the oldest parishes of the city, with about 600 members, in majority retired people or professionals. The church was also available for the celebration of weddings and baptisms of Italians of the city who requested them.

On October 1, 1961, the missionaries celebrated for the first time the mass at Gleneagles-Seaton, distant 6 miles from Lower North Adelaide. At the same time the parish of "Mater Christi" was created, detaching Gleneagles from the parishes of Woodville and Hindmarsh. It numbered, then, about 250 families; some sixty children attended the school, which was used as a church on Sunday. The first concern of the pastor, Fr. Luciano Bianchini, and his assistant, Fr. Ermete Nazzani was the construction of a new school. Their parishioners supplied great part of their work free of charge. The collaboration of Australian and Italian volunteer workers with the priests brought the building to completion in nine months and to its inauguration on September 9, 1962, and it contributed at the same time to uniting the parish into a community.

Upon completion of the school, the church was enlarged and remodeled and blessed March 10, 1963. Three more classrooms were added to the school in 1964. The boundaries of the parish were extended in the same year and its membership rose to 1,500 parishioners. The new rectory was dedicated in 1966. Fr. Francesco Lovatin became pastor in 1967 and then Fr. Corrado Martellozzo in September of the same year. At that time the parish numbered about 2,500 members in 338 Italian families, 200 Australian, and 75 mixed. Quite

a few more Italian families of the surrounding district availed themselves of the religious and social services of the parish of Mater Christi. The 21,000 Italian residents of the city were attended to through the preaching of missions.

In September 1970, Fr. Martellozzo was succeeded by Fr. Mario Volpato, and on January 1, 1977, by Fr. Domenico Ceresoli, who was able to immediately carry out the project for a new church consecrated on April 28, 1978. The parish presently numbers about 3000 Catholics: 75% of them Italians, the rest Australians, Poles, etc. There are about 40,000 Italians in Adelaide. Scalabrinians give regular assistance to 12,000 of them residing closer around the parish of Mater Christi, while periodically reaching, by means of flying missions, other thousands of Italians of the city and of the Northern Territory.

#### SHEPPARTON, VICTORIA: PARISH OF ST. MEL

The Scalabrinian presence began in the diocese of Sandhurst (Bendigo) in Victoria in August 1959. Fr. Tito Cecilia was five months at Bendigo, five months at Wangarata, where about 800 Italians lived, assisting at the same time the two or three thousand Italians of Myrtleford; and lastly, from January 1960 till April 1962, at Tatura, but always on the move to visit and assist the Italians scattered throughout tobacco plantations and orchards. Finally, on April 22, 1962, Bishop B. Stewart entrusted to Scalabrinians the parish of St. Mel at South Shepparton in the center of Goulburn Valley. The parish had been erected in 1955, detaching it from the parish in central Shepparton, and it extended more than 20 miles into the surrounding countryside rich with fruits, vegetables, wheat and shepherds. The parish numbered about 1,500 Catholics, half of them Italians, and the rest Australians. There lived 3000 Italians in the city of Shepparton, and 3000 more were scattered in the various towns of the valley. Assisted by Fr. Cecilia, the first Scalabrinian pastor, Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, had to face at first considerable financial and moral difficulties, the latter ones due above all to divisions among Italians and between Australians and Italians. He visited all the Italian families of the vast parish, took care of the religious instruction of the 120 children who attended public schools, and improved the finances. Once the parish

was reorganized, it became possible to get in touch with the other Italian groups of the diocese of Sandhurst, while a Mass continued to be said at Tatura on Sunday.

Fr. Ermete Nazzani was made pastor in September 1967. A revision of the census showed a membership of 2,400 Catholics, 1,100 of them Italians. In the district entrusted to the Scalabrinians there lived 9,000 Italians who were systematically visited every year. A parish hall was built in 1968, which was dedicated by Bishop Stewart on September 29. It was decided to build a new church to take the place of the church and school combination structure that would be entirely used only as a school. Work started in 1969, and the church, with a seating capacity for 800 people, was inaugurated on July 19, 1970. In 1969, the rectory was handed over to the Daughters of the Divine Zeal, who were to direct the kindergarten and a new rectory one was built.

Fr. Giovanni Pagnin took possession of the parish on March 12, 1972. In 1973 it numbered 3,800 members, 60% of them of Australian origin, and 40% Italians, with a few families of Dutch and other extractions. Besides a small group of Tuscans arrived there in the twenties, the Italian community is formed by two-thirds of Calabrians and one-third of Apulians from "San Marco in Lamis". The kindergarten is attended by about forty children, and the parish school by 380 students, 130 of them Italians. The 2,000 Italian families and about 100 Spanish ones of the district assisted by the missionaries of Shepparton continue to be contacted through the flying missions, a weekly radio program initiated by Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, and their presence at regional celebrations. Fr. Dino Torresan is pastor there since May 1977.

#### RED CLIFFS, VICTORIA: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH

The parish of St. Joseph in Red Cliffs began in 1953, detaching it from that of Mildura. The town sprang up in 1920, in the middle of a strip of land along the Murray River, which through an irrigation system set up right after World War I, consented a productive cultivation of vines, citrus, and fruits. In 1922, it numbered 150 Catholics and in 1963 number grew to 1,200, two-thirds of them Australians



and one-third Italians. Many other Italians lived in that valley, especially in Mildura, Swan Hill, Robinvale and Merbein: 3,000 of them all together. The Bishop of Ballarat invited the Scalabrinians into Red Cliffs to assist them. Fr. Dante Orsi took possession of the parish on January 20, 1963, and was joined by Fr. Leo Silvestri the following August. The missionaries extended their activity to the entire valley (Swan Hill stands at a distance of 250 kilometers south from Red Cliffs) and helped substantially in the solution of the problem of the pastoral care for migrants. The parish had a wooden church built in 1941, with seating capacity for 250 people, and a school made of bricks and stones built in 1933. Frs. Orsi and Birollo prepared the project for a new church, which was actually built between July 1967 and June 1968, but inaugurated and opened for services by Bishop J. P. O'Collins on October 8, 1967. Fr. Orsi had been transferred to Newcastle two weeks before and was replaced by Fr. Birollo as Pastor. The Bishop consecrated the completed church in August 1968. He had administered Confirmation the previous night and something had happened to him then, such as never did before in his 38 years as Bishop. As is the custom in those places, he had invited the candidates to take the pledge to abstain from alcoholic beverages until the age of 21. A long and embarrassing silence followed his invitation. As a good sport, the Bishop limited himself to remark that it was quite understandable in the case of Italians for whom a glass of wine does not represent a danger, and much less, a sin. In 1968, there were 1,550 Catholics in the parish, half of them immigrants; Italians residing in the district usually cared for by the missionaries were about 4000. Frs. Tiziano Martellozzo and Aldo Montanari were named pastors in 1970 and in November 1973, respectively. The region of Red Cliffs was by then saturated and no new arrivals of immigrants were being registered. Signs of depopulation began showing up, instead, due to difficulties in the sale of their produce and to the fact that the harvest of raisins, the main product of that district, suffered frequent losses, and so the land is progressively becoming the property of a few owners. In 1975, the parish had 310 families, 130 of them Italians, and about 20 from Eastern countries. The parish school staffed by the Sisters of Mercy, numbers 155 children. Assistance is still provided for the 2,500 Italians of the Sunraysia region: 350 families at Mildura,



30 at Euston, 20 at Buronga, 60 at Merbein, 80 at Robinvale, 120 at Swan Hill. In 1976, Fr. Antonio Dal Bello became pastor while Fr. Montanari took upon himself the assistance of the Italians of Sunraysia.

#### DEE WHY, SYDNEY, N.S.W.: PARISH OF ST. KEVIN

The parish of St. Kevin at Dee Why was founded in 1928. Built in 1923, the first church was destroyed by a fire in 1958 and the same fate befell the school in 1959. The new church was constructed in 1960-1962 by the pastor Fr. Thomas O'Neill. In 1965, Cardinal N. T. Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, decided to entrust it to the Scalabrinians. It had been vacant following the death of the pastor in February. The Cardinal wanted, this way, to offer the Scalabrinians a position more involved and promising than the parish of St. Francis De Sales in Albion St., Sydney, and to place them in a condition that might allow them to carry out an apostolate for the Italians of the northern region of the metropolis.

The pastor Fr. Giovanni Pagnin and his assistant Fr. Luigi Astegno took possession of the parish of St. Kevin on April 1, 1965. An approximate census showed a total of over 900 Catholic families: 80 of them Italians. A more accurate count confirmed in 1968 the same number, but there were 156 Italian families then within the parish, while another 600 resided in the district of Warringah, also under the jurisdiction of the Scalabrinians of St. Kevin. Though almost entirely not of a recent immigration, they had not as yet been religiously or socially integrated. According to the census taken in 1972 there were 1,200 families in the parish, 200 of them Italian (85% Calabrian, 15% Sicilian), 50 Dutch, and a few of other nationalities. The parochial school was attended by 380 students. Fr. Emilio Vaccaro was pastor from 1971 till 1977. Fr. Giorgio Baggio succeeded him in 1977. The new parish hall was inaugurated on May 14, 1978.

#### NORTH FITZROY - MELBOURNE, VICTORIA: PARISH OF ST. BRIGID

The parish of St. Brigid at North Fitzroy, in mid Melbourne, was entrusted to the Scalabrinians on January 20, 1968, by Archbishop J. Knox with the intent that they might take care of its high percent-

age of Italians and make it a center of irradiation for the pastoral assistance of Italians residing in the city, which about 100,000 strong, numbered the largest concentration of Italian immigrants in Australia. Out of a total of 2000 families, the parish counted over 1000 Italian families, which meant 5,000 Italians out of a total of 8,000 parishioners. Fr. Giovanni Raccanello was its first pastor from 1968 to 1971, with Fr. Leo Silvestri as his first assistant. The latter had been there for some time already to assist the aging pastor Fr. Little, who remained in North Fitzroy as "pastor emeritus". Three other assistants soon arrived to join them. The demographic situation of the parish was in a steady evolution because residents, especially the Italians, sold out their houses to Australians, pensioners or alone, as soon as they could and moved to the suburbs. In 1973, there were 1,200 families: 600 Italian, 60 Maltese, a few Spanish, Yugoslavians, Greek, and Lebanese. The parish school was attended by 480 students, which represented 40% of all children, who in 1968 were about 1,200. Still in 1973, the missionaries provided a regular assistance for various Italian communities of the city with a Sunday Mass in Coburg, where 700 Italian families lived; in East Coburg, with 100 families; and in Preston, with 200 families. A mass was said, each month in Morewell for its 250 families, in Moe, and in St. Alban. By means of "flying" missions the missionaries could reach also the Italians of other places in the dioceses of Ballarat, Sandhurst, and Sale. The parish is also the residence of the director of the "Il Messaggero": a monthly with a circulation of 5,500 copies.

Fr. Giovanni Mello became pastor in 1971. At the present, the families are less than 1,000, 400 of them are Italian. The school has an attendance of 350 students. Besides that at the nearby chapel of St. Mark, a Sunday Mass continues to be said in the parishes of Alphington, Preston, Bulleen, and a monthly one at Morewell.

#### **SOUTH MORANG, VICTORIA: THE VILLAGE FOR ITALIAN ELDERLY.**

In September 1975, Fr. Remigio Birollo was asked to study a proposal by Comm. Walter Vaccari, president of the "Italian Community Service Fund". He had allocated part of the fund for the purchase of a property at South Morang, a suburb of Melbourne with the intent

of building on it an institution for elderly Italians. Mr. Vaccari had pledged himself to the securing of the amount needed to obtain the subsidies of the Australian government and had turned to the Scalabrinians to make sure he could count on an organization capable of warranting both the direction and the continuity of the initiative.

At the February 1976 Provincial Assembly, the Scalabrinian Province of Australia accepted the task and entrusted it to Fr. Birollo himself. In August 1977, work began on the construction of the "first phase" that would have allowed the admittance of 40 elderly residents by early 1979, distributed in ten units and of the Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony Maria Claret, who were to staff it, and were housed in a separate unit by themselves.



## PART IV

THE PROVINCE OF SÃO PAULO  
BRAZIL: SÃO PAULO, PARANÁ,  
RÍO DE JANEIRO,  
DISTRITO FEDERAL, PARÁ



## CHAPTER I·

### PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

#### AN INITIAL SUMMARY

Succession of Provincial Superiors from 1941 to 1978

(1935) - 1946: Fr. Francesco Milini

1946 - 1952: Fr. Sante Bernardi

1952 - 1958: Fr. Mario Rimondi

1958 - 1964: Fr. Sante Bernardi

1964 - 1967: Fr. Isidoro Bizzotto

1967 - 1970: Fr. Secondo Guerrino Zago

1970 - 1973: Fr. Romano Bevilacqua

1973 - Fr. Rovílio Guizzardi

Alphabetical list of institutions and parishes with dates of their beginning and discontinuance in the period between 1941 and 1978:

#### **Seminaries:**

Astorga, PR: Scalabrini-Janssen Seminary opened in Lobato in 1965 and then transferred to Astorga in 1967.

Curitiba, PR: N. Sra. do Rocio Seminary, opened in 1969.

Curitiba, PR: Interprovincial Seminary of Philosophy initiated in 1978 and transferred to its present location in 1979.

Domenico, SP: São Joaquin Seminary opened in 1972.

Osasco, SP: Novitiate, opened in 1975.

Rondinha, PR: Fr. Natale Pigato Seminary opened in 1975.

São Paulo, SP: João XXIII Major Seminary, opened in 1954 in the premises of the Christopher Columbus Institute, and transferred to its present location in 1964.

#### **Parishes and Other Positions:**

Astorga, PR: Parish of St. Sebastian opened in 1961

Campo Comprido, PR: Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes reopened in 1962

Cascalho, SP: Parish of Assumption discontinued in 1952

Curitiba, PR: Parish of Our Lady do Rocio, opened in 1952

Curitiba, PR: Parish of St. Joseph, Vila Feliz, opened in 1957  
Florida, PR: Parish of St. Anthony, 1957, discontinued in 1971  
Foz do Areia, PR: Parish of Mission  
Iguaracu, PR: Parish of N.S. Aparecida opened in 1960  
Itupiranga, PR: Parish of St. Anthony, opened in 1951  
Lobato, PR: Parish of Sacred Heart, 1959, discontinued in 1972  
Londrina, PR: Parish of N.S. Aparecida, Vila Nova, opened in 1959  
Londrina, PR: Parish of Our Lady of Peace, opened in 1960  
Munhoz de Mello, PR: Parish of St. Sebastian, opened in 1962  
Ribeirão Pires, SP: Parish of St. Joseph  
Río de Janeiro, RJ: Parish of St. Anthony, opened in 1960  
Río de Janeiro, RJ: Parish of St.s Cecilia and Pius X, opened in 1957  
Rondinha, PR: Parish of St. Sebastian  
Rudge Ramos, SP: Parish of St. John Baptist, opened in 1954  
Santa Fé, PR: Parish of Our Lady of Grace, 1961, discontinued in 1976  
Santa Felicidade, PR: Parish of St. Joseph  
Santa Felicidade, PR: Parish of Immaculate Conception at Butiatuvinha opened in 1972  
Santo André, SP: Parish of St. Andrew  
Santos, SP: Parish of O.L. of the Seamen and Seamen Centre opened in 1971  
São Bernardo do Campo, SP: Parish of O.L. of the Good Voyage and St. Bernard  
São Paulo, SP: Christopher Columbus Institute  
São Paulo, SP: Parish of Our Lady of Peace  
São Paulo, SP: Parish of St. Charles in Vila Prudente, 1967  
São Paulo, SP: Parish of St. John Baptist at Ipiranga, 1958  
São Paulo, SP: Shrine of San Antonio in Praça do Patriarca  
São Paulo, SP: New Provincial Residence, 1975  
Sobradinho, Brasilia, DF: Parish of Bom Jesus dos Migrantes, 1974  
Tucuruí, PA: Mission for Workers at the Hydroelectric Plant, opened 1978  
Umbará, PR: Parish of St. Peter  
Vicente de Carvalho, SP: Parish of Our Lady of Grace, opened in 1957



The Province of São Paulo includes also the Scalabrinian positions taken in the States of São Paulo and Paraná since 1888, in the states of Rio de Janeiro, since 1954; Para' from 1972, and in the Distrito Federal of Brasilia since 1974. In 1946 it numbered 10 residences with 26 priests and 3 Missionary Brothers; in 1954 it had 14 locations and 36 priests, 36 religious clerics, and still 3 lay brothers; in 1965 it had 32 positions with 55 priests, 60 clerics, and 3 brothers; and finally in 1978 it counted 40 positions, 71 priests, 46 clerics and 2 brothers.

#### FR. FRANCESCO MILINI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1941-1946)

Provincial Superior since 1936, Fr. Francesco Milini was confirmed for another term in 1942, during WWII, which forestalled any movement missionaries between Europe and America. By the end of the war this is how the situation of the Province stood:

##### **State of São Paulo:**

São Paulo, SP: Christopher Columbus Institute: Frs. Sante Bernardi (Director), Isidoro Bizzotto, Attilio Barichello, and Bros. Leone Criveller and Francesco Prevedello. Residents, either sick or aging: Frs. Marco Simoni, Sblandiano Simoni, Ernesto Consoni, and Bro. Bartolomeo Celoria.

São Paulo, SP: Rectorship of the Shrine of San Antonio: Fr. Domenico Carlino, Fr. Corrado Stefani.

São Paulo, SP: Parish of Our Lady of Peace: Frs. Mario Rimondi and Fernando Sperzagni.

São Bernardo, SP: O.L. of the Good Voyage and São Bernardo Frs. Girolamo Angeli and Francesco Dodi.

Santo André, SP: Parish of St. Andrew Frs. Giuseppe Foscallo and Fiorente Elena.

Ribeirão Pires, SP: Parish of St. Joseph Frs. Luigi Corso, Antonio Negri, and Antonio Cervini (residing at Maua).

Cascalho, SP: Parish of the Assumption of Our Lady Fr. Louis Stefanello.

##### **State of Paraná:**

Umbará, PR: Parish of St. Peter Fr. Pietro Rigo.

Rondinha, PR: Parish of St. Sebastian Fr. Francesco Corso.

Santa Felicidade, PR: Parish of Santa Felicidade (Curitiba) Fr. Primo Bernardi.

World War II did not cause any immediate difficulty for Brazil, and so the most important works then in progress could be carried through: the construction of the first wing of the new building to house the boys of the Christopher Columbus Institute, and the Church of Our Lady of Peace: both were ready for use in 1942.

Italian immigration resumed in 1946. The following is the immigration trend in the 25 years between 1946 and 1970:

Year	Expatriates	Repatriates	Balance
1946	603	97	506
1947	4,137	1,142	2,905
1948	4,697	1,501	3,196
1949	6,949	1,377	5,572
1950	8,980	2,776	6,204
1951	9,183	2,124	7,059
1952	17,026	1,499	15,527
1953	14,328	5,157	9,171
1954	12,949	2,695	10,254
1955	8,523	2,592	5,931
1956	6,022	2,080	3,942
1957	6,157	2,640	3,517
1958	4,528	2,503	2,025
1959	3,874	1,784	2,090
1960	2,976	1,579	1,397
1961	2,223	1,382	841
1962	1,205	1,401	+196
1963	528	1,552	+1,024
1964	233	1,477	+1,244
1965	295	765	+470
1966	384	465	+81
1967	554	478	76
1968	419	579	+160

1969	749	639	+110
1970	573	680	+107
TOTALS	118,095	40,964	77,131

At the resumption of Italian immigration, the Province had pledged itself since 1946 to the strengthening of the assistance to the new arrivals not only at the headquarters of the parish of Our Lady of Peace in São Paulo, but also by making plans for two new centers of assistance, one in Santos, the main port of entry, and the other in Río de Janeiro. But a few more years had to elapse before this project could begin to enter the operational stage. The same must be said for the project, outlined in 1946, of opening a Major Seminary in São Paulo.

#### FR. SANTE BERNARDI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1946-1952)

He was named Provincial Superior in July 1946 with Frs. Domenico Carlino and Mario Rimondi as Councilors; in July 1949, Fr. Bernardi was confirmed for another term and given Frs. Fiorente Elena and Primo Bernardi as his Councilors. The main concern of the Province at this time was to strengthen the positions already in its possession with the arrival of new missionaries that were beginning to come in from Italy, though not yet respondent to the needs. In 1950 there were only 6 priests more than in 1940, and except for the parish of Our Lady of Peace at São Paulo, the Province was still holding on to the same position as in 1920. Already in 1946, thought was given to the strengthening of the Scalabrinian presence Paraná. Archbishop Manuel da Silveira d'Elboux of Curitiba readily welcomed the proposal for the opening of a residence centrally located in the city of Curitiba and declared himself willing to create a new parish to entrust to the Scalabrinians, while expressing also his consent to the eventual opening of a seminary.

In 1946, a missionary was sent to the capital of Paraná to make plans for a new parish, which was actually created in 1952 under the title of Our Lady do Rocio.

In 1951, the Scalabrinians set up a residence in the city of Jundiáí, distant about sixty kilometers from São Paulo and there they found-

ed the parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the suburb of Colonia, inhabited at that time by Italian families.

#### FR. MARIO RIMONDI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1952-1958)

He was appointed on August 20, 1952. In his first term he had Frs. Luigi Corso and Romano Bevilacqua as Councilors, and in his second one Frs. Domenico Carlino and Sante Bernardi. His six years saw in 1953 the relinquishing of the small parish of Cascalho in the diocese of Campinas; the opening in 1954 of João XXIII Major Seminary in São Paulo; of the parishes of Rudge Ramos in the municipality of Santo André in 1954; of Vicente de Carvalho near Santos, in 1957; of St. Cecilia and St. Pius X in Rio de Janeiro in 1957; of St. John the Baptist on the premises of the Christopher Columbus Institute at Ipiranga in 1958.

While the two parishes of Rudge Ramos and Ipiranga responded to local needs, the other positions were framed within a plan of a wider nature that aimed above all at a more effective presence of the Congregation in its own specific field of emigration.

At the end of 1952, by initiative of Fr. Rimondi, the Chancery of São Paulo opened an office for the assistance to immigrants on arrival. The year 1952 marked the peak of Italian immigration into Brazil after World War II with the entry of 17,000 Italians, most of them settling in São Paulo. On the social level, this office of assistance, or Patronato, took care especially that the new families were welcomed and helped to settle in their places of work and in homes. From 1952 until 1955, Fr. Rimondi was the chairman of the office of assistance; in early 1956 it was transformed into the "Archdiocesan Commission for Immigration": Auxiliary Bishop Paulo Rolim Loureiro became its president, and Fr. Rimondi its Vice-President, who continued actually to act as its executive director. Architect Arcani, chairman of the Patronato of Assistance to Italians died in the beginning of 1954. Fr. Rimondi, who had founded it, took his place. In 1955 permission was obtained to say a Sunday Mass in Italian in the parishes of São Bernardo, Santo André, and São Caetano while an intense religious and social action continued to be carried on for Italians at the church of Our Lady of Peace in downtown São Paulo.

In early 1953, on the occasion of a trip to Río de Janeiro for a day of study on Emigration, Fr. Rimondi asked Auxiliary Bishop Helder Camara whether it was possible to establish an institution for the assistance to Italians of the capital. Upon his encouraging answer, Fr. Rimondi continued negotiations with the chancery while travelling at the same time once or twice a month to Río de Janeiro to help in the religious assistance to Italians. By the end of 1953, Bishop Camara, in the name of the Archbishop Card. Jaime de Barros Camara, and the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Armando Lombardi, charged Fr. Rimondi with the organization of assistance to Italian immigrants in Río de Janeiro, São Paulo, Porto Alegre and Curitiba. And thus at the same time the National Catholic Commission for Immigration (CNCI) was born. It had been founded at the urgings of Pope Pius XII by count Francesco Cantuti Castelvetti, commander of the Palatine Guard. Its task was helping immigrants, especially refugees from countries East of the Iron Curtain, by supplying them with money for the trip, assistance at ports of arrival, temporary hospitality at the Hospedaria dos Imigrantes, documents for residing in Brazil, and loans for renting a house. They were helped in finding a job and in filling in forms to send overseas for members of their families to join them. This Commission depended on the International Catholic Commission for Migrations (CICM or ICMC), founded at Geneva in 1951 by Pius XII. Walter Dushnyck, an American, was the director of the International Office of Río de Janeiro. It seemed at first as though Auxiliary Bishop Camara intended to entrust the direction of the National commission to Fr. Rimondi, but then he deemed it more opportune that the task be given to a Bishop because of its national character. Fr. Rimondi was named director of the National Office of São Paulo, on which also the offices of Río de Janeiro, Curitiba and Porto Alegre depended, headed respectively by the two Scalabrinian missionaries Frs. Irio Dalla Costa and Paolo Bortolazzo. The location of the office in São Paulo remained at the Church of Our Lady of Peace until the end of 1955, and then it was transferred to the Chancery but with Fr. Rimondi still remaining in charge as its executive director.

Nothing much was done at Curitiba because recent immigration there had very little significance. The CNCI's Archdiocesan Office of

Río de Janeiro was entrusted to the Scalabrinians from 1954 to 1957 when Auxiliary Bishop Camara reorganized the CNCI in view of the fact that immigration from overseas had practically ceased. In the meanwhile the Scalabrinians could begin to assist the 35 thousand Italians of the Federal Capital. There remained the problems of Santos, main port of entry for the new immigration, and of North Paraná, into which a great mass of Italians and other migrants were moving.

In 1956, Bishop Idilio J. Soares entrusted the Scalabrinians with the task of opening a parish in Vicente de Carvalho as a center from where to organize the assistance to Italian seamen going through the port of Santos and to Italians residing in the city. Entitled to Our Lady of Grace, the parish was erected in November 1957. It did not respond to the scope first intended, because it rapidly grew into an immense parish of internal immigrants, especially from the North East of Brazil.

With a certain delay, due above all to lack of personnel, the Scalabrinians entered another movement of internal migration, also characterized, however, by the presence of a very strong percentage of people of Italian extraction. This phenomenon concerned North Paraná where 430,000 persons went to reside especially in the 10 years between 1940 and 1950 attracted by the sudden growth of coffee plantations in the region of Londrina.

The phenomenon of internal migrations was not new, but it was beginning only then to emerge sufficiently enough as something different from the common phenomenon of urbanization. It began as a modest moving from the States of the North East and East to that of São Paulo. As compared with the 70,000 foreigners, in 1901 there arrived at São Paulo only 1,434 Northeasterners: up to as late as 1919, they did not exceed the annual quota of 5,000. The years between 1923-1939 witnessed instead a significant increase: some 55,000 internal migrants moved into São Paulo in 1928. In 1935, the government of São Paulo began to encourage immigration to the hinterland of the State and to Northern Paraná. In 1939, 100,000 migrants passed through the Departamento de Imigração e Colonização set up at that time in São Paulo. In the years 1942 and 1946, the Northeasterners headed for the Amazonian region where the production of rubber had been intensified because of the war. In 1947 the flow reversed

towards São Paulo in the excess, sometimes, of 200,000 a year. In the last few years it stabilized at an oscillating quota of between 80 to 100,000 a year. Other channels opened up to migrants, however, such as from *Río Grande do Sul* to *Santa Catarina*, *Goias*, *Mato Grosso*: from *Paraná*, *Santa-Catarina*, and *Río Grande do Sul* to the Amazonian states. When speaking of internal migration, we can ordinarily affirm in round figures, that 30 million Brazilians are involved in this phenomenon. According to the 1970 census, internal migrants numbered 29,497,665: 18,786,947 of them within their own states, and 10,710,718 from state to state.

As mentioned before, the Scalabrinians began to get interested in this phenomenon only in an indirect way in the sense that the scope was directed at that time only to Italian immigrants who had become involved in part in internal migrations. As to Northern *Paraná*, for instance, the Italians from Italy were very few, while many were the descendants of Italians who had settled in the hinterland of the States of *São Paulo* and *Río Grande do Sul*. The Province had been considering already, since 1954, the problem of a Scalabrinian presence in Northern *Paraná*, but only in 1958 was it actually brought to some practical solution, when Bishop *Geraldo Fernandes* of *Londrina* repeatedly invited *Fr. Rimondi* to visit his diocese and the "promised land" of coffee. He would have given to the Scalabrinians a parish in the city of *Londrina* and a territory within the rivers *Bandeirante* and *Pirapó* with five or six parishes neighboring each other. All together about 140,000 people would have been entrusted to the Scalabrinians, part of them owners of small properties with three or four thousand plants of coffee. The families of Italian origin belonged generally to this class. The other part was made up of Northeasterners or other needier migrants, employed as rural laborers and paid so much for each plant. Roads were hardly marked out, churches and houses were made of wood, and there was lack of electricity, water and means of transportation. These colonizers lived in pioneering conditions, subject to a great mobility, exposed to the risks of monoculture and of exploitation.

### FR. SANTE BERNARDI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1958-1964)

In the meantime Fr. Rimondi's second term in office elapsed and in 1958 he was succeeded by Fr. Sante Bernardi, assisted by Frs. Isidoro Bizzotto and Albino Vico, who was replaced later in 1961 by Fr. Romano Bevilacqua. It was now up to Fr. Bernardi to define the procedures for the opening of the Scalabrinian parishes in Northern Paraná. On January 25, 1959 possession was taken of the parishes of Lobato, with 15,000 people, and of Florida, with 8,000. The parish of N. S. Aparecida, in the periphery of Londrina with perhaps 15,000 people, was taken in the following March. In July and October of 1960 respectively of the parishes of Iguaraçu (35,000 people) and of Our Lady of Peace in the city of Londrina (12,000 people) were accepted. In 1961 the Scalabrinians took the parish of Astorga (40,000 people), and in 1962 those of Santa Fé (30,000 people) and of Munhoz de Mello (over 10,000 people).

In 1959, plans were made for the creation of another parish in *Río de Janeiro*, erected in 1960 under the title of St. Anthony in the outskirt area of Brass de Pina. In 1962, the Scalabrinians returned to the parish of Campo Comprido, in the vicinity of Curitiba. But the most important event of that year was the inauguration of the new João XXIII Major Seminary, built on land of the Christopher Columbus Institute in São Paulo. The clerics had been the guests of the same Institute since 1954; works on their housing were started in 1958; on June 29, 1962, the Cardinal Archbishop of São Paulo blessed the premises that welcomed the community of the students of Theology and Philosophy: the former ones were transferred from the Seminary of Guaporé, in *Río Grande do Sul*, in 1962.

### FR. ISIDORO BIZZOTTO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1964-1967)

Fr. Isidoro Bizzotto was named Provincial Superior in 1964, and Frs. Guerrino Zago, Massimiliano Sanavio, Ugo Fent, and Mario D'Agostini, were his Councilors. Following a ten-year period of remarkable expansion, time had come for consolidating it and reflecting on the forms of the expansion itself. Two facts are representative of the moment. Out of the eight pastors of North Paraná parishes, seven requested in 1964 that a Minor Seminary be opened in that region.



While waiting for the construction of the Seminary of Astorga, the Good Shepherd Institute of Lobato temporarily serves the purpose. The first seminarians were admitted to it in 1965. The construction of the Scalabrini Janssen Seminary of Astorga was started in 1966. The first wing was completed in March 1967 when it welcomed the forty seminarians of Lobato and 30 more new ones. This way, the plan formerly formulated by Bishop Scalabrini, and pursued by Fr. Faustino Consoni through several attempts, became a reality. The last attempt had been made in 1935 at the Christopher Columbus Institute by Fr. Girolamo Angeli with three orphans aspiring to become priests.

In 1966 work was started on a regular weekly basis by a group of clerics at the favela do Vergueiro, near João XXIII Seminary. In their activities as catechists and social assistants the clerics discover that almost all of those 7,000 slum dwellers were internal migrants and had gone through the Departamento de Imigração e de Colonização (DIC) of São Paulo. This government institution supplied assistance for a few days to the tens of thousands internal migrants who were arriving each year at São Paulo. Over 400 functionaries were assigned to run the small city of resettlement offices. There were also six Sisters of St. Vincent De Paul: a Chinese priest used to say Mass in their Chapel on Sunday. Until 1960 or 1961, Fr. Francesco Dodi had been its chaplain for a few years. In 1967 the clerics begin the work of catechesis and human contact, especially with the sick and people in greatest sufferings, under the guidance of Fr. Juarez Segalin, who had become the chaplain of DIC.

This way, the Scalabrinian *Équipe* for Internal Migration (ESMI) was formed, from where in 1969-1970 the Center for Migration Studies was begun with headquarters at João XXIII Seminary. And so, the problem of a decisive and well organized form of assistance to internal migrants began to be considered as something proper to the specific scope of the Scalabrinian Congregation, which had been extended in 1966, to all migrants regardless of their nationality.

In 1965, the Provincial Government set up its headquarters in a residence of its own at Osasco, a suburb of São Paulo, on a property donated by the Rossa brothers: but it did not turn out to be a practical solution because of difficulties of communication. In 1968, its seat was moved to the premises attached to the church of Our Lady of

Peace. In 1966, Cardinal Agnelo Rossi, Archbishop of São Paulo expressed the intention of dividing the only parish of São Paulo at Vila Prudente with 50 thousand people, so as to form a new parish by the girls' section of the Christopher Columbus Institute, where two Scalabrinians used to go and provide assistance for a population thought to amount to between 15 and 20,000 inhabitants. The parish was erected in March 1967 with the title of St. Charles Borromeo and entrusted to the Scalabrinians.

#### FR. SECONDO GUERRINO ZAGO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1967-1970)

A new Provincial Government was installed in August 1967 with Fr. S. G. Zago as Provincial Superior, and Frs. Ugo Fent, Massimiliano Sanavio, Pietro Zamberlan, and Avelino Magagnin, as his Councilors .

In the last months of that year, at the time of his canonical visitation, the Superior General, Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo, stressed the historical task of the Province of São Paulo: born for Italian migrants, it could not be said to have outlived its purpose. New ways had, therefore, to be found to pursue it together with the new tasks deriving from the extension of the scope to all nationalities. In response to this need, in 1968, two weekly radio programs began to be broadcast from the stations America and Radio de Julho of São Paulo. In the same year, two priests were assigned full time to activities for migrants: Fr. Juarez Segalin for Brazilian migrants, and Fr. Luigi Vaghini for Italians. For the Italians of Santos and for the seamen, as well, who were going through that port, the most important one of Latin America, a building was purchased in 1970, that was to become the Seamen's House, and the Scalabrinians were entrusted with the church of Our Lady of the Seafarers, that in 1971 became the location of the personal parish for the seamen and fishermen, and the center for the assistance to the Italians of Santos. Out of this the *Équipe* for Foreign Migrations would be born in 1974 with the scope of extending and organizing the activities for Italians, especially of recent migration, from Santos to São Paulo and other places. In the meanwhile the *Équipe* for Internal Migrations and the Center for Migration Studies began to carry out the *Progetto Scalabrini* (Scalabrini Plan) which envisioned

survey tours to be made by priests and clerics for a research study on the phenomenon of internal migrations. In 1970, a week of study on Brazilian migrations was organized which, in addition to various church and civic speakers, it included also the Scalabrinian Provinces of São Paulo and *Río Grande do Sul* and the three Brazilian provinces of the Scalabrinian Sisters. At the close of the week, Cardinal Agnelo Rossi asked the Scalabrinians to work on organizing the pastoral care for migrants in the Archdiocese of São Paulo. With the consent of his successor Card. Paul Evaristo Arns, the chaplaincy of the DIC was relinquished in 1974, when it became the DM (Departamento de Migração), because it had changed its scope and was being subjected to political interference. The seminarians continued to carry on their activities in the favela do Vergueiro until it disappeared, in the favela (slums) of Vila Prudente, in the residential center of Sapopema, in the parishes of Vicente de Carvalho and of Our Lady Aparecida of Grajaú, where a Scalabrinian began actually to function as pastor in 1970. In 1969, a minor seminary was opened, titled after Nossa Senhora do Rocio, by the parish church of the same name in Curitiba, with 21 seminarians of the third and fourth high school years, taken from the seminary of Astorga. In previous years, the seminarians used to be sent to far away *Río Grande do Sul* to continue their studies.

With only two missionaries at first, the OPM (Operation for Promoting and Coordinating the Assistance to Migrants) was given life in 1975 for the purpose of sensitizing the Province, the local Church, and Public Authorities to the problems of internal migrants; keeping in touch with Church and Government agencies; preaching missions; organizing programs of assistance, etc.

#### FR. ROMANO BEVILACQUA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1970-1973)

In July 1970, Fr. Zago was succeeded by Fr. Romano Bevilacqua, assisted in the government of the Province by Councilors, Frs. Ugo Fent, Avelino Magagnin, Antonio Gallo, and Rovílio Guizzard. In 1971, Fr. Alessandro Gramola took the place of Fr. Ugo Fent, assigned to begin a Scalabrinian presence in Portugal together with Fr. Giuseppe Magrin, who had been transferred already from the Province of São Paulo to that of France for assisting the Portuguese, and

with Fr. Antonio Benetti, arriving from the Province of R o Grande do Sul. The Province of S o Paulo contributed four more missionaries to the assistance to the Portuguese in Europe: Frs. Fochesato, Vaghini, Consonni and Barichello.

In 1971 and 1972 respectively, the Scalabrinians withdrew from the parishes of Florida and Lobato in North Paran . Because of killing frosts, the coffee plantations had been abandoned and the population suffered a general loss of about half its size. It was thus decided to leave the most isolated places to better employ the personnel in positions more respondent to the scope of the Congregation. In fact, projects were made in 1971 for the supplying of a Scalabrinian contribution to assisting the people, moving into the Northern States, especially consequently to the construction of the very long Transamazonian road. Already other Institutes and Dioceses had started to send in priests and nuns, and the Bishops were soliciting the collaboration of the Scalabrinians for a solution of the tremendous problems born of these movements of people into regions almost wholly deprived of clergy and assistance. In 1972, the Apostolic Nuncio urged the Provincial Superior to send a few religious into Amazonia, and the Prelate of Marab , in the State of Par , offered the locality of Itupiranga, along the Transamazonian road. Fr. Bevilacqua concluded the negotiations and in 1973 he sent the first missionaries to Itupiranga shortly before his term expired. In 1972, the Province of S o Paulo organized a survey tour among the Brazilian migrants in Paraguay: but the opening of a mission in that nation, carried out actually in 1974, was entrusted to the Province of St. Peter. Two other initiatives figure in the plan of collaboration between the two Provinces:

- the founding of a parish in Brasilia, to have an opportunity to devote themselves to the internal migrants who had settled in the satellite cities surrounding the Federal Capital, while seeking to keep in touch at the same time with Church and State organizations that take care of migration on a national scale;

- and the Interprovincial Committee for Formation, aimed at coordinating this sector for the Scalabrinian Seminaries of Latin America. These two initiatives became reality in 1974.

## FR. ROVÍLIO GUIZZARDI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1973---)

Fr. Rovílio Guizzardi became Provincial Superior in May 1973, assisted as his Councillors by Frs. Luciano Bonotto, João Garbosa, Albino Vico, and Antonio Gallo, who was replaced by Fr. Pietro Zamberlan in January 1974. Fr. Guizzardi was confirmed for a second term on June 8, 1976, Frs. Pietro Zamberlan, Guglielmo Bellinato, Luciano Bonotto, and Jacyr Braido, made up his Council. In July 1977, Fr. Pietro Zamberlan resigned his office for reasons of health. Fr. Bellinato was named Vicar Provincial and Fr. Albino fourth Councillor and Provincial Treasurer. To the abovementioned positions, that is, the opening of the parish of the Good Jesus of Migrants at Sobradinho, a satellite city of Brasília and the forming of the Equipe for the Missions for Foreigners and of the Operation for Migrants, we must add the founding of three more residences in 1975: the Novitiate at Osasco, a suburb of São Paulo, marking the beginning of a separate one from what had been until then the only Novitiate existing in Brazil that of *Río Grande do Sul*; the new Provincial Residence, built near the Christopher Columbus Institute and João XXIII Seminary, and inaugurated in July 1975; and lastly, the Fr. Natale Pigato Seminary opened at Rondinha, Paraná. By the close of 1975, Fr. Giorgio Cunial was appointed by the Archbishop of São Paulo coordinator of the chaplains of the foreign communities of the Archdiocese, and in March 1976 he fixed his residence in São Paulo. In the following year, the Church of Our Lady of Peace became the location of the Center of the Pastoral Care for Migrants, with some missionaries committed to the assistance of the most recent migrants, both internal and foreign ones.

At the end of 1976, the parish of Santa Fé was given back to the Diocese of Apucaraná in view of continuing to reappraise the positions of North Paraná where the flow of migrants was beginning to wane. At the same time a mission was opened at Foz do Areia, South Paraná, for the *barrageiros*, skilled workers specialized in the construction of dams for electric plants, living in a constant condition of migration and isolation.

Another mission was started in 1978 for the barrageiros at Tucuruí, comparatively near the mission of Itupiranga, along the Transamazonian road in the State of Pará.

Two other important undertakings were materialized in 1978. A Scalabrinian, Fr. Jacyr Braidó, was assigned to Brasília with the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil in charge of the sector of the pastoral care for migrants. In March of the same year a project was carried through that had been in the making for years: the separation of the students of philosophy from those of theology at the João XXIII Seminary of São Paulo. In fact, an interprovincial seminary of philosophy was founded at Curitiba with provisional quarters by the parish of Our Lady do Rocio, in expectation of the new location already under construction.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SEMINARIES

#### JOÃO XXIII SEMINARY OF SÃO PAULO

Immediately following World War II, the Provincial Superior, Fr. Milini, made known to the General Administration the opportunity of opening a major seminary in the city of São Paulo. Till then there was in Brazil only one seminary at Guaporé in *Río Grande do Sul*; the novitiate was opened in 1946 at Nova Bassano in the same state. The two Provinces agreed on a project to have the students continue their studies after the Novitiate in a place that might better respond to their cultural needs. Cardinal Rossi appeared hesitant. He would have preferred, at first that the Seminary of Guaporé be enlarged, but in September 1947 he approved the project on condition that the clerics conducted studies at home rather than at the Theological Faculty of São Paulo, as had been previously prospected. The major seminary should have been built at São Paulo within March 1949; later on, thought could be given to a minor seminary in Paraná. A variety of difficulties hindered the carrying out of the project which was resumed in 1950, when there was no longer room for other students at the Seminaries of Guaporé and Nova Bassano. After lengthy discussions on their location, it was decided that the seminarians should be provided lodgings at first in a section of the new building of the Christopher Columbus Institute: but even this temporary solution became possible only in 1954. The 17 college students who had arrived from *Río Grande do Sul* on February 23 of that year were lodged on the top floor of the new wing of the Christopher Columbus Institute. The decree of the founding of the seminary carries the date of February 4, 1954: on the 3rd, Fr. Romano Bevilacqua had been appointed rector, Fr. Danilo Pecin, Vice-Rector; and Fr. Pietro Zamberlan, spiritual Director. Classes were held at home and attended also by seven Servites. Until 1961, only college and philosophy students were living at the Seminary of São Paulo; but in 1962 the theologians also were transferred to it. On June 29's of that year, Card. Carlos Carmelo

de Vasconcellos Motta blessed the quarters, named after Pope John (João) XXIII, which had been built in the years between 1958 and 1962 on the property of the Christopher Columbus Institute. Fr. Isidoro Bizzotto was the life of the project.

For lack of a sufficient number of "home" professors, in 1964 the clerics began frequenting theology classes at the Central Seminary of São Paulo, not far from home; in the following years only those students attended it who intended to get an academic degree. In 1972, the Congregations of the Scalabrinians, the Redemptorists, and the Verbitas, stipulated an agreement aimed at providing a common direction and administration for the "Theological Institute of São Paulo" (ITESP) and at contributing to it the qualified personnel, with the theology students of the three Congregations and others, in attendance. The ITESP is located at the João XXIII Major Seminary. In 1975 the department of philosophy was merged with the "Medianeira" faculty of the Jesuits; as we shall see later, in 1978, first steps were taken to transfer it to Curitiba.

In order of time, the following succeeded Fr. Romano Bevilacqua in the direction of the Seminary: Frs. Secondo G. Zago (1961-1964), Avelino Magagnin (1965-1967), Rovílio Guizzardi (1968-1973), Luís Dal Plan (1973-1974), Ottone Tasca (1975).

### THE "SCALABRINI-JANSSEN" SEMINARY, ASTORGA

For quite a while now, the Province had been experiencing the need for a minor seminary to be opened in Paraná, a more fertile region of vocations than that of São Paulo. When the Scalabrinians settled between the years 1959 and 1962 in the parishes of North Paraná, that region was thought to be more promising than the district of Curitiba. In 1964, the pastors of Our Lady "Aparecida" and of "Our Lady of Peace" in Londrina; of Astorga, Florida, Iguaraçu, Lobato, and Munhoz de Mello, undersigned a petition to the Superiors that work should be started on the construction of a seminary in the parish of Astorga. Bishop Gerald Fernandes of Londrina, on whom Astorga then depended, gave permission, donated the property, and on February 20, 1965, blessed the cornerstone. Work could be started, however, only in March 1966. In the meantime, it was decided to ini-



tiate, the seminary anyway by the use of the “Buon Pastore” “Good Shepherd” facilities offered by the pastor of Lobato, Fr. Angelo Cerantola. The first 15 seminarians were admitted on March 8, 1965; in the beginning of 1966 there were 48 of them, and 40 by the end of the school year. On March 20, 1967, the 40 seminarians of Labato, and another 30 new ones, occupied the seminary of Astorga, officially inaugurated on April 21, 1967, in the presence of Bishop Romeo Alberti of Apucarana and Bishop Fernandes of Londrina. The new seminary was dedicated to the memory of Bishop Scalabrini and Fr. John Janssen who had been pastor of Astorga before the parish was entrusted to the Scalabrinians. In 1972, work began on the construction of the second wing of the building. The rectors of the “Scalabrini-Janssen” seminary followed each other in this order: Fr. Arlindo Pedrini (1965-1968), Fr. Eloi Dalla Vecchia (1969-1971), Fr. Gian-Carlo Rizzinelli (1972- 1976), Fr. Nadir João Bordin.

#### THE SEMINARY OF “OUR LADY OF ROCIO” AT CURITIBA

In 1968, the seminary of Astorga had exhausted its capacity to the full, and in the “João XXIII” Seminary thought was given to separating high school seminarians from the students of philosophy. The Provincial Council proposed to use the premises attached to the parish of “Our Lady of Rocio” in Curitiba, which until 1966 had served as headquarters for the youth organization of “Lar N.S. do Rocio’”. The building could host some fifty students. After securing permission from the General Council and from the Chancery of Curitiba, the Seminary of “Our Lady of Rocio” opened its doors on February 24, 1969 to 21 students; on the following March 9 it was blessed by Archbishop Manuel da Silveira d’Elboux. In 1972, the college courses were also begun. A new wing was built in 1975 and inaugurated on June 4.

In order of succession the following were the rectors: Fr. Arlindo Pedrini (1969-1972), Fr. Moacir Calza (1973), Fr. Emir Filter (1974). Fr. Armelindo Costa (1975)

#### SÃO JOAQUIM SEMINARY, JUNDIAÍ

In 1958, when the new parish church of the Sacred Heart was built at the “colony” of Jundiaí, thought was given to the use of the old

church as a parish hall while transforming of the hall built by Fr. Amianti into a minor seminary, where to house the candidates of the region of São Paulo, whose parents did not consent their children to be sent to R o Grande do Sul. Fr. Amianti bought also the land for a future seminary; but the project became a reality only in 1972. Bishop Gabriel P. Bueno Couto granted permission on February 22 of that year; the first seminarians entered it in early March; and its official dedication took place on June 8. The building held about twenty students, and was identified as a "parochial seminary" since both direction and training are done by the same personnel that run the parish of the Sacred Heart. Fr. Giuseppe Bortolato directed the seminary since its beginnings.

#### THE NOVITIATE OF OSASCO

In 1961, the Superior General Fr. Raffaele Larcher asked Fr. Sante Bernardi to search for a property where to build the Novitiate for the Province of St. Paul. Fr. Bernardi turned to the Rossa Brothers, who were the owners of a villa at Osasco. These benefactors donated both the villa and the land to the Scalabrinians on condition that they should be made to serve as a seminary or a novitiate. The donation was legally sanctioned only in 1965; from the end of that year till 1968, as seen above, the villa served as the official residence of the Provincial Superior; it was used, afterwards, for meetings and retreats. In 1974, the Province renewed a petition to have a novitiate of its own, due to the growth of the minor seminaries. After obtaining the decree of erection on January 8, 1975, the novitiate began to function on the following February 9 with five novices directed by Fr. Luciano Bonotto as Novice Master. For the first five months the Novitiate had its provisional quarters in the "Casa del Marinaio" at Santos. Upon completion of the remodeling works, the Novitiate was moved to Osasco, officially dedicated on November 21, 1975.

#### "FR. NATALE PIGATO" SEMINARY, RONDINHA

The minor seminary of Paran a named after Fr. Natale Pigato, also had its beginnings in 1975. The opening of a small seminary either at Santa Felicidade or in the vicinity of Curitiba, had been in the plan-

ning for some time. From among the various proposals for its location, the choice fell on the old parish school of Rondonha which had been relinquished to the archdiocese of Curitiba and changed over to a retreat house. In April 1975, Archbishop Pedro Fedalto surrendered the property in exchange for the construction of new classrooms for the parochial school. The seminary was opened in March 1976 with 40 students, under the direction of Fr. Angelo Cerantola.

#### THE INTERPROVINCIAL SEMINARY OF PHILOSOPHY, CURITIBA

For some years, already, the idea was being aired about separating the community of the students of philosophy from that of theology at São Paulo to provide larger room for the remarkable numbers in philosophy courses, thus to create an intermediate “acclimatization stop-over” for the clerics that were to be transferred from the Province of St. Peter to that of St. Paul. The two Provinces agreed locate the students of philosophy in Curitiba, Paraná, about half way between their two Novitiates. The “Interprovincial the Latin America Committee for Formation” (CIFAL) and the General Council approved the project in August 1977: the Province of St. Paul agreed to buy the property at 5300 Avenida Salgado Filho and to construct the building; the Province of St. Peter was to provide part of the personnel.

On March 6, 1978, the course of philosophy was officially inaugurated in the presence of Archbishop Pedro Fedalto with 23 seminarians of the first year, under the direction of Fr. Ivo Pretto, joined later on by Fr. J. Carlos Pedrini. The first year was housed in the premises of the Seminary of Our Lady of Rocio, while waiting that the students might be moved into a building of their own in March 1979, when its construction was expected to be completed.



## CHAPTER III

### PARISHES AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE CITY AND STATE OF SÃO PAULO

#### SÃO PAULO: THE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS INSTITUTE

Projected by Fr. Sante Bernardi, the first wing of the new quarters of the boys section was begun on December 6, 1942, and inaugurated on December 8, 1945. This section had then some 160 orphans, as many as in the beginning of the war; while those of the girls' section continued to number about a hundred. The foundations of the second part of the construction, which included also the church, were laid in 1946. On Christmas Day of 1946, the church was opened to the public; in 1958 it became the location of the parish of St. John the Baptist. The remaining part of the construction was inaugurated in 1954, and it housed the initial group of the João XXIII Seminary. In 1950, the Scalabrinian Sisters returned to the section for boys. Director of the Institute since 1928, and Provincial Superior since 1946, Fr. Sante Bernardi handed its direction over to Fr. Isidoro Bizzotto, who brought to completion the works of the Institute of the church, of the João XXIII Seminary, and had another four new classrooms built in the section for girls. By 1956, the boys' section numbered 220 boarding students and 350 day students; the girls' section had 70 boarders and 450 day students. Fr. Massimiliano Sanavio directed the Institute from March 1958 to January 1959. During Fr. Pietro Zamberlan's tenure as Director between 1964 and 1973, various other works were done until 1972 when it was decided to demolish the historical building raised in 1895 by Fr. Giuseppe Marchetti. In its place, the offices and the hall were built. This last section, which completed the renovation of the Institute, was inaugurated on June 30, 1973, in the presence of the Governor of the State of São Paulo. Fr. Romano Bevilacqua succeeded Fr. Zamberlan as rector of the institution in the same year. In 1978, the Institute hosted in its two sections for boys and girls about 350 abandoned minors.

## SÃO PAULO: THE CHURCH OF SANTO ANTÔNIO

The ancient church of Santo Antônio, in the central Praça do Patriarca continued to carry on its peculiar function as a center of devotion and charity, frequented every day by hundreds, and often by thousands, of people who enter it either to pray, or to confess their sins, receive Holy Communion, pay their respects to St. Anthony, to do or receive an act of charity: all activities that turn to the benefit especially of the orphans of the Christopher Columbus Institute. In February of 1943, the State has officially acknowledged the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary "dos Homens Brancos" as the legitimate owner of the Church. On April 10, 1970, it was declared a historical and religious landmark of the State of São Paulo.

Here follows the list of rectors in order of time: Fr. Francesco Navarro, 1937-1944; Fr. Francesco Milini, 1944-1947; Fr. Domenico Carlino, 1947-1950; Fr. Sante Bernardi, 1950-1958; Fr. Secondo Guerriero Zago, 1959-1960; Fr. Primo Bernardi, 1960-1964; Fr. Sante Bernardi, 1965-1968; Fr. Mario Rimondi, 1968-1969; Fr. Severino Filippin, 1969-1970; Fr. Primo Bernardi, 1971-1973; Fr. Luciano Bonotto, 1974-1975; Fr. João Lorenzato, 1975.

## SÃO PAULO: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF PEACE

Begun in 1940, works on the construction of the monumental church dedicated to Our Lady of Peace were continued through the WWII. On August 30, 1942, Archbishop José Gaspar de Fonseca e Silva inaugurated the central body of the church which was opened on the occasion of the National Eucharistic Congress. In the following years it was given the finishing touches and the artistic decoration which owes its high quality to the frescoes of Fulvio Pennacchi and to the sculptures of Galileo Emendabili. The church was consecrated by Cardinal A. G. Piazza on September 11, 1954, during his visit to the emigrants of Brazil. The corner stone of the complex, including the school and the parish offices, was laid on November 4, 1945. Endowed with a medical and dental clinic, the parochial elementary school, with capacity for 500 students, was dedicated in 1951. The kindergarten was inaugurated with 200 children on July 5, 1955, and entrusted to the care of the Scalabrinian Sisters who remained until

December 1972. At that time the parish numbered about 8000 people; but it represented also the moral center of the Italian community of São Paulo. In it were celebrated all religious functions connected with patriotic events; but, above all, innumerable were the Italians who flocked to it on Sunday to get together for Mass, for advice, for legal and social assistance.

That was the only church in São Paulo where preaching in Italian was allowed. Consular authorities joined the priests in offering assistance to emigrants. It served as headquarters of the Italian Catholic Union (with the beginning of the war its name was changed to Catholic Union of São Paulo) for the assistance to needy Italian and Italo-Brasilian families. It was the headquarters, for some time, of the Pro-Patria sport association. As said before, for a few years the parish premises housed the Archdiocesan Office for Immigration. Fr. Rimondi, who directed it, was also Vice President, and then President, of the Patronato of Assistance to Italian immigrants.

On January 8, 1956, Archbishop Card. Vasconcellos Motta officially erected the Italian National Parish for the Italians of the whole archdiocese of São Paulo under the title of St.s Francis of Assisi and St. Catherine of Siena, with headquarters in the territorial parish of Our Lady of Peace. Fr. Rimondi, who had been its pastor in the years of the major constructions, 1940-1942, was made the first pastor of the national parish, while Fr. Francesco Dodi became the pastor of the territorial one. Since 1964 the two positions were joined in one person, to the detriment, however, of the personal parish. On the other hand, one must take into account that by 1966 the people of the territorial parish had grown to 25,000 souls.

In May 1961, the corner stone was laid of a high school for 800 students, which was inaugurated in early 1966. It was closed in 1973 also because of competition from the free public schools grown up in the vicinities of the church. In time, the Church of Our Lady of Peace itself began falling short of its purpose of service to the Italian community for various reasons, among which are included the progressive integration of Italians in the local society, the location of the church, rendered increasingly worse by the new constructions and roads around it, and the lack of initiative. In 1970, the church became instead the center of the religious life of the 600 Catholics from Korea

of São Paulo. In 1970, a section of the kindergarten was placed in fact, at the disposal for use by Korean children assisted by Benedictine Sisters of their nationality. In 1973 the personal Korean parish was erected under the direction of a priest of that nation who has his residence together with the Scalabrinian community of Our Lady of Peace. In 1977, this community was so restructured as to have it become specifically the center for the most recent immigrants, either internal or Italian and from neighboring countries and the seat of AVIM (Volunteers' Association for Integration of Migrants) which publishes the periodical "O Migrante".

Here follows the list of pastors since 1940: Mario Rimondi 1940-1952; Romano Bevilacqua, 1953-1954; Luigi Corso, 1954-1955; Francesco Dodi, 1956-1961; Romano Bevilacqua 1961-1965; Francesco Dodi 1965-1967; Comercindo Dalla Costa, 1968-1969; Romano Bevilacqua, 1970; Ugo Fent, 1970-1971; Antonio Gallo since March 1971.

#### SÃO PAULO: PARISH OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO AT VILA PRUDENTE

The chapel of Vila Prudente, where the girls' section of the Christopher Columbus Institute is located, was the only center of Catholic worship of that neighborhood until 1942. The parish of St. Emidius was created in 1942 under the direction of Dutch priests. In 1966, Archbishop Cardinal Agnelo Rossi decided to split this parish which numbered 50,000 people, thus erecting another one, which he entrusted to the Scalabrinians, since two of them had been practically carrying on parochial work already at the chapel of the Christopher Columbus Institute. The decree of erection of St. Charles' parish, with a population thought to be about between 15 and 20,000 people carries the date of April 30, 1967.

Fr. Egidio Battocchio was named its first pastor. He began conducting services in the chapel mentioned above, while the temporary church was under construction on a piece of property offered by the Christopher Columbus Institute; this church was opened for worship in November 1969. In 1972, the population was thought to amount to 18,000 inhabitants, with 185 baptisms, a decrease from the 455 baptisms in 1959.



### São Paulo: Parish of St. John the Baptist of Ipiranga

Another parish sprang up in 1957 by the Christopher Columbus Institute with headquarters in the chapel of its boys' section. The idea of a parish came first, in 1950 when the new spacious chapel of the Institute began functioning. The other parishes of the district were far too distant while a population of 20,000 inhabitants around it gravitated towards the Institute. In 1957, Cardinal Vasconcellos Motta announced the creation of 25 new parishes in the city of São Paulo: among them, with decree of October 30, 1957, was also created that of St. John the Baptist, directed actually by the same priests of the Christopher Columbus Institute. Fr. Pietro Zamberlan took possession of it on the November 19, of 1958. The parish school was opened in 1960, and in 1961 it had 625 students, housed in temporary quarters. The new parish school was built in 1967, but incorporated, later on, with the Institute. In return, it was decided in 1974, to construct a building for the parochial activities.

The first pastor, Fr. Zamberlan, 1959-1963 was followed by Frs. Alcides Zanella, 1964-1968; João Garbossa, 1968-1973; Romano Bevilacqua, 1973-1977; Ermenegildo Amianti. In 1972, its population was still thought to number 20,000 souls. There were 60 baptisms (a decrease from 290 baptisms in 1960).

### SÃO PAULO: SUBURBAN PARISHES

From the weekend apostolic activities of the clerics of João XIII Seminary in the suburbs of the metropolis, such forms of religious assistance came into being in the last years as could be considered, somehow, the equivalent to the taking over of parishes. The administration of the parish of the Aparecida at Grajaú is the most consolidated one. Fr. Giuseppe Pegoraro had been working there with the help of the seminarians since 1970; there he fixed also his residence in 1974. The parish numbered about 25,000 people, 90 per cent of them workers, living in very precarious social and hygienic conditions such as are found in almost all wards of the periphery of São Paulo: no hospitals, no first aid or police stations. For any need one had to travel to Santo Amaro, a distance of about 20 kilometers. The majority of these people originate from the North-East, from the State

of Minas Gerais and from the hinterland of the State of São Paulo. A spacious hovel serves as church. In 1976, Fr. Pegoraro was transferred to the direction of the parish of St. Ann at Santo Amaro, a parish not yet officially entrusted to the Congregation. In Number 28 of the Information Bulletin of the Province of St. Paul, dated on November 6, 1975, we read:

Besides the activities proper of the Center of Studies and of the Pro Migrante operation, as its officially appointed pastor, Fr. Juarez Segalin is responsible for the Reconciliation parish of the Santa Madalena district. Though not officially so named, Fr. Jaycir Braido is carrying on the same work, together with Fr. Ottone Tasca, for the Catholic communities of the Vila Industrial and the Public Housing Complex of B.N.H. in the region of São Paulo. Also with no official appointment, Fr. Luigi Dal Pian exercises the functions of a pastor for three communities of the southern suburbs of the Paulist capital.

These are districts of intense immigration, characterized by all those factors of poverty and want peculiar to internal migrants newly arrived at any megalopolis. The priests of the Center of Pastoral Care for Migrants are giving assistance since 1977 to immigrants at Jardim Elba, Jardim Grimaldi, Jardim Tres Corações, and Jardim do Lago.

#### THE PARISH OF THE ASSUMPTION AT CASCALHO IS DISCONTINUED

The small parish of Cascalho had been directed since its very beginnings in 1911 by Fr. Luigi Stefanello. Out of respect for the senior priest, the Bishop of Campinas consented to let the parish go on until 1953 when Fr. Stefanello had to retire because of invalidity. The parish was then joined with that of nearby Cordeiropolis.

#### JUNDIAÍ: THE PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART

We know already how in 1919-1923, Fr. Carlo Porrini (see Vol. IV) had exercised the ministry as an assistant of Canon Igino de Campos in the colony of Barão de Jundiaí, then the only parish of Jundiaí, now a bishopric. The Italian Colonial Circle of Barão de Jundiaí had been founded in 1888 by a group of Italian emigrants (Silvestroni, De Marchi, Vaccari, Casin, Bitto, Pezzotto, D'Agostini, Murari, Bressan, Salsa), who were granted by the government a piece of land in the vi-

cinity of Jundiaí. There they enthroned an image of the Sacred Heart. Later on, other families of migrants (Zanatta, Benacchio, Perbellini, Passarin) built a church that was completed in 1900 and dedicated to the Sacred Heart. A visitation has been recorded Bishop Duarte Leopoldo e Silva of São Paulo made to those Italians on May 27, 1910. They were periodically assisted at that time by the Salvatorian missionaries.

In 1942 the Italians of the Colonia formed the Don Bosco Catholic Circle and began thinking about a new church. In 1946, the chapel of the Sacred Heart was raised to a quasiparish and entrusted to the Italian priest Fr. Montano Catanzano. In the following years, Cardinal Vasconcellos Motta, Archbishop of São Paulo, expressed the desire to make it an autonomous parish and to entrust it to the Scalabrinians. In fact, it was placed in the hands of Fr. Ermenegildo Amianti on January 28, 1951. The parish was actually created on September 7, 1952, and Fr. Amianti took official possession of it as pastor on the following October 26. The Archbishop gave permission for the construction of the new church, the rectory, and parish institutions. The corner stone was laid on December 4, 1955, and the new church was inaugurated on Christmas day of 1957. The rectory had been completed in October of the same year. Fr. Amianti established the St. Charles Pious Association for Social Assistance of the Colonia ward, the *Corporação da Banda Feminina*, the *Brasil-Italia Society* for cultural exchange, the parish movie house, the Don Bosco Recreational Center. Fr. Primo Bernardi became pastor on January 25, 1965. The parish numbered then 10 thousand people in the central town, and 7,000 more scattered around the chapels of Caxambú, Toca, Roseira, and Ivoturucaia. Fr. Bernardi had the final touches of the church completed. Fr. Albino Vico succeeded him in 1968. The census of 1971 listed the presence of 1,509 families, 20% of them of people born in Italy, and the rest of Italian extraction or of internal migrants, especially from the State of Minas Gerais. In 1972, there were 160 baptisms (105 in 1953, 185 in 1960). Fr. Francesco Dodi was Fr. Vico's successor since 1976.

The Scalabrinian Sisters had a great share in the activities of the parish. In 1963, in fact, they opened one of their most important institutions not far from the church, which was their novitiate house until

1973, of the Provincial Administration until 1976, and later the rest home for senior Sisters.

As seen above, the St. Joachim parish seminary was opened in 1972.

#### RIBEIRÃO PIRES: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH

In November 1941, sickly pioneer missionary Fr. Marco Simoni, its pastor since 1928, relinquished the parish of St. Joseph into the hands of Fr. Luigi Corso, who gave immediate start to the works for the remodeling of the parish church. He was assisted by Fr. Domenico Corso who carried on an intense apostolic action at the chapels of the communities of Paranapiacaba, R o Grande, and Mau a, but he was soon taken away by tuberculosis in May 1942 at the age of 31. Fr. Antonio Negri took his place as assistant and took Mau a to heart in a special way. In fact, he began residing there in 1946 where he organized the religious life and built the church which was dedicated in 1952, then raised to a parish in 1954, included in the new diocese of Santo Andr e, and entrusted, on that occasion, to the diocesan clergy.

The new rectory of Ribeir o Pires was inaugurated on August 9, 1946. Fr. Fernando Sperzagni became pastor in 1948 and brought the remodeling of the church to completion. In 1953 the parish numbered 30,000 people: 35% of Italian extraction, and the rest of Portuguese and Japanese origin. Besides the division of the parish with the creation in 1954 of that of Mau a, another parish was erected in 1956 at Paranapiacaba (formerly Alto da Serra).

Fr. Massimiliano Sanavioa was pastor for a few months between July 1957 and March 1958; then followed Fr. Alcides Zanella from 1958-1961; and Fr. Francesco Dodi, 1961-1965, who remodeled the front of the church for the 50th anniversary of the parish in 1961. In 1965, the parish was entrusted to Fr. Secondo Guerrino Zago. The population had grown very much, due especially to the arrival of great numbers from the NordEast. The entire population of the township of Ribeir o Pires, that is about forty thousand people, belonged to the parish of St. Joseph until November 1965. Almost half of them were included at that time in the new parish of Santana. Fr. Mario Rimondi was pastor for a few months in 1968; Fr. Alcides Zanella re-

turned on December 13 of that year. In 1972, the people of the parish numbered 18,000: one-third from the North East; 1/10th of Japanese extraction; a few hundred of Middle East origin; the rest, descendants of either Italian or Portuguese ancestors, There were 1,122 baptisms in 1972 (up from 617 in 1960). The parish was directed by Fr. Francesco Dodi from February 1976 until September of the same year on the arrival of the new pastor Fr. Angelo Baggio. In 1978, Ribeirão Pires had about 30,000 inhabitants, 80% of them Catholic.

#### RUDGE RAMOS: PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Erected on June 29, 1953, by separation from the Scalabrinian parish of São Bernardo, the parish of St. John the Baptist at Rudge Ramos was entrusted to the Scalabrini Fathers in 1954. The first pastor, Fr. Ugo Fent took possession of it on the April 11, 1954. The new diocese of Santo André was created on July 18 of the same year and Rudge Ramos was made a part of it. At that time the Scalabrinians would have preferred the new parish of Mauá, but the Chancery did not view favorably that religious priests should have charge of three neighboring parishes (São Bernardo, Mauá, Ribeirão Pires): in 1953, Auxiliary Bishop Rolim Laureiro of São Paulo proposed a choice between the old parish of São Caetano, founded by Fr. Luigi Capra, and the new one of Rudge Ramos; in January 1954 the same Bishop made an official request for the latter one. The city of Rudge Ramos marks the location previously known as Meninos, where, numerous Italians from the Garfagnana region especially, settled at the time of early emigration to engage in the production of charcoal and bricks.

It had now become an industrial center; its population, thought to be about 8,000 in 1957, was made up of immigrants from the hinterland of the State of São Paulo and of other Northern States, and of people of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese extraction. Early Italians had built a church that had grown insufficient by now; the rectory had collapsed in 1953.

Fr. Ugo Fent had a new rectory and a hall built. In 1957, Fr. Luigi Corso was the acting pastor. Fr. Fiorente Elena directed the parish in the years between February 1958 and 1973. The fast growth of the industrial center is proven by the fact that, in spite of the successive

creation of four more parishes, the parish of St. John the Baptist still numbered 30,000 people in 1966. To Fr. Elena credit is due for the new construction of the parish: its grandiose church, which replaced the old one demolished in 1962; the kindergarten, and the parochial school. In 1972, it had 35,000 people and 522 baptisms (up from 386 in 1960). Fr. Luciano Bonotto became pastor in January 1973; Fr. Reynaldo Scroccaro succeeded him in 1975. Fr. Alcides Zanella became pastor since February 22, 1976.

### SANTO ANDRÉ : THE PARISH OF ST. ANDREW

The parish was directed by Fr. Giuseppe Foscallo between 1937-1948. He founded the Casa Criança for the children of workers, under the direction of the Scalabrinian Sisters, and made plans for the construction of a new parish church.

At that time, with its 500 factories, the parish had already acquired the typical aspect of an industrial district. The population had risen to 15,000 people. Fr. Foscallo founded the chapels of Vila Vitoria and Rudge Ramos; both of them parishes now. Fr. Domenico Carlino was the pastor in the years 1948-1949. From 1949 to 1959 Fr. Primo Bernardi was the pastor who built the new parish school and Casa da Criança and founded the chapel of Vila Humaitã, presently a parish. Construction on the new church began on February 27, 1950. It was inaugurated on November 29, 1953 on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the city of Santo André.

As already mentioned above, the new diocese of Santo André was created in 1953. It extended to more or less the same territory occupied not many years earlier by the only parish of São Bernardo directed by the Scalabrinians. Built by the Scalabrinians as a subsidiary of the parish of Santo André, the church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel was chosen as the cathedral. Besides the three Scalabrinian parishes of Santo André, São Bernardo and Ribeirão Pires, in 1969 the new diocese numbered 23 parishes, all of them early chapels of the same.

By the creation of this diocese, the parish of Santo Andrew was reduced still further, thus making room for the new parishes of Vila Huamaitã and Vila Vitoria. This way, its territory of 100 square kilometers was cut down to only 14; but it still had 20,000 people. Fr.

Fernando Sperzagni was pastor in 1958-1964, to be succeeded from 1965 to 1970 by Fr. Romano Bevilacqua, who ordered the construction of Fr. Luigi Capra high school. This was sold in 1972, when still under construction, as a consequence to the general crisis of parochial schools. Fr. Mario Rimondi was pastor in 1970-1976. By the year 1972 the population of the parish had grown to 35,000 people with the registration of about 396 baptisms (down from 1,069 in 1960); in 1978 there were 25,000 souls and about 400 baptisms. The parish functioned as the center of assistance to the Italian communities of ABC, that is, of the extensive municipalities of Santo André, São Bernardo and São Caetano; and to the workers' camps employed in the building of highways and other public constructions, almost all of them internal migrants. Fr. Reynaldo Scroccaro became pastor there in February 27, 1976.

#### SANTOS: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE SEAMEN AND SEAMEN'S CENTER

The need for a Scalabrinian presence in the port city of Santos had already been felt by Fr. Giuseppe Marchetti in 1894. In 1946, upon resumption of emigration after World War II, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Santos requested a Scalabrinian for the Santa Casa (hospital) which had been turned into a hostel where immigrants landing at that port could find temporary lodgings. Much to his regret, the Provincial Superior Fr. Milini had to decline the offer for lack of personnel. In 1956, the bishop of Santos Dom Idilio Soares called in the Scalabrinians to the new parish of Vicente de Carvalho (Itapema), with the intent of establishing there a center for assisting seafarers and Italians; however, though begun with only 5000 people, the parish of Our Lady of Grace in 1966 numbered already 60,000 people and could not leave room for extra parochial activities. In 1969 the new Bishop Davi Picão of Santos, and Msgr. Francis Frayne, head of the Apostleship of the Sea, agreed with the Scalabrinians to buy a building at 361 Avenida Washington Luiz, in view of opening there a center for seafarers on merchant ships going through Santos. The house was bought by the Scalabrinians in January 1970. They were also given charge over the church of Our Lady of Seafarers, where they were granted all faculties for the exercise of the sacred ministry



for seafarers and fishermen. Frs. Alessandro Gramola and Artemino Brugnartotto took possession of it on March 28, 1971. They were succeeded in April 1974 by Frs. Giorgio Cunial and Orazio Cappellari, who were appointed co-pastors of the personal parish of Our Lady of seafarers. They founded the Equipe para as Migrações Estrangeiras, taking care especially of the Italians of São Paulo. The activities for seafarers was very limited because the military was reluctant in granting priests to enter the port and the ships. Fr. Cappellari worked alone there since March 1976.

### **SÃO BERNARDO: PARISH OF O.L. OF THE GOOD VOYAGE AND SÃO BERNARDO**

Committed especially to the organization and spiritual formation of its Catholic associations, Fr. Girolamo Angeli concluded in 1947 his ten-year term as pastor of this parish with laying of the corner stone of the new church which was inaugurated in 1950 by his successor Fr. Elena, also a pastor there for ten years (1947-1957). Fr. Elena must be credited with the construction of four other churches, which later became new parishes: Santa Rita, São Pedro de Taboão, Nossa Senhora de Fatima, Santa Edwiges of Vila Vivaldi, all of them formed, like that of Rudge Ramos, by division from the parish of São Bernardo. Fr. Pietro Celotto was pastor from 1957 to 1965. In 1962 he had a steeple built after the blueprint of that of St. Mark in Venice. In 1961 he obtained permission for the new construction of the Menino Jesus High School, previously functioning in the old parish hall built by Fr. Angeli. Fr. Ugo Fent became pastor in 1965. He began construction of the new parochial hall. The parish numbered then 30,000 people: in 1966 it listed 1,450 baptisms. Fr. Avelino Magagnin was pastor in 1968-1973 and brought the hall to completion in 1969. He was replaced for a time by Fr. Carlitos Dall'Agnese, who was succeeded by Fr. Adelino De Carli in 1975. In 1972, the population was estimated at 20,000 people and there were 2,053 baptisms. In 1978 there were thought to be 30,000 people.



## VICENTE DE CARVALHO: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF GRACE

Before 1957, the actual territory of this parish used to belong to that of Guarujá. A chapel stood there at a place called Bocaina. When the Air Base of Santos was set up on it, military authorities had a new chapel built in the nearby town of Itapema. At first, it functioned as a subsidiary chapel of the parish of Guarujá; on November 30, 1957, Bishop Idilio Soares made it a parish under the title of Our Lady of Grace and entrusted it to the Scalabrinians. The first pastor Fr. Antonio Cervini, who had been working at Guarujá since March 1956 as an assistant of the Pastor Fr. Domenico Rangoni, took possession of the new parish on November 15, 1957. His entry had been prepared by Fr. Pietro Celotto, who had been acting pastor of Guarujá for the four preceding months.

Fr. Jacob Bordin became pastor in August 1964, Fr. Irio Dalla Costa in January 1971, Fr. Alessandro Gramola in March 1972, succeeded in turn by Fr. Benjamin Bossa in 1976.

The population which were thought to be 70,000 in 1972, grew to 100,000 in 1978, 90% of it migrants from the North East, very poor, illiterate in great part, lodged in unsafe and unsanitary houses, the victims of abnormal situations and easy prey to Spiritism and macumba. There is no hospital. Authorities have so far concentrated their efforts on the school: it is frequented by 10,000 pupils, age six to ten. The parochial structures are still insufficient: there is a central church, enlarged in 1973 and five more centers of worship, all in a state of extreme poverty. A parochial hall was opened in 1976. In 1972, there were 1,171 baptisms (up from 206 in 1956 and 813 in 1960).



## CHAPTER IV

### PARISHES OF THE STATE OF PARANÁ

#### ASTORGA: PARISH OF ST. SEBASTIAN

The parish of St. Sebastian was created on December 28, 1948. It belonged then to the diocese of Jacarezinho; in 1956 it passed over to the new diocese of Londrina and to that of Apucarana in 1965. The first pastor was the diocesan priest Fr. Luciano Ambrosini. He built the first parish church, and then the second one, made of wood, the hospital, and the parochial school. He was succeeded on March 1, 1956 by Fr. João Janssen who succeeded in settling the quarrels that divided the people and began construction the new masonry church. Fr. Janssen died on January 14, 1961. Fr. Comercindo Dalla Costa, the first Scalabrinian pastor, entered the parish on November 26, 1961. He reopened the elementary school, built a new parish hall and rectory, and a night hostel for the poor. In 1966 it was estimated that the parish, with a territory of 433 square kilometers, had a population of about 28,000 inhabitants. Before leaving the parish into the hands of his successor, Fr. Alessandro Gramola (1967-1970), Fr. Dalla Costa completed the construction of its large church, which was inaugurated on December 15-16, 1967, and decorated afterwards especially by the efforts of Fr. Massimiliano Sanavio, who took possession of the parish on November 15, 1970. He was succeeded in 1976 by Fr. Antônio Scartazzini.

In 1972, the parish had about ten "chapels" with some fifty base communities, animated by as many as 200 coordinators trained through special courses. Like all other parishes of North Paraná, in the last years Astorga experienced two phenomena: the decrease of its population and the growth of transient workers. From its 42,296 inhabitants of 1968, the population of Astorga decreased to 24,967 in only two years. This decrease was due to the crisis of the coffee plantations. In many places the land was turned over to use for the raising of livestock; something that needs only one-tenth of the manpower required in coffee growing. Many people moved into Mato

Grosso, Goiás, and other States. In their place there grew the number of the adventitious workers, called “boias frias” because they are engaged on a daily basis and arrive at the employment office with “cold lunches” that are to sustain them throughout the day. In 1972, the number of the “Boias Frias” in North Paraná was thought to amount to about 100,000; it is indeed a question of emarginated and exploited people, on the lowest level of the social scale.

#### CAMPO COMPRIDO: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Already in 1904, when Bishop Scalabrini visited Brazil, the people of Campo Comprido had asked to have a priest reside by the church they had built for this purpose; but only in 1930 did Fr. Giovanni Morrelli take up residence there, and just for a few months, because due to disputes with the trustees, he soon moved on to Santa Felicidade and finally to Rondinha. The faithful of Campo Comprido, however, were steadily cared for by the Scalabrinians of Santa Felicidade of which they had been made a part already in 1895.

In 1939, when Santa Felicidade and Orleans were made parishes, the 150 families of Campo Comprido were joined to Orleans, but they were not happy with a decision to become members of an almost entirely Polish parish. They succeeded afterwards in obtaining permission from Archbishop Attico Eusébio da Rocha of Curitiba that a priest of Santa Felicidade might continue to be their chaplain; and this is what Frs. Luigi Corso, Antonio Negri, Primo Bernardi, and Francesco Corso kept doing. In 1939, Fr. Tirondola obtained from the Archbishop that the chapel should be entrusted to the Scalabrinians. However, when in 1941 Fr. Francesco Corso became pastor of Rondinha, Fr. Domenico Carlino of Santa Felicidade requested and secured the help of the Capuchins. These, however, left in 1948, and so Campo Comprido was returned to Orleans. In the meantime the new bell-tower was inaugurated. A certain Vittorio Boscardin must be credited above all for his efforts to obtain a resident priest and the creation of the parish. In 1961, Fr. Irio Dalla Costa, pastor of Rondinha, suggested to him to inquire of the Archbishop whether he had any objection against conducting a subscription by the people of Campo Comprido to have a resident priest. It had to be presented to

the Superior General Fr. Raffaele Larcher, then visiting that region. Bishop Manuel da Silveira d'Elboux replied he would talk about it personally to Fr. Larcher, who accepted the proposal on condition that the faithful purchase a piece of land by the church on which to build a seminary. Fr. Irio Dalla Costa was given charge to buy the land and to make plans for the parish; he himself was named "Vicarius Aeconomus" (Parish Administrator) on February 3, 1962. He built the new rectory, which was inaugurated on October 11, 1964. On January 31, 1965, Fr. Ermenegildo Amianti took possession of the parish as its first official pastor, and he directed it until September 23, 1973, when he was succeeded by Fr. Luigi Corso. In 1966, there were 3,500 people, the great majority of them of Italian extraction, 10% Brazilian, and the rest Polish, Japanese, Portuguese, Hispanics, etc. By the year 1978 that number had decreased slightly.

#### CURITIBA: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROCIO

The Provincial Superior, Fr. Sante Bernardi, brought to a successful conclusion the long cherished project of establishing a position in the city of Curitiba, if for no other reason than the Scalabrinians had been working 60 years already in the immediate vicinities of the city and yet had never taken care, directly at least, of migrants living in the Capital of Paraná. Archbishop Attico Eusébio da Rocha offered an opportunity for the creation of a new parish in the "Sorriso" ward. In January 1950, Fr. Luigi Corso was sent there to prepare the ground for the formation of a new parish, while serving in the meantime, as chaplain of "Our Lady of Light" hospital, directed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery. He acquired a property on Rua Desembargador Westphalen and in 1951 built a makeshift church and rectory. Archbishop Manuel da Silveira d'Elboux made it a parish on February 18, 1952, separating it from that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and dedicated it to Our Lady of the Rocio, Patroness of the State of Paraná. Fr. Luigi Corso took possession of it as its first pastor on March 9, 1952. Fr. Irio Dalla Costa succeeded him on May 23, 1954. He had a wooden statue made in Italy of Our Lady of the Rocio, which was blessed by the Archbishop himself on November 13, 1955.

In that same year, Fr. Dalla Costa began considering the purchase of a piece of land for the construction of a new church, being the first one insufficient. It became the task of the third pastor, Fr. Albino Vico, however, who, after entering the parish on February 12, 1956, bought the property in March 1956 and so proceeded to build the church. The Archbishop blessed the corner stone on November 24, 1957, but work was started only a year later. The new church was inaugurated on November 15, 1965, by Archbishop Manuel da Silveira d'Elboux. Fr. Francesco Corso became pastor in April 1966; Fr. Primo Bernardi in January 1968; Fr. Jacob Bordin in January 1971. In 1956, the parish had 15,000 souls, 40% of them of Italian extraction; in 1973 it numbered 9,000. In 1956 there were 428 baptisms and 519 in 1972. In his campaign for the promotion of charitable institutions of assistance in the archdiocese, Archbishop d'Elboux had a building constructed alongside the parish church on land owned by the Scalabrinians, where to house the children of the "São Luis" orphanage who upon completion of elementary school should desire to continue their studies or learn a skill. Work began on June 21, 1958; the building was inaugurated on July 24, 1960 and named "Lar N.sa S.ra do Rocio", the first 12 students entered on July 19th. There were 21 of them in 1961. They began to dwindle hence, and it did not pay that for such a small number two missionaries, Fr. Artemino Brugnaro, the director, and Brother Francesco Prevedello the supervisor of the printing and shoemaking shops should be employed, were then rented out. And so, it was decided to close down the institution and turn it into a parochial school, but, as we said already, it was actually made into a seminary. The chaplaincy of the great mental hospital "N.sa S.ra da Luz" held in the beginning by Fr. Luigi Corso and host to the first religious services of that ward was entrusted to Fr. Domenico Carlino who retained it until the day of his death on February 10, 1971.

#### CURITIBA: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH AT VILA FELIZ

Suburban "Vila Feliz" had its beginnings about in 1945, about eight kilometers from downtown Curitiba and at the same distance from the Scalabrinian parish of Umbará, whose pastor, Fr. Albino

Vico, was charged by the Archbishop with the care of the district. On August 15, 1952, he started work on the first chapel which was blessed by Archbishop d'Elboux on March 21, 1954, though the first Mass had already been said in it on Christmas day of 1953.

Dedicated to St. Joseph, the parish was created by a decree of July 2, 1957. Fr. Francesco Corso was its first pastor. He organized the spiritual life and built a temporary parish hall, inaugurated on February 2, 1958 by Auxiliary Bishop Girolamo Mazzarotto of Curitiba. The pastor moved into the new rectory in February 1962 and the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart opened the school in the following May. This school, previously situated by the temporary church, had been opened by Fr. Vico on March 2, 1955. On August 13, 1962, work was started on the construction of the new parish church, nearly completed by 1978. Its only "chapel" of St. Anthony at Pinheirinhos was raised to a parish on February 24, 1963. Fr. Angelo F. Baggio took possession of the parish of St. Joseph on April 17, 1966. In the beginning the parish had about 10,000 people: by 1966 its population had more than doubled, mostly laborers and poor, half of them from Paraná and Santa Catarina; the remaining half of Italian, Polish, and German extraction on an even percentage. In 1972, its population was thought to be 25,000, and by 1978 it had grown to about 40,000: 60% of Polish origin, 20% of Italian extraction, and the rest of others. Fr. Pietro Celotto succeeded Fr. Baggio in 1977.

#### FLÓRIDA: PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

The parish of St. Anthony was detached from that of Santa Fé and erected by Bishop Geraldo Fernandes of Londrina with a decree of January 6, 1959. It lacked the rectory, and so the pastor Fr. Luigi Corso, who had taken possession of the parish on January 25, 1959, used to spend the night at Lobato for the first few months. The parish had its first pastoral visitation on September 25, 1959: there were 700 confirmations. In 1960, a piece of land was purchased for the church, and the parish hall was built, the first stone structure of that place. The rectory was ready by 1961. The corner stone of the parish church was laid on July 1, 1963, which was opened for worship on Christmas day of 1965. In February of the same year the parish had passed, like all

others in the region, to the new diocese of Apucarana. Fr. Luigi Corso directed the parish till 1964; on October 11 he was succeeded by Fr. Natale Ubaldi, who took official possession of it in early 1965. There lived then at Florida 3,000 people, and 6,000 more in the hamlets of Angulo and Valencia. After 1969 the population began to drop fast. The parish was given back to the diocese in March 1971, due to a revision of positions of North Paraná.

#### FOZ DO AREIA: MISSION FOR THE "COPEL" WORKERS

In February 1976, Bishop Frederic Helmelt of Guarapuava (Paraná) asked the Scalabrinian Province of St. Paul to take charge of the religious assistance of the employees of the Electric Energy Company of Paraná (COPEL) engaged in the construction of the dam and electric plant at Foz do Areia, on the Iguaçú river. The "barrageiros" were about 5,000, and a triple of this number was soon anticipated by the time their families would join them. The mission was opened on December 15, 1976 and entrusted to Fr. Irio Dalla Costa, to be succeeded a few months later by Fr. Carlo Verri. Three Scalabrinian Sisters added their cooperation on February 27, 1977.

#### IGUARAÇU: PARISH OF OUR LADY APARECIDA

Early explorers and adventurers penetrated the forests of Iguaçu only in 1950. They found there a widow with her daughter who lived on hunting. The "fazendas" (plantations) of Iguaçu had not been planned, like those of other regions, by the "Companhia Melhoramentos Norte do Paraná": and so they had been bought by landlords and were tilled by day and seasonal laborers. Small and middle owners were almost unknown. To this very day the phenomenon of the "Boias Frias" is very much ongoing.

The parish of Iguaçu was erected on August 15, 1952, with a decree by the bishop of Jacarezinho; like all other neighboring parishes, it passed over to the diocese of Londrina in 1956 and to that of Apucarana in 1965. Fr. Ambrosio Marks was its first pastor. He built three small wooden churches, one after the other, and the parochial school. Beginning with 1956, there were detached from the territory



of Iguaraçu the parishes of Santa Fé, Flórida, Lobato, and Munhoz de Mello.

Fr. Marks retired in March 1960 and the parish was entrusted to the Scalabrinians. Fr. Guido Pirolo took care of it between May and July. Fr. Angelo F. Baggio took possession of it as pastor on July 17, 1960. In 1961 he began the construction of a new church; leaving aside the one Fr. Marks had just started. The church was inaugurated on August 16, 1964. The construction started by Fr. Mark was completed to serve as a parish hall and as headquarters for the religious associations by Fr. Antonio Gallo, pastor since January 1966. Fr. Francesco Corso became pastor in 1968. He built the church of Angulo (3,600 people), raised to a parish in 1972, and the new rectory. Its inhabitants were about ten thousand in 1966, 20,000 in 1968, again 10,000 in 1970, and 3,500 in 1978: such ups and downs were due to the varying fortunes of the coffee crops, completely wasted by the "heavy frost" in 1975. Fr. Corso was succeeded Fr. Antonio Cervini in 1977.

#### LOBATO: PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Lobato also began to be inhabited around 1950. When raised to a parish, it was placed in the care of the Scalabrinians. Fr. Massimiliano Sanavio was made its first pastor on January 25, 1959. On the 31st of the same month he laid the corner stone of the parish church. In six months it was almost half completed. Fr. Sanavio built also a parish hall. Fr. Angelo Cerantola, the second pastor, made his entry on August 23, 1961, and resumed construction of the church which was dedicated by Bishop Fernandes of Londrina on March 3, 1963. In September of the same year, Fr. Cerantola began the construction of the "Good Shepherd" College, and was to be later on the temporary seat of the Minor Seminary opened on March 8, 1965 and then moved to its permanent residence in Astorga in March 1967. In 1966, the parish numbered 2,075 people in town, and another 7,462 in the countryside: 60% of them from the Northern States. There were 45 families of Italian extraction. In 1971, the inhabitants amounted to 6,300 and only to 3,000 in 1972. The parish was given back to the diocese of Apucarana in August 1973. Fr. Fulvio Patassini had been its pastor since February 1971.

### LONDRINA: PARISH OF OUR LADY APARECIDA IN VILA NOVA

The city of Londrina had only one parish up to March 1, 1952, when a parish dedicated to Our Lady Aparecida was created in the suburb of Vila Nova. A small church to Our Lady had been built there in 1939; in 1942 a larger wooden church was constructed at a little distance from the first. Fr. Beño Werner was its first pastor. He enlarged the wooden church and had the rectory built. Fr. Carlo Bonetta succeeded him in 1953 and, in 1954, the Xaverian Fr. Mario Del Sante, who built the parochial school in the same year and gave start in 1955 to the construction of a stone church. The fourth pastor, Fr. Tarcisio Facchinello, was transferred to Curitiba in 1959 and left the church still at its foundations.

The first Scalabrinian pastor, Fr. Ugo Fent, named on March 15, 1959, resumed construction of the church which was opened for worship on Christmas Day of 1960. A short while earlier the new parish of Our Lady of Peace had been detached from that of the Aparecida, also entrusted to the Scalabrinians; in 1963 the parish of Our Lady of the Rosary was divided in two; and in 1966 that of Our Lady of Light.

Fr. Pietro Celotto became pastor on March 22, 1965. He completed the church and had a new parochial school built in 1966.

Fr. Pietro Celotto became pastor on March 22, 1965. He completed the church and had a new parochial school built in 1966. Fr. Reynaldo Scroccaro succeeded him in January 1968; Fr. Primo Bernardi in February 1974; Fr. Eloi Dalla Vecchia in 1975. In 1969 in the territory of the Aparecida and other parish was erected, that of Parque Ouro Verde. Half made up of people of Italian origin and of Japanese and the rest of internal migrants from various states, the population amounted to 10,000 inhabitants in 1961; to 11,000 in 1972 and 13,000 in 1978. There were 350 baptisms in 1960; 326 in 1972; they rose to an average of 400 in the following years.

### LONDRINA: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF PEACE

The parish was created by a division from the parishes of Our Lady Aparecida and "Vila Casoni" with Decree of August 15, 1960. The Scalabrinian Fr. Egidio Battocchio was its first pastor. Upon taking possession of it on October 9, he found a miserable little rectory,

a wooden structure serving as church, and the foundations of a new church. Fr. Battocchio had a wooden pavilion built as a building better fit for worship and resumed the construction of the church.

The parish had about 10,000 people, 40% of them Italian, in greater part laborers and small property owners, who had moved from São Paulo to Londrina following a brief stay of a few years in the rural communities of North Paraná. Fr. Albino Vico, became pastor in February 1966; Fr. Artemino Brugnartotto in 1968; Fr. Carlo Verri in 1971. A new parish hall was inaugurated in August 1974. Made pastor in 1976, Fr. Fulvio Patassini built the façade of the church. In 1978 there were 6,400 parishioners and 279 baptisms.

#### **MUNHOZ DE MELLO: PARISH OF ST. SEBASTIAN**

The parish was created with a decree dated on August 1, 1960, but the Scalabrinian Fr. Guido Pirollo, its first pastor, took possession of it on December 2, 1962. The parishioners, made up of 50% of Italian origin, 30% from the Northeast, and 15% of Japanese extraction, built him a small house for the occasion; a few years earlier they had constructed a church, also made of wood. In 1965, Fr. Pirollo began construction on a stone church, which was completed by his successor Fr. Natale Ubaldi, pastor in 1971-1974. Fr. Sante Bernardi Jr. became pastor in 1975. In 1978 out of a total population of 7,376 inhabitants, 5,000 were Catholic with 202 baptisms. In 1966, the population amounted to 9,500 inhabitants, 1000 of them in the center of town, the others scattered throughout the chapels, where a Sunday Mass was said each month. In 1968 the population had grown to 12,000 to revert to 7,080 in 1972.

#### **RONDINHA: PARISH OF ST. SEBASTIAN**

Fr. Luigi Corso was its pastor from July 1937 to November 1941, to be succeeded until 1956, by Fr. Francesco Corso, who built the parish school in 1951 but could not see it in use because it lacked electric lights. In fact, electricity reached Rondinha when Fr. Irio Dalla Costa was already the pastor there (February 1956 - January 1965). He surrendered the parish school to the Archbishop of Curitiba, who decided in 1956 to make it the Archdiocesan "Retreat House", directed

by the Sisters of St. Andrew. As seen above, in 1975 the Archbishop gave back the house, which became the seat of the minor seminary "Fr. Natale Pigato".

Pastor from 1965 to 1974, Fr. Orazio Cappellari built another parochial school which was inaugurated in 1966. Almost entirely of Italian extraction, the population amounted to 5,000 people in 1962, and 4,000 in 1972. In the same year baptisms were 92 (105 in 1940, 79 in 1950, 57 in 1960). Fr. Artemino Brugarotto became pastor in May 1974.

### SANTA FÉ: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF GRACE

The place began to be settled in 1949: two pioneers opened a trail in the forest and built a wooden chapel on a clearing. In a short while the forest was burnt down and replaced with a plantation of 20 million coffee trees. The first Mass was said in July 1950; the chapel was enlarged in 1952 and a priest began to celebrate Mass in it once a month. On October 26, 1956, Santa Fé was made a parish, and shortly afterwards a municipality. Fr. Giuseppe Bedin, an Italian priest, was its first pastor. He had also the care of Lobato and Flórida. A stone church was built in 1959-1960. Fr. Massimiliano Sanavio took possession of it on January 30, 1962. He completed the church and restored the rectory. The parish had been entrusted in 1961 by the Bishop of Londrina, with Fr. Alessandro Gramola as its temporary pastor. Fr. Sanavio was succeeded in October 1964 by Fr. Luigi Corso, who opened the kindergarten and the parish hall in 1966. Fr. Irio Dalla Costa was made pastor in March 1972. In November 1972, a hurricane caused the total ruin of the church: reconstruction began in 1974.

In 1966, its inhabitants amounted to 12,000 people: half of them Italo-Brasilians from the State of São Paulo, and the other half from several other states of Brasil. By 1968 the population had doubled (21,334), to revert to about the previous level (11,531) in 1970. The parish was given back to the Diocese of Apucarana in 1976.

## SANTA FELICIDADE: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH AND PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION BUTIATUVINHA

Fr. Domenico Carlino promoted above all the spiritual growth of the parish. He directed the parish in 1939-1946. Fr. Primo Bernardi (1946-1949) set the church square in order, and in his second term (1958-1960) he endowed it with an entry staircase. Following a brief tenure by Fr. Luigi Corso (1949-1950), Fr. Domenico Carlino returned to direct the parish from 1950 to 1952. In the years 1952-1957, he was succeeded by Fr. Massimiliano Sanavio, whose main achievement was the parish hall. Fr. Antonio Gallo was pastor for a few months between 1957 and 1958 and then in 1960-1964. To Fr. Irio Dalla Costa (January 1965-February 1968) are due the new rectory and the hall for the works of social assistance. Fr. Pietro Celotto was pastor in 1968-1977. He was succeeded by Fr. Massimiliano Sanavio.

In 1952, the parish had 5,100 people, and 8,500 in 1972. It registered 473 baptisms in 1972 (156 in 1950, and 240 in 1960). The new church of Butiatuvinha was inaugurated on November 5, 1972. It had been detached from Santa Felicidade and raised to an autonomous parish on December 5, 1971. It now has 4,500 souls, 60% of them of Italian parentage, and 40% of recent immigration. Fr. Arturo Seppi was its first pastor. He had a parish hall built, which was inaugurated on August 31, 1975.

## UMBARÁ :THE PARISH OF ST. PETER

From December 1939 till May 1946 the parish was directed by Fr. Primo Bernardi, who completed the construction and the furnishings of the new parish church. He was succeeded by Fr. Pietro Rigo (1946-1951) to who is due the existing rectory. Fr. Albino Vico (1951-1956) built the parochial school and entrusted it to the "Sisters of Mercy", who replaced the Apostle Sisters of the Sacred Heart. As seen before, while pastor at Umbará, Fr. Vico had made ready for the birth of the parish of Vila Feliz by the construction of the provisional church of St. Joseph. Fr. Francesco Corso succeeded him in February 1956. In July 1957 he became the first pastor of Vila Feliz. Fr. Angelo Baggio (1957-1960) completed in April 1959 the bell tower begun by Fr. F. Corso. Fr. Arturo Seppi brought to an end the grandiose project of

the parish institutions with a social center and a movie theater (1967), currently serving as a meeting place. In 1974 a new parish was created in Pinheirinhos detaching it from Umbará and Vila Feliz, and another one at Tatuquara in 1971. Fr. Tranquillo Lorenzin was made pastor in January 1971. In August 1977 he opened the “Lar das Meninas” for abandoned girls.

In 1960, the parish numbered 3,000 people, 4,300 in 1966, 5,500 in 1972, and some 9,000 in 1978. Baptisms amounted to 140 in 1960, 135 in 1972, and to an average of 180 in the last years.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PARISHES OF RÍO DE JANEIRO, PARÁ, AND THE FEDERAL DISTRICT

#### RÍO DE JANEIRO: PARISH OF ST. CECILIA AND ST. PIUS X

Within the context of the contacts begun by the Provincial Superior Fr. Mario Rimondi in 1953 for organizing the assistance to Italian migrants, plans were discussed with the Archbishop Card. Jaime Camara and Auxiliary Bishop Helder Camara for the opening of a Scalabrinian residence in Río de Janeiro, then the Capital of Brazil. In the early months of 1954 a house was found near the NS. das Dores High School where two missionaries could reside: one would have served as chaplain of the Institute while busying himself with the organization of a parish; the other would have directed the diocesan office of the National Catholic Commission for Emigration. Charged with these activities, Frs. Mario Consonni and Antonio Gallo arrived at Río de Janeiro on March 12, 1954. They immediately began visiting the Italian families. A Sunday Mass for Italians in the church of Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Benedict was secured with difficulty from the Cardinal almost a year afterwards, and it began to be celebrated on February 13, 1955. On September 4, of 1955, Card. Jaime Camara named Fr. Consonni as Spiritual Assistant to the Italians of Río de Janeiro, and on June 19, 1956 he granted the mission "cum cura animarum" for the Italians and their children. On October 12 of the same year a piece of land, the size of 7,000 square meters, was purchased on Rua Alvaro Ramos in the "Botafogo" area. The first meeting of the main exponents of the Italian community was held on September 3 for the forming of a Committee for the Construction of the Church and Center for the Social Assistance to Italian Migrants. The Italian Catholic Center of Assistance St. Pius X was given a provisional seat on February 14, 1957. Though there had never been a mass immigration of Italians to Río de Janeiro, still about 37,000 of them, mostly from the South, lived there. On the same day the two missionaries,

Frs. M. Consonni and Alfredo Bona, moved to Rua Alvaro Ramos, though continuing to say the Sunday Mass in the church of Our Lady of the Rosary till the end of 1958 when the chapel at the Center was ready. Set up with the help of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, the medical aid center was inaugurated on June 24, 1958 in the presence of the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Armando Lombardi and of the Ambassador of Italy. Eleven doctors offered their services for free a few hours a week in collaboration with 14 nurses who extended their work also to homes in particularly difficult cases. The poor were given the medicines without charge. On June 2, 1962 the corner stone of a rest home for the elderly, now called "Vila do Sol", was laid, which was inaugurated on October 30, 1973. In October 1958, Fr. Alfredo Bona was succeeded by Fr. Orazio Cappellari who was the director of the bimonthly, "La Voce d'Italia" from 1959 to 1964. On June 21, 1965 the mission was entrusted to Fr. Mario Rimondi, who started immediate work on forming a territorial parish, titled after Sts. Cecilia and Pius X, actually created on March 4, 1966. He took official possession of it on April 17, 1966. According to an approximate estimate, the new parish numbered 20,000 people. The following priests succeeded him as pastors: Fr. Irio Dalla Costa (1968-1971), and Fr. Secondo G. Zago, since February 1971. In 1973 the population was thought to amount to between 20 and 25,000 people; by 1976 it had decreased to about 15,000. The parish takes in also a "favela". In 1973 Fr. Adelino De Carli obtained permission to enter the port of Río de Janeiro to give life to some kind of the Apostleship of the Sea, but this lasted only a short while. A work of assistance was begun on behalf of political refugees of various nations of Latin America and of immigrants from the Northeast employed in the construction of the subway.

#### RÍO DE JANEIRO: PARISH OF ST. ANTÔNIO DO QUITUNGO

The beginnings of the parish of St. Antônio on Quitungo Street, in the neighborhood of Brás de Pina, resemble those of the parish of Sts. Cecilia and Pius X, Fr. João Lorenzato arrived at Río de Janeiro on September 2, 1959; he too took residence at 110 Rua Aturiá as chaplain of the N.S. das Dores High School, and from there he



set going the spiritual movement that was to give birth to the parish of St. Antônio in the neighborhood of Leopoldina at the northern end of the metropolis. He said the first Mass on October 25, 1959, at the "Leopoldo Miguez" Day School, at 451 Estrada do Quitungo, with only a few parishioners present. For the span of 20 months he said two Masses each month there and two more at 70 Rua Valdemar Mangini. The parish was created on June 1, 1960; on that same day, Mons. Soter de Silveira, Vicar General of the Archdiocese, blessed the image of St. Anthony donated by the Cardinal. On June 8, 1961, Cardinal Camara blessed the provisional chapel, and two days later, Fr. Lorenzato took possession of it as its first pastor. This chapel was serving practically as the hall of the hospital - nursing home of the St. Antônio Social and Cultural Institute of Assistance at Rua Quintuno, whose administration was entrusted by the Archbishop to the Scalabrinians. The first wing began functioning in 1965. Besides the hall, this part contained several medical offices, a pharmacy, an X-ray room, a dentistry lab, and the parochial offices. A kindergarten began to operate in early 1966 with 25 children. In 1970, the Institute was assigned to sheltering chronically ill elderly cared for by a group of doctors and with the profits from the rent the parish church was built, whose cornerstone was laid on January 13, 1974, Fr. Guido Pirolo (1971-1977) and Fr. Egidio Battocchio (since September 1977) have succeeded Fr. Lorenzato. In 1972, the population was presumed to number about 20,000 people of mixed ethnic extractions, in great part former shanty dwellers, ranging between the middle and the lowest classes, often distrustful of authorities and of the Church.

#### ITUPIRANGA: PARISH OF ST. ANTÔNIO

In 1972, Archbishop Alberto Ramos of Belém and Prelate Stefano Cardoso de Avelar of Marabá invited the Scalabrinians to open a mission for the immigrant workers of the new road under construction through the Amazon region. The "Prelature" of Marabá in the state of Pará, extends over an area of 120,000 square kilometers with only 100,000 people: in 1972 it was served by 11 priests and 30 nuns. It had two successive periods in which people came to settle there: about 1897 at the time of the rubber "boom", and lately for work on the

transamazonian road, with consequent colonization along the new great highway. The majority of the people originate from the states of Maranhão, Goiás, and in general from the North. Among the newcomers, many moved in also from the central and southern states; half of them are illiterate. Health conditions are poor: sickness is a frequent occurrence due to insufficient food and lack of hygiene resulting from scarcity of drinking water. Sixty per cent of their dwellings are huts made of mud and palm branches. The climate is tropical: dry summers and wet winters. The Scalabrinians were offered a region that depends from the city of Itupiranga, at 49 kilometers from Marabá, on the river Tocantins, distant 420 kilometers from Belem, the capital of Pará, and 6 from the Transamazonian highway. The main town numbers a little more than 4,000 people: between 10 and 12,000, the entire municipality. It was founded in 1896 with the name of Lago Vermelho, changed to Itupiranga in 1930. It is a municipality since 1948. Its population is almost entirely black or mulatto, who had moved in from the states of Maranhão, Pará, Goiás, Ceará, Bahia, Paraná, Ríó de Janeiro. There is also a Village of Indios Paracanas. Its main produce are the Brazilian nuts of Pará and rice. When it is time for gathering the nuts, on January 6, the male population disappears from town for three months. The general conditions of life are extremely poor. Illiteracy runs as high as 60%: there is only one elementary school. Many of them have no documents or securities on the part of employers. Before the Scalabrinians came, there was only a medical aid center attended just by one nurse, a French nun, who had to care for the most urgent needs of the whole population in addition to the new one of the transamazonian highway. A doctor called on it once a month. There was also a church. The bishop offered the missionaries the house, his car, a motor boat and a monthly salary. In March 1973 there arrived at Itupiranga from Ríó Grande do Sul four sisters of St. Theresa, and on June 30 of the same years Frs. Antônio Scartazzini and Sextilio Fochesato also reached it. Then there came the following succession of priests: Frs. Luis Batistel, José Milesi, Gianpiero Gabello, and Guido Pirollo.

### TUCURUÍ: MISSION FOR WORKERS OF AN ELECTRIC PLANT

When the decision was made to open the mission of Itupiranga, it had been already foreseen that it would have to be extended eventually to the workers of the hydroelectric plant of Tucuruí, on the *Río Tocantins*, about 200 kilometers to the north of Itupiranga, and to the miners that would have been employed in the exploitation of the iron mines of the *Serra dos Carajás*. Leaving aside the latter project, the Eletronorte Company gave start to the construction of the Tucuruí dam, for which thousands of “barrageiros” (transient workers) were employed together with their families (some 27,000 people in all). The opening of this other mission along the Transamazonian highway would have allowed also removing the missionaries of Itupiranga from isolation, relieving them of the burden of assisting workers along a tract of the same high way too far for them. Negotiations with the Prelature of Cameté were concluded in 1977, and in early 1978 an agreement with the Eletronorte Co. was signed. The mission was opened on March 17, 1978 with the arrival of Fr. Giancarlo Rizzinelli to whom Fr. Antonio Simonetto was added shortly afterwards. The missionaries spend Saturdays and Sundays remaining at the disposal of the large community settlements of the Eletronorte and devote the other days of the week also to the groups of settlers scattered over a strip of 200 kilometers along the transamazonian highway.

### SOBRADINHO: PARISH OF THE BOM JESUS DOS MIGRANTES.

Already in the early beginnings of the new federal capital's existence, the Scalabrinians began plans for the opening of a residence in Brasilia to secure a place close to the church and state bodies with decision making powers. The Province of St. Paul bought a property, but the project fell through right away because of the bankruptcy of the “Real Estate” company that had sold it. In 1973, the Scalabrinian Sisters of Brasilia informed that the Archbishop José Newton de Almeida Baptista Pereira intended to open new parishes. Both provinces of St. Peter and St. Paul jointly decided to give life to an inter-provincial project. In October 1973, Frs. Laurindo Guizzardi and João Garbossa visited Brasilia and became aware of the “dynamic” state of the migratory movement affecting above all the suburbs of the capital

(the so called “satellite” cities), the possibility to secure admittance to the central organisms of the State and of the Brazilian National Conference of Catholic Bishops for the sector of migrations, and also the opportunity to establish a station halfway from the missionaries who had begun operating in the Amazon region, 3,000 kilometers from São Paulo. The negotiations begun with the Archbishop were concluded in March 1974 with the offer of the satellite city of Sobradinho, 21 kilometers northeast of downtown Brasilia, with a population of between 10 and 15,000 people, all of them from the North-East, poor though not destitute, almost completely lacking religious knowledge and practice. With the title of “Bom Jesus dos Migrantes”, the parish was created on June 24, 1974, and on the following day the Archbishop said the first mass in the open field because there was yet no church. Arriving from the Province of St. Peter, the first pastor, Fr. Giuseppe Carradin, began residing there on June 11, 1974. Fr. Natale Ubaldi, from the Province of St. Paul, was assigned to him later on as his assistant. On March 19, 1977, the Archbishop of Brasilia inaugurated the parish hall, serving both as church and social center. In May 1978, Fr. Jacyr Braido became a member of the community and became associated with the directional staff of the Brazilian National Conference Catholic Bishops (CNBB) in the sector of the pastoral care of migrations acting as public relation man with the Ministries of Internal and Foreign Affairs.

PART V

PROVINCE OF ST PETER

BRAZIL

(RÍO GRANDE DO SUL, SANTA CATARINA,  
PARANÁ, DISTRITO FEDERAL)

PARAGUAY



# CHAPTER I

## PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

### GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE PROVINCE

Provincial Superiors: 1941-1978

Fr.	Angelo Corso:	1938-1946
Fr.	Rinaldo Zanzotti:	1946-1950
Fr.	Francesco Prevedello:	1950-1951
Fr.	Angelo Corso:	1951-1952
Fr.	Giovanni Simonetto:	1952-1958
Fr.	Angelo Corso:	1958-1964
Fr.	Rodolfo De Candido:	1964-1969
Fr.	Elias Bordignon:	1969-1973
Fr.	Laurindo Guizzardi	1973-1974
Fr.	Pão lo Bortolazzo:	1975-

#### **Seminaries:**

Campos Novos, SC: "Paulo VI" Seminary (opened in 1975)

Casca, RS: "San Raphael" Seminary (1951)

Guaporé, RS: "São Carlos" Seminary (Formerly "Aeterni Patris")

Nova Bassano, RS: "Sacred Heart" Novitiate (1946-1955) & Seminary (1955)

Passo Fundo, RS: "São Carlos" Novitiate (1967)

São Miguel do Iguaçu, PR: "São Miguel" Seminary (1978)

#### **Parishes and Missions**

Anita Garibaldi, SC: Parish of Santa Barbara (opened in 1949)

Anta Gorda, RS: Parish of St. Paul

Barra do Leãos SC: Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows (opened in 1951 - joined with the parish of Erval Velho in 1959)

Barra de Leão, SC: Parish of St. Joseph (opened in 1951- discontinued in 1972)

- Campos Novos, SC:-Parish of St. Giovanni the Baptist (opened in 1948)
- Casca, RS: Parish of St. Louis
- Cascavel, PR: Parish of St. Christopher (opened in 1972)
- Dois Lagedados, RS: Parish of St. Rocco
- Encantado, RS: Parish of St. Peter
- Erval Velho, SC: -Parish of St. Sebastian (opened in 1950)
- Foz do Iguaçu , PR: Parish of St. Joseph (opened in 1976)
- Guaporé, RS: Parish of St. Anthony
- Itapuca, RS:-Parish of St. Joseph the Worker
- Marari, SC: Parish of St. Albert, moved to Monte Carlo, Parish of the Immaculate Conception, in 1976
- Nova Bassano, RS: Parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Nova Brescia, RS: Parish of St. Giovanni the Baptist
- Palmares, SC: Parish of St. Joseph, opened in 1967
- Palmitinho, RS: Parish of St. Teresa of the Little flower (opened in 1961 and relinquished in 1969)
- Passo Fundo, RS:- Parish St. Joseph the Worker (opened in 1963)
- Porto Alegre, RS: Centro de Pastoral Migratoria (CIBAI) 1959 Assistance to Migrants (begun in 1953)
- Parish of N. Sra de Pompeia
- Porto Alegre (Vila Nova) RS: Parish St. Joseph
- Protásio Alves: RS: Parish .of N. Sra. do Rosario
- Pulador, RS: Parish of N. Sra. do Rosario (opened in 1949, relinquished in 1970)
- Putinga, RS: Parish of N. Sra dos Navegantes
- Rodeio Bonito, RS: Parish of N. Sra dos Navegantes (opened in 1960)
- Rondinha, RS: Parish of N. Sra do Rosario
- Santa Rosa del Monday, (Paraguay): Parish of Santa Rosa (1976)
- Santa Teresa, (Paraguay): Mission of Santa Teresa (1974)
- São Miguel do Iguaçu, PR: Parish of São Miguel (opened in 1968)
- Sarandí, RS: Parish de N. Sra de Lourdes
- Serafina Correa, RS: Parish de N. Sra do Rosario
- Sobradinho, DF: Parish of Bom Jesus dos Migrantes (opened with the Province of São Paulo in 1974)



Vespasiano Correa, RS: Parish of St. Giovanni the Baptist (relinquished in 1977)

(N.B. - The dates of opening or closing of mission between the years 1941 and 1978 have been entered between parentheses)

#### FR. ANGELO CORSO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1941-1946)

He directed the Province of St. Peter from 1938 to 1946, with Frs. Antonio Serraglia (deceased in 1944) and Davide Angeli as councilors, and with Frs. Aroldo Murer and Rinaldo Zanzotti from February 1946.

During WW II, scarcity of personnel weighed heavily on the province so as to make it impossible to profit by a few favorable opportunities, such as the offer of large parishes, or to strengthen positions other than the strictly parochial ones. The Provincial himself was at the same time pastor of Guaporé and bursar of São Carlos seminary, which he had recently enlarged. He obtained permission to open in 1946 at Nova Bassano the first novitiate of Brazil, and launched the idea of founding two more minor seminaries.

#### FR. RINALDO ZANZOTTI: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1946-1950)

He was appointed Provincial Superior on August 20, 1946, with Frs. Francesco Prevedello and Aroldo Murer as councilors. The latter was made Provincial Bursar in 1949 and replaced by Fr. Emilio Rosa.

In 1946 the Province had 15 parishes, one novitiate, 30 priests and a missionary Lay Brother. In 1947 Fr. Zanzotti called attention to the urgency for following the large flows of migrants moving out of Río Grande do Sul into the States of Santa Catarina and Paraná. He was particularly concerned with the thousands of Italian families that were migrating to Western Paraná, thus remaining deprived of religious assistance. In 1974 he obtained authorization for the building of the "St. Raphael" seminary at Casca, which was opened in 1951. In 1948, the Bishop of Lages, Santa Catarina, offered a vast parish in the region of Campos Novos: he was in extreme need of priests and afraid that it might be taken over by the protestant "Catholic Church of Brazil". Fr. Zanzotti's reasoning went like this: "The parishes we now have are very few: we must expand the field of work for our

future missionaries though not without small sacrifices on our part. We only wait for some help to be able to widen our sphere of action among thousands of abandoned Italian families." (Zanotti to Card. Rossi, Guaporé, February 22, 1948. Arch. G.S., 421/1).

The expression "to widen the field of work for our future missionaries" was also understood to include the intention to offer a field of action among non-Italian migrants to the new Scalabrinian missionaries born and trained in Brazil who, though of Italian extraction, did not look upon themselves as such anymore. In fact, the region offered by Bishop Daniel Hostin of Lages was inhabited mostly by the so called "caboclos" (descendants of white and native parents). "In any case" - as Fr. Francesco Prevedello wrote in a report of 1951 - "one cannot say that these parishes are alien to our scope, because, apart from the fact that people of Italian extraction are now entering in great numbers those places, the groups of Italian descent living among the natives, with no religious assistance allow themselves to be so utterly assimilated into the environment as to lose their good habits and their faith (...); in localities where all people are of Italian stock, national pride becomes a factor for preservation; but as to the parishes of the diocese of Lages, instead, the presence of the missionary is absolutely needed for the defense of their faith and Christian traditions." In 1948, the Scalabrinians took up the direction of the parish of Campos Novos, in 1949 that of Anita Garibaldi, and the parish of Erval Velho, all of them in the state of Santa Catarina and diocese of Lages.

#### FR. FRANCESCO PREVEDELLO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1950-1951)

Fr. Angelo Corso: Provincial Superior (1951-1952)

On July 3, 1950, at the age of only 39, Fr. Zanzotti died at Vila Nova, Porto Alegre. As first councilor, Fr. Francesco Prevedello succeeded him. He was confirmed in the office on November 4, 1950. Frs. Emilio Rosa and Secondo G. Zago were chosen as his councilors. The parishes of Barra Fria and of Barra do Leão, in the state of Santa Catarina were opened in 1951.

Fr. Prevedello was elected Superior General on July 7, 1951, and the same Chapter appointed Fr. Angelo Corso Provincial Superior of

the Province of St. Peter which he began to direct in September on his return to Brazil. At that time the Province had 20 parishes, 2 seminaries, a novitiate, 40 priests, 16 clerics, and a missionary lay brother. In 1952, another one was added to the list of parishes, that of Marari; it too was in the state of Santa Catarina.

#### FR. GIOVANNI SIMONETTO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1952-1958)

A new provincial administration was installed on July 24, 1952 with Fr. Giovanni Simonetto as Provincial Superior, and Frs. Angelo Corso and Elias Bordignon as Councilors. They were all reconfirmed in July 1955, but the second councilor was replaced with Fr. Beniamino Rosato in 1957.

In June 1953, Archbishop Alfred Vicente Scherer of Porto Alegre created the "Committee for Immigration", inviting representatives from all Dioceses of *Río Grande do Sul* to be members of it. No sooner did Fr. Simonetto read the news in the press than he travelled to Porto Alegre to offer the archbishop the services of the Scalabrinian Congregation founded for migrants placing one of his missionaries at his disposal. Archbishop Scherer accepted the offer, and so Fr. Paolo Bortolazzo was sent to Porto Alegre in July 1953, where he took residence at the rectory of the parish of São Pedro and began to assist immigrants of various nationalities by the "Hospedaria (Hostel) dos Imigrantes". In March 1955, this task was entrusted to Fr. Alessandro Mancini with the title of "Missionary for Migrants". He started out with one Sunday mass for Italians at the church of Holy Angels, connected with the boarding-house of the Franciscan Nuns on *Vigário José Inácio* Street. He was granted no additional jurisdiction. In February 1957, Fr. Mancini was replaced by Fr. Quintilio Costini, who immediately engaged in and brought to a successful conclusion in September of the same year the dealing for the purchase of a piece of land at 220 *Rua Barros Cassal*. The existing old house was remodeled somehow, and Fr. Costini moved in in January 1958. A provisional hall was made ready on that land which began functioning as a chapel under title of Our Lady of Pompeii on May 6, 1958. On that occasion, Fr. Angelo Corso petitioned the Archbishop to entrust a parish to the Scalabrinians, but Dom Scherer did not

deem that place suitable and proposed him a parish on the outskirts of town. Conditions evolved, however, in favor of the Scalabrinian project. In 1959, the Archbishop created the personal parish for the Italians of the archdiocese with quarters by the church that was to be built on Rua Barros Cassal. Fr. Costini had organized in the meantime a society known by the title of “Centro Cultural e Assistencial N. Sra. de Pompeia para Migrantes” renamed afterwards, “Centro Italiano Brasileiro para Imigrantes” (CIBAI). The church of N. Sra de Pompeia was built in the years 1959-1967. At last a long cherished dream of the Congregation’s presence in the capital of the State of *Río Grande do Sul* had become a reality! It had been hindered by the lack of personnel on the part of the Congregation, and by the tendency of the bishops to look upon immigrants as subjects of ordinary pastoral care, regardless of nationality and of needs. The Apostolic Constitution ‘*Exul Familia*’ of 1952 was itself interpreted, in its early years at least, in a restrictive sense.

At that very time, the life of the Scalabrinian province was undergoing the identity crisis we spoke about in the first part of this volume. It had come to full maturity especially in the seminaries of *Río Grande do Sul* because of the conflict between the constitutions’ enunciation of the scope of the Congregation and the psychosocial realities in the midst of which Brazilian seminarians had been born and raised. Though working in traditional parishes, the missionaries coming from Italy felt they had “to keep alive the Catholic faith in the hearts of Italian (emigrants) and of their descendants” (1948 Constitutions, Ch.I,2), because language, mentality, and customs of their parishes could still be identified as Italian. The seminarians, instead, though descendants of Italians, felt themselves Brazilians, and to them working in the Scalabrinian parishes they were born in meant doing so for Brazilians. Some unbending stands taken on both sides along nationalistic lines, a certain static attitude of a number of missionaries, the lack of clear directives, and faithfulness, as well, to the letter of the Constitutions, the ever present fear of a split within the religious community, the commitments already agreed upon with the local dioceses and bishops, the need for parishes as vocational centers, were all main factors of an unrest that reached its peak in 1957-1958, to subside little by little, thereafter, until the General

Chapter of 1963 decided to revise the scope of the Congregation. The aftermath of this unrest was the resignation of Fr. Giovanni Simonetto as Provincial Superior.

#### FR. ANGELO CORSO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1958-1964)

On January 26, 1958, Fr. A. Corso was named Provincial Superior for the third time. The definitive appointment of Fr. Rodolfo De Candido and Fr. Elias Bordignon as his councilors came only a few months later. This Provincial Administration was confirmed in September 1961. In 1958, the Province was requested to send some of its missionaries to open a mission for Italian immigrants in Venezuela: the choice fell on Frs. Giovanni Simonetto and Antonio Marcon. In 1960, the Province accepted also the request to send Brazilian missionaries to North America, for the ever increasing numbers of Portuguese-speaking immigrants of some Scalabrinian parishes: Fr. Delizio Artico was the first to go. In the same year, the Bishop of Santa Maria offered the Scalabrinians two vast parishes that were about to be incorporated into the new diocese of Frederico Westphalen. In pleading with the General Administration to accept them, Fr. Corso pointed out, as Frs. Zanzotti and Simonetto had done before, the need of abandoning smaller parishes to be able to make use of personnel that might follow the migratory flows of the descendants of Italians into other regions of *Río Grande do Sul*, and to the states of Santa Catarina, Paraná and Mato Grosso. The two parishes of Rodeio Bonito and Palmitinho were thus respectively accepted in 1960 and 1961.

From its 1962 report, the Province of St. Peter had 25 houses, 50 priests, 2 missionary Lay Brothers, 9 clerics, 10 novices, and 252 students in the minor seminaries of Guaporé, Casca, and Nova Bassano. A building by the shore of Atlantida was donated in 1960 for the vacations of the seminarians.

In 1963, the Scalabrinians began to be present in the city of Passo Fundo, and precisely in its outskirts inhabited by poor workers, with the opening of, the parish of St. Joseph the Worker in the "bairro" (suburb) Santa Cruz.

#### FR. RODOLFO DE CANDIDO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1964-1969)

A new direction was appointed in May 1964 with the naming of Fr. Rodolfo De Candido as Provincial Superior, and Frs. Elias Bordignon, Giuseppe Corradin, Danilo Pecin, Ernesto Fabbian as Councilors. In December 1967, Fr. De Candido was reappointed and his council included the following priests: Elias Bordignon, Angelo Corso, Danilo Pecin and Florindo Ciman.

In 1965 we were offered parishes by the Bishops of Vacaria in R o Grande do Sul and of Toledo in Western Paran . In 1948 a considerable flow of migrants of Italian stock had begun, and was still under way, into the latter diocese from R o Grande and Western Paran . Authorized to engage in negotiations, Fr. De Candido brought them to a successful conclusion in 1968 when he accepted the parish of S o Miguel do Igua u in the diocese of Toledo. The parish of Palmares was created in the meantime in 1967, in the region of Campos Novos, while the seat of the Provincial Administration and of the Novitiate was transferred in the same year to the new building constructed within the territory of the parish of St. Joseph the Worker in Passo Fundo.

In 1967, such was the state of the Province: five parishes caring for a population of between 15 and 30,000 people; three parishes with about 10,000 people, 13 parishes of 4 or 8000 parishioners, and 4 parishes with less than 4000 people. There 5 schools at the following sites: Serafina Corr a, Sarand , Nova Bassano, Rondinha, and Campos Novos; 3 Radio Stations at Sarand , Guapor , and Campos Novos; and 3 hospitals at Nova Bassano, Rodeio Bonito, and Anita Garibaldi. By the year 1969, the personnel included 59 priests, 3 missionary brothers, 34 clerics, 15 novices, and 230 non-religious seminarians.

**FR. ELIAS BORDIGNON: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1970-1973)**

**FR. LAURINDO GUIZZARDI: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1973-1974)**

**FR. PAOLO BORTOLAZZO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1974 - )**

Following the election of Fr. De Candido to Vicar General of the Congregation, Fr. Elias Brodignon was appointed to succeed him as Provincial Superior with Frs. Paolo Bortolazzo, Quintilio Costini, Laurindo Guizzardi, and Giuseppe Corradin as his councilors.

After the 1969 General Chapter, that had initiated the revision of the Constitutions and approved the widening of our scope to all migrants of any nationality, a plan was set up for the reconsideration of Scalabrinian positions in the province. The parishes of Palmitinho (1969), Pulador (1970) and Barra do Leão (1972) were discontinued while in Paraná, the parish of St. Christopher was open in 1972 in Cascavel, a typical community of a recent internal migration. The need was ever increasingly felt of moving out of the old rural regions into the industrial districts, points of attraction of a considerable part of the new migrants, or into new farming territories still the choice of people yet bound to the rural culture, the characteristic vocation of the great majority of the early migrants to Brazil, especially in the states of the south. While the parish of Cascavel responded to the first type of migration, the mission of St. Teresa in Paraguay, begun in 1974, is located in a region "taken over" by some 200,000 Brazilians in search of new farms to till. At the same time there was the will to safeguard the validity of the old parishes as sources of new vocations because the problem between the young and the old personnel was still very much alive. From the actual data one may well conclude that the importance of the Province of St. Peter on the vocational level can be compared at least with the Italian province whose action is almost exclusively vocational.

A Center for Migration Studies was founded in Porto Alegre for the purpose of studying and coordinating the pastoral problems connected with the new migratory phenomena. Its director is also in charge of the migration office of the southern section of the Brazilian National Conference of Catholic Bishops. He has the collaboration of ECEM: (Equipe Carlista de Estudos Migratorios) made up of missionary Priests and Sisters of St. Charles. These organizations gave life to "Project Scalabrini", with the task of updating the apostolic positions to meet the needs of current migratory trends. In the last years the cooperation between the two Scalabrinian Provinces of Brazil has been intensified. It led to the formation of the CIFAL (Inter-provincial Formation Committee for Latin-America), which includes also the province of Argentina, and to the founding of the parish of Sobradinho, a suburban city of Brasilia.

On June 21, 1974, the Provincial Residence was transferred from Passo Fundo to Porto Alegre. Fr. Laurindo Guizzardi, the future bishop of Bagé, served as Provincial Superior from April 29, 1973, with Frs. Piodecimo Fantinato, Paolo Dal Grande, Ernesto Fabbian and João Granzotto as councilors, until October 30, 1973, when he was elected Vicar General of the Congregation. On January 5, 1975, Fr. Paolo Bortolazzo was named to succeed him as Provincial Superior, and given Frs. Paolo Dal Grande, Piodecimo Fantinato, Augustinho Sopelsa, and Genoir Pieta as councilors. On January 9, 1978, Fr. Bortolazzo was confirmed for a second term, and Frs. Luigi Cattani, Enio Botton, Paolo Dal Grande and Armando Da Costa were appointed his councilors.

While during the brief tenure of Fr. Laurindo Guizzardi the Province expanded into Paraguay, in that of Fr. Bortolazzo a second mission was founded there; two more minor seminaries were established at Campos Novos, in the state of Santa Catarina, and at São Miguel do Iguaçu in the state of Paraná; the parish of Itaipú at the Foz do Iguaçu, in the same state, was opened for the “barrageiros” (“builders of dam”); and the one in Vespasiano Correa, Ríó Grande do Sul, was relinquished.

In 1978, the Province numbered 67 priests, one missionary brother, 19 clerics, 16 Novices, and 320 minor seminarians.



## CHAPTER II

### THE SEMINARIES

#### GUAPORÉ, RÍO GRANDE DO SUL: SAN CARLOS SEMINARY

Fr. Secondo Guerrino Zago served as Rector of St. Charles (formerly "Aeterni Patris") Seminary from 1939 to 1945. During World War II the electric and water systems were completed, and a second wing was built. By war's end there were 110 seminarians: 4 in second year of philosophy, 5 in the first, 7 in pre-college year, 7 in fourth high school, 7 in third, 22 in second preliminary course, and 24 in the first one. On December 7, 1943, upon completion of the high school courses and pre-college year, the first six seminarians were vested with the clerical habit and immediately admitted to philosophy, because permission for opening a novitiate in Brazil was granted in 1945.

Fr. Rinaldo Zanzotti was called to succeed Fr. Zago, who had been appointed in the meantime Novice Master; but only briefly, because he was named Provincial Superior in July 1946. Afterwards, in September, the direction of the seminary was entrusted to of Fr. Francesco Prevedello, who had just arrived from Italy. The first two Brazilian clerics were sent to complete their theological studies in Rome in 1947. On December 17, 1950, Frs. Elias Bordignon and Luiz Conte, the first ones to be trained in the Scalabrinian seminaries of Brazil, were ordained priests.

In 1951, Fr. Francesco Prevedello was elected Superior General, and so Fr. Roberto Ciotola was named to succeed him as rector of the seminary of Guaporé. In 1952, in addition to a 6 priest staff, there were 12 clerics, 18 students in second high school, 30 freshmen, 28 in preparatory course for high school, 20 in the second preliminary year, and 15 in the first: 123 seminarians in all. The freshmen class was moved to Casca and the admission class to Nova Bassano in the beginning of the 1955 school year, when the Novitiate was transferred from Nova Bassano to Guaporé. In 1955-1956 the Novice Master, Fr. Zago, served also as Rector of the seminary of Guaporé. The number of students had dwindled to eighty. Fr. Rodolfo De Candido was

rector from 1957 to 1964. In the beginning of the 1957 school year the seminary had 16 students in theology, 12 novices, and 73 seminarians. The building was too small and unfit, for the Novitiate especially. The first remedy was to build a convent for the Sisters, which was ready for 1964; the novices were lodged in the former quarters of the Sisters.

In June 1964, following the appointment of Fr. Rodolfo De Candido as Provincial Superior, Fr. Laurindo Guizzardi was named acting Rector, and definitely Rector in 1965. On September 13, 1965, work began on the construction of a new wing. The new school year, 1966, started with 125 students: 22 in college, 25 seniors, 39 juniors, 39 sophomores, and the novices. At that time the students made their novitiate after the first year of college; the remaining years, beginning with 1954, were spent at the "João XXIII" seminary of São Paulo. In 1968, it was decided to return the college years back to R o Grande do Sul, precisely to Guapor , because there was no room at that time in Passo Fundo where the novitiate had already been transferred in 1967. College was actually moved to Passo Fundo in 1969.

It was decided in the meantime to tear down the earliest building of Guapor , already in crumbling conditions by then, and to replace it with a new construction which was started in early 1974 and inaugurated in December 1975. Fr. Laurindo Guizzardi was named pastor of Guapor  in February 1971. The seminary was under the direction of Fr. Paolo Dal Grande for two years, and Fr. Genoir Pieta succeeded him as rector on May 29, 1973. The construction of the seminary of San Carlos and its chapel were completed by November 1976, and inaugurated on the 29th of that month.

### SAN CARLOS NOVITIATE, NOVA BASSANO, GUAPOR , PASSO FUNDO

In 1941, when the first candidate for the Novitiate had completed high school, the Provincial Superior Fr. Angelo Corso petitioned that the rector of the seminary of Guapor  be made Master of the Novices. Both the Superior General Card. Raffaello C. Rossi, and Fr. Francesco Tironbola did not deem the times to be ripe for novitiates outside Italy. The problem was afterwards delayed because of the war; but when it ended, practical difficulties, such as distances and traveling

costs, prevailed over the dreaded danger that the opening of novitiates outside Italy might become the cause of the Congregation's decline. In 1945 formal permission was granted to establish a Novitiate in the United States, while a like initiative of Fr. Angelo Corso was favorably welcomed for Brazil, where he had purchased for the parish the new hospital of Nova Bassano, and with the consent of the bishop of Caxias do Sul he had made the proposal to settle the first Brazilian novitiate in the old one. The building was aptly remodeled; the novitiate was established with a decree of July 2, 1945, and opened on March 19, 1946, with 12 novices, under the direction Fr. Secondo Guerrino Zago, Novice Master. In the following years, with the exception of one when there were 15 of them coming from two classes, the number of novices averaged between five and nine: reason why it was deemed opportune to aggregate the novitiate to another community. On January 4, 1955, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation issued a decree for the transfer of the Novitiate to Guaporé, into the building of San Carlos Seminary.

This solution was intended to be temporary; but only in 1964 was it possible to come to the final decision of building a special house in Passo Fundo, after abandoning the proposals to establish it either at Serafina Correa or at the "Scuola Tecnica Rurale Padre Remigio" of Casca. Already in 1961, Fr. Corso was advocating the need for opening an institution at Passo Fundo, seat of the diocese where the most important Scalabrinian parishes of R o Grande do Sul and the seminaries of Guapor  and Casca were situated. Bishop Cl udio Colling of Passo Fundo gave permission in 1962 to open the novitiate at Passo Fundo and so the General Administration abandoned the project of moving it to S o Paulo. In 1964 about fourteen hectares purchased at a distance of six km from downtown Passo Fundo, in the suburb of "Passo de Valinho", within the borders of the Scalabrinian parish of St. Joseph the Worker. On January 13, 1966, the General Administration authorized the construction of the building which was to house the novitiate and the Provincial Office. On February 16, the bishop of Passo Fundo granted formal permission for the two religious residences. Works began in May 1966 and were completed in 1967. The decree for the transfer of the Novitiate was signed by the Superior General Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo on May 2, 1976; on May 22 the novic-

es entered the new house which was officially inaugurated on June 10. Fr. Ernesto Aliti had succeed Fr. Zago as Novice Master in 1957; Fr. Aldo Bortoncello was appointed on May 21, 1961, and Fr. Danilo Pecin in early 1964. In September 1968, the corner stone was laid of a new complex of buildings that were to house, as said above, the philosophy students beginning with the 1969 school year.

By then the community Passo Fundo had a staff of four priests, 14 religious students in first year of philosophy, 14 more in the second, and a missionary brother. Fr. Ottone Tasca was rector of the philosophy students from 1969 to 1974, and Fr. Rodolfo De Candido was named in 1975.

### CASCA: SÃO RAFAEL SEMINARY

The seminary of Casca was planned in 1946, because the one in Guaporé had grown too small for so many aspirants. The Provincial Superior Fr. R. Zanzotti bought a vast piece of land one kilometer from the church of Casca at the close of the same year. He had architect Fausto Scudo, who had built the seminary of Bassano del Grappa (Italy), draw up the blue print of the new building. His design was then adapted by architect Tiziano Bettanin and carried out by the general contractor Gelindo Boscarin. Works began in July 1948. Fixed for October 10 of the same year, the blessing of the cornerstone was moved to December 19, because of rain. Following the preparations conducted by Fr. Antonio Cerato in 1947, Fr. Emilio Rosa was entrusted with the supervision of the works. The first wing of the building was completed in October 1952, but the first 51 freshmen, students of second preliminary course, and six philosophy clerics had begun classes already on April 2, 1951, when fixtures, floors, window or door frames were still lacking. Fr. Florindo Ciman was its first rector, assisted by Fr. Onorio Benacchio as teacher of the clerics, and by Bro. Matteo Gheno, the only Missionary Brother then in Río Grande do Sul. Fr. Quintilio Costini served as rector from June 1951 to December 1952, and Fr. Rodolfo De Candido in the years 1953-56. The 1952 school year opened with 17 students in the three years of philosophy, and 38 minor seminarians in the upper high school classes. In 1953 there remained the philosophy courses, 39 students of the

lower high school, and 24 in the preparatory courses. In 1954, the students of philosophy moved to São Paulo, and the São Rafael Seminary was set aside for minor seminarians, as had been envisioned in the construction plans. Fr. Remigio Dalla Vecchia was appointed rector in early 1957, but he died suddenly on August 15 of the same year. Fr. Luigi Zandonà took over the direction of the seminary for the rest of the year to be succeeded as rector by Fr. Danilo Pecin for the years 1958-1964. In 1959 there were 120 seminarians and they grew to 142 by 1960. It became necessary to complete the building with the construction of the other wing. Work was started on September 9, 1964 and the new section was inaugurated on November 4, 1965.

Fr. Giovanni Milani was rector in 1964; Fr. João Garbossa was acting rector from January until September 1965; Fr. Floriano Ghiggi succeeded him as rector; Fr. Aldo Bortoncello followed as acting rector from August 1966 until February 1967; Fr. Paolo Dal Grande served as rector from March 1967 to February 1971. The seminary has been directed by Fr. Luigi Cattani in 1971-1976; by Ivo Pretto in 1976-77, and by Fr. Agostinho Dal Pian since 1978.

On May 14, 1962, an agricultural technical school dedicated to Fr. Remigio Dalla Vecchia, for both boarding and day students was inaugurated close to the seminary. Following a successful period, the school began to lose importance, and on July 12, 1967 a fire destroyed it.

#### NOVA BASSANO: SAGRADO CORAÇÃO SEMINARY

As already said before, the Novitiate was opened at Nova Bassano in 1946, and transferred to Guaporé in 1955, and then the students of philosophy were housed in the same building from 1947 until 1951. In March 1955 it began to function as a minor seminary for 25 students under the direction of Fr. Mario Bianchi, rector from January 1955 to December 1963. In 1958 it was decided to build a new seminary because the old wooden structure, no longer fit for a large community, was no longer safe. The new building was dedicated in October 1960. In 1961, side by side with the new seminary, a rural school was run in the old building, which was moved elsewhere in 1962. In the same year the foundations of another new wing were laid and seminary's

capacity was brought to 80 students. On September 7, 1962, a fire destroyed the remaining wooden section together with the chapel.

Sacred Heart Seminary was under the direction of Fr. João Garbossa and Fr. Osvaldo Biolchi in 1964, of Fr. Ernesto Fabbian in 1965-67, of Fr. Piodecimo Fantinato in 1968-74, and of Fr. Agostinho Dal Pian since March 1974. In 1977, the students were taken out of the public school and internal classes were resumed. Fr. Aldo Bortoncello was made rector in 1978.

### CAMPOS NOVOS, SC: PAULO VI SEMINARY

The idea of opening a minor seminary in the state of Santa Catarina was present right from the very beginning of the Scalabrinian presence at Campos Novos. Bishop Daniel Hostin of Lages granted permission quite readily. In 1963, the Scalabrinians gained possession of a piece of land in the vicinity of Campos Novos. But due to scarcity of personnel and means the General Administration delayed granting authorization until 1967, when the date was about to elapse within which the property had to be used for the construction of the seminary. Begun in 1968 and inaugurated on July 6, 1973, the building turned out too big for a minor seminary, and so it was used as the parish high-school. After the 1974 General Chapter, it was finally decided to open a small seminary in the section of the building that the blue print had set aside for the community of the Sisters. On December 23, 1974 the General Administration authorized its opening, which took place on March 3, 1975, with 28 boarding and 2 day students. The rector was Fr. Agostinho Betu.

### SÃO MIGUEL DO IGUAÇU, PR: SÃO MIGUEL SEMINARY

As soon as Province took over the parish of São Miguel do Iguaçu it began thinking about the possibility of opening a small minor seminary for the region west of the Paraná River. The bishop of Toledo gave his consent by word of mouth first, which he officially confirmed later on May 22, 1972. The actual opening of it was postponed. In fact, the authorization of the General Administration carries the date of October 10, 1977.

Provisionally housed in the old rectory, the small seminary began functioning in March 1978 with 14 students. The first rector was Fr. Augustino Sopelsa, who was also the pastor.





## CHAPTER III

### THE PARISHES OF RIO GRANDE DO SUL

#### ANTA GORDA: PARISH OF ST. CHARLES

Pastor from 1912 to 1948, Fr. Erminio Catelli founded the hospital in 1941. In 1942 the Scalabrini Sister took over its direction and in 1960 obtained the titled of ownership. Fr. Ernesto Aliti was pastor from March 1948 to December 31, 1952, and organized the catechism classes, especially throughout the 21 chapels. At his time the parish had a population of about 5,000 souls.

Fr. Bruno Paris was pastor from early 1953 to the end of 1961. To him are due the construction of the school and the parish hall in 1957, the renovation of the church in 1959, and the rebuilding of the rectory in 1960. The hall was handed over to the Scalabrinian Sisters until a new elementary school was built for about 200 pupils and a trade high school.

Fr. Avelino Garbin was pastor in 1962-70, Fr. Ernesto Fanni in 1970-77, and Fr. Antônio Stella is the present incumbent since 1977. In 1956 it was made a part of the new diocese of Santa Cruz do Sul. Its population counts presently about 6,000 individuals, almost entirely of Italian descent. The parish presents the typical problems common to the region that includes the towns of Encantado and Guaporé: the young move out to the big cities for an education or a job, and many families especially the young ones, move northward to new lands.

#### CASCA: THE PARISH OF ST. LOUIS

Pastor since 1939, Fr. Ermenegildo Amianti was succeeded on June 10, 1947, by Fr. Antonio Cerato, who started the works in September of the same year on a wooden school, inaugurated on May 21, 1948, and entrusted to the newly arrived missionary Sisters of St. Charles. Fr. Emilio Rosa was appointed pastor on September 10, 1948, also with the task of supervising the construction of "São Rafael Seminary". Equal collaboration in the building of the seminary was

also offered by Fr. Emilio Delmi, pastor from March 25, 1949 to January 6, 1953. He was succeeded until the end of 1959 by Fr. Guerrino Invernici, who rebuilt the school of St. Louis in masonry, inaugurated on June 21, 1958. Presently it is the property of the Scalabrinian Sisters who conduct in it elementary and high-school classes.

The hospital of St. Lucy, instead, the work of Fr. Luigi Cattani, pastor from January 1, 1959 to February 20, 1966, belongs to the parish. The hospital had been opened by private group of lay people in 1942; Fr. Cattani bought it for the parish on January 6, 1963, had it restored and reopened it on March 10, 1963, entrusting it to the Scalabrini Sisters.

Fr. Bruno Todesco was pastor in 1966-68, while Fr. Aroldo Murer became pastor in 1968.

In 1959 the parish was assigned to the new diocese of Passo Fundo; the parish of St. Anthony at Palmas was dismembered from it in the same year. Following several subdivisions, the parish of Casca numbers at present about 200 families in town, made the seat of a municipality in 1954, and some 300 more, spread around 13 chapels: 340 of them of Italian extraction, 110 Polish, and 50 Brazilian-Portuguese (1967 census).

#### DOIS LAGEADOS: PARISH OF ST. ROCCO

Fr. Carlo Pedrazzani was pastor from March 4, 1928 to December 31, 1948. In his last two years he was assisted by Frs. Ernesto Aliti, Giuseppe Corradin, and Luigi Vigna. Fr. Pedrazzani kept living in the rectory he had built in the years 1941-42 until he died on October 4, 1951.

Fr. Carlo Seppi directed the parish in 1949, succeeded in 1950-52 by Fr. Mario Ginocchini who built the hall in 1950 and restored the church doing away with the questionable paintings of Fr. Carlo Pedrazzani. The parish had then, as also as of this day, some 5,000 people of very modest means. It has had the following succession of pastors: Fr. Bruno Todesco, January 4, 1953 to February 14, 1954; Fr. Aroldo Murer, who built the "São Rocco Hospital" in 1957-58 and entrusted it to the sisters of St. Camillus, until February 27, 1965; Fr.

Angelo Corso, until February 1967; Fr. Attilio Lovato, March 12, 1967; and Fr. Ernesto Fanni, on March 6, 1977.

#### ENCANTADO: THE PARISH OF ST. PETER

Fr. Alfredo Antonelli, pastor since December 1937, was followed by Fr. Antonio Cerato on April 22, 1941, and by Fr. Aroldo Murer (March 1, 1942 to February 2, 1954), who began works on the construction of the parish hall in March 1942, inaugurated it on June 20, 1943, and built the new rectory in 1949.

In those same years the archbishop of Porto Alegre had repeatedly asked the Scalabrinians whether they would be willing to surrender the parish of Encantado to the diocese giving as reason that the diocesan minor seminary was under construction in a neighboring parish: he would have offered a parish in Porto Alegre, in exchange. But besides the importance of the parish itself, Encantado meant too much to the Scalabrinians for historical reasons, as it was the initial place of their very presence in Río Grande do Sul. In 1959 it was included in the new diocese of Santa Cruz do Sul. At that time it had some 6,000 people, 2,750 of them in the central town, and the rest distributed around in 13 chapels.

In April 1954, Fr. Florindo Ciman, pastor from February 3, 1954 to February 18, 1959, decided to rebuild the parish church, retaining the twin bell-towers raised by Fr. Foscallo. The first mass was said in the new building on June 29, 1956: but finish work on the church, and on the stairs leading up to it were brought to completion several years later by the present pastor.

Fr. Luigi Salvucci was pastor in the years between February 18, 1959 and August 25, 1961. He was succeeded in turn by Fr. Ernesto Aliti, pastor in 1961-1967; Fr. João Granzotto, acting pastor from July 1967 to August 1968; and finally Fr. Ernesto Fabbian, who built the parish hall and dedicated it on June 29, 1978. The parish and its 18 chapels have currently 2,500 families, 85% of them of Italian origin. Its periphery is experiencing increasing numbers of internal migrants.

## GUAPORÉ: PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

During WWII, the parish was directed by Fr. Angelo Corso. In spite of economic strictures, he completed the parish hall, the monumental facade of the church, and the "Scalabrini College" which he entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters. At the time the parish numbered 6,000 people, and the phenomenon of young families migrating into Santa Catarina and Northern Paraná was already in progress on a large scale. Fr. Quintilio Costini took possession of the parish on September 8, 1946. He completed the church which was dedicated by Archbishop Becker in 1950. Fr. Angelo Corso returned as pastor on January 23, 1952. On March 1953, he bought the "Rádio Sulina de Guaporé" founded by the society of the same name for political propaganda, and placed it at the service of the parish under the name "Rádio Aurora". Fr. Giovanni Simonetto was pastor for five months in 1958. In August of the same year he set out to open the Scalabrinian mission of Venezuela. Fr. Angelo Corso replaced him from August to December 1958. Fr. Ernesto Fabbian took over from January 1959 to February 1956, to be succeeded by Fr. Tranquillo Lorenzin until 1971. The "Lar da Criança", a charitable institution for abandoned children, was opened in 1968, by initiative of Mrs. Palmira Pandolfo.

Fr. Laurindo Guizzarda became pastor in January 1971, and when he was named Provincial Superior, the parish was provisionally directed by Fr. Luigi Salvucci from May 1973 to March 1974, when Fr. Piodecimo Fantinato took possession of it as pastor. It now numbers 15,000 inhabitants, two thirds of them in the central community, and the remaining spread throughout its 33 chapels. 95% of the people are of Italian stock. There are also many from the northeast regions, who live in dire poverty.

## ITAPUCA: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH

Fr. Emilio Rosa was pastor of Itapuca from May 1940 to September 1948. In April 1943 a strong wind blew off the roof of the church, and in 1944 the foundations of a new one were laid; the cornerstone was blessed on May 1, 1945, and the church was dedicated in February 1949. The following priests succeeded one another as pastors: Fr. Antonio Cerato, September 19, 1948-September 18, 1949; Fr. Beniami-

no Rosato, September 19, 1949-July 31, 1954, who built the bell-tower, inaugurated on October 26, 1952; Fr. Gaetano Fanara, August 1954 to July 1956; Fr. Giovanni Milani, August 1, 1956-December 1959. He was succeeded, in turn, by Fr. Antonelli from January 1, 1959 to November 19, 1961, the day of his death. On November 30, 1961, the parish was again entrusted to Fr. Emilio Rosa, who built the new rectory in 1965-66. Located on a mountainous and arid land, cut off from the main communication lines, the small parish is poor and without a future; the young migrate, and the farms are being turned over into grazing pastures. It has a population of about 1,800 inhabitants, almost all of Italian extraction; one tenth of them in the central town, the rest in its 8 chapels.

#### NOVA BASSANO: PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART

In the years 1940-47, Nova Bassano was known as Silva Pais, because during WWII all Italian names of places were changed. It resumed, thereafter, its former denomination as was given by its founder, Fr. Peter Colbacchini. In 1942, the pioneer Fr. Giuseppe Pandolfi, pastor for 26 years, retired. Fr. Aneto Bogni succeeded him as pastor in 1942-44, to be followed, in turn, by Fr. Filippo Flesia in 1944-46. Fr. Guerrino Invernici became pastor in July 1946. On June 1, 1947, he laid the foundation stone of the new parish church, which was opened for worship on June 29, 1950. At that time the parish numbered 4,000 people, 600 of them in the main town, the rest in 13 chapels around.

Fr. Mario Ginocchini was pastor from January 1953 to March 1960. At the close of 1953 he began publication of the monthly "A Semente" and had a fifteen meter tall cross erected on the summit of Mount Pareo, the highest in the region; a chapel in honor of Our Lady of Caravaggio was built on a somewhat lower level which was dedicated on May 26, 1955. The square in front of the hospital was fixed up in 1954, named after the founder of Nova Bassano, and embellished with a statue of Our Lady of Mount Grappa, a gift of the twin city Bassano del Grappa, the birth place of Fr. Peter Colbacchini. The "Pius X" square, in front of the church, and the Padre Pandolfi Hall, replaced now by a new construction, were inaugurated on June 17,

1956. In May 1958 Fr. Ginocchini began construction on the new hospital "Our Lady of Lourdes" to replace the one built by Fr. Aroldo Murer entitled to St. "Teresinha", that had been opened on May 3, 1940, with the cooperation of the Scalabrinian Sisters.

The new four story building, with a 104 bed capacity, was inaugurated in March 1963, though the first wing had been opened already since October 1961. Fr. Elias Bordignon, who had by then been pastor since March 1960 remained as administrator of the hospital also after March 1965 when he was replaced in the direction of the parish by Fr. Ernesto Fabbian as administrator, soon to be succeeded by Fr. Davide Fontana as pastor from August 1965 till March 1970. Fr. Waldomiro Pieta became pastor since then.

#### NOVA BRESCIA: PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

During World War II, Nova Brescia was given the name of Tiradentes and then of Canabarro. Fr. Beniamino-Rosato, pastor from July 1934 to March 1948, rebuilt the church, gave life to "St. John Baptist" hospital, which he entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters, and to a cooperative winery society.

He was succeeded for short terms by Fr. Carlo Seppi, (March-January 1949) and Fr. Luigi Vigna (January-December 1949). The latter, and Fr. Vittorio De Lorenzi, especially, pastor from January 1950 to January 1955, brought to completion the remaining works and the refinishing of the church, which was blessed by Archbishop Scherer of Porto Alegre on February 17, 1952.

To Fr. Roberto Roncato, pastor from February 1955 to December 1956, befell the task of healing the financial situation of the parish and of building rectory and bell tower, blessed by the same archbishop respectively on June 24, 1956, and June 24, 1957. The "Teachers' School" of the new College of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, directed by the Scalabrinian Sisters, began to function in 1956. The foundation stone of the new building had been laid on August 15, 1953. The high school was initiated in 1964. Of late, the number of students is dwindling, and so is also the population.

Fr. Giuseppe Finotto was pastor in the years between January 1957 and February 1965. He completed the construction of the hos-

pital and built the parish hall, which was blessed on August 15, 1960 by Bishop Alberto Etges of the new diocese of Santa Cruz do Sul, to which Nova Brescia had been attached in 1959. In 1964 it became a "municipality", independent of Arroio do Meio, of which it had been part since 1935. Fr. Onorio Benacchio was parish administrator from February 1965 to February 1966, when the parish was taken over by Fr. Antônio Stella (1966-76), who tried to get some industrial initiatives going for the revival of the town and of its meager natural resources.

Fr. Attilio Lovato is currently the pastor. With about 4,000 people during the war years, the parish had 7,500 of them in 1967, with 15 chapels. In 1972, its population was estimated at about 9,000 souls; but then it began to decline because of the aridity of the soil and for lack of industry, so that the actual number of people living there today is thought to amount to some 8,000.

#### **PALMITINHO: PARISH OF ST. TERESA OF THE CHILD JESUS**

The history of the Scalabrinian presence at Palmitinho is tied to that of Rodeio Bonito they were offered together by Bishop Luis Sartori of Frederico Westphalen, who decided to raise it to a parish on June 13, 1961, on the promise that it would be accepted by the Scalabrinians. The official decree for the creation of the parish, however, carries the date of December 31, 1961. Fr. Bruno Paris was the first pastor. The early settlers began inhabiting the region by 1923; a certain Pietro Casaril, the first settler of Italian extraction, arrived there in July 1925 from Vila Maria, soon followed by a few others, all from the district of Guaporé. The first modest chapel was built towards the end of 1927, in which Fr. Quattro Pani of Palmeira, celebrated mass for the first time on February 25, 1928. In 1935 a considerable immigration of "taquarian" (of Azorean extraction), from lower Taquari, began coming in and settled a part of the river Guarita basin. In 1967, there were about 7,000 people: 25% Italians, 73% Taquarians, and 2% Black. The first oratory gave way to a chapel, and then a wooden church was built under the direction of Fr. Luizinho Sponchiado, assistant of Frederico Westphalen, which was inaugurated on April 21, 1954. More precisely, the parish of Palmitinho was in fact dismem-

bered from the then only parish of Frederico Westphalen. In turn, it was itself relieved in 1964 of its German section with seven chapels, which were attached to the new parish of Pinheiro, thus remaining with 19 chapels. Fr. Paris restored the roof of the Church, built the parish hall of wood, which was destroyed by a fire in March 1965 and immediately rebuilt of masonry. In 1968, when the Province of Río Grande do Sul was planning to expand into Paraná, to regions of recent immigrations, it was decided to abandon the parish of Palmitinho, as was in fact done on March 9, 1969.

### **PASSO FUNDO: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER**

In 1946 the people of Vera Cruz, a suburb of Passo Fundo, formed a committee in charge of the construction of a wooden chapel that was blessed on August 31, 1947, by the priests of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, the parish on which the borough of Vera Cruz depended. In 1961, Bishop Cláudio Colling of Passo Fundo offered the district to the Scalabrinians, who had been contemplating for a long time to establish a residence close to the episcopal see. In February 1963, Fr. Beniamino Basso was sent to organize the parish which was officially created on March 1, 1964 and dedicated to St. Joseph the Worker. The parish is made up partly of the suburb of Passo Fundo, inhabited by workers of modest means, and partly of an agricultural district, peopled with farmers and breeders, extending as far as 50 km from the parish church, thus embracing a territory of 750 km. In 1967 there were thought to be 4,500 people in the suburban district, and 3,200 more in the rural area. 95% of the people of the first zone are of Portuguese or mixed blood, the rest are of Italian extraction. In the rural section, instead, 60% are of Portuguese stock, and the remaining 40% of Italian descent.

Fr. Basso built a wooden parochial hall next to the church; on Sundays it became an addition to the church. The corner stone of the new church was laid on the May 1, 1967. Assigned to the founding of the missions of Paraguay, Fr. Basso was succeeded by Fr. Giovanni Battista Corso on March 10, 1974. Presently the parish numbers about 17,000 souls.



## PORTO ALEGRE: CIBAI AND OUR LADY OF POMPEII PARISH

As mentioned above, the Archbishop of Porto Alegre had set up, in 1953, a diocesan Committee or Secretariat for Migration, with headquarters on Mariante Street, by the parish of Our Lady of Piety. A diocesan priest, chaplain to the armed forces, was appointed its secretary! Surprised at the fact that no thought had been given to the contribution a congregation for migrants could provide, the Provincial Superior Fr. Giovanni Simonetto offered the archbishop the collaboration of a Scalabrinian missionary. Archbishop answered he would seriously think it over and study the way to employ such services. And in fact, only a few days later he sent word that he was expecting a missionary without delay! Fr. Paolo Bortolazzo was appointed to fill the task, and he began his work in July 1953 in the premises of the "Hospedaria dos Imigrantes", with residence in the rectory of the parish of St. Peter, of which Mons. Lottermann was the pastor. In March 1955, Fr. Bortolazzo was summoned to the direction of Sarandí's High School and so was replaced by Fr. Alessandro Mancini, who took up residence first at the rectory of the parish of Our Lady of Mercy, and then in the parish of Vila Nova, together with his confrere Fr. Ernesto Fabbian.

In the early years their settling and activities were very uncertain and aleatory in spite of his official appointment as "Missionary for Migrants" in response to the provisions of the "Exul Familia". The secretariat and the "Hospedaria" carried on their activities in a rented and run-down parish hall. The archbishop would seem contented with some kind of social action, and precisely with employment assistance of the new immigrants, but the Scalabrinians were aiming also at the religious assistance of Italians. With a degree of difficulty they secured permission to celebrate a Sunday mass for them in the church of the Holy Angels attached to the boarding house of the Franciscan Sisters.

There was need for a more central location and a church of their own where Italians might go to at any time of day and night. In fact, there were some 10,000 Italians of recent immigration, and 30,000 of them still carried an Italian passport. A jurisdiction limited to the celebration of one Mass and to hearing confessions could not do. In

early 1957, Fr. Quintilio Costini, the new man in charge, moved his residence to the church of Holy Angels, and immediately began looking around in search of a centrally located piece of land. By the end of the same year a lot was purchased at 220 Rua Barros Casal, the house standing on it was restored, as said above, and on January 10, 1958 Costini moved in it. A wooden chapel-hall combination building was put up along-side the house, where Archbishop Sherer said the first mass on May 6, 1956. On that occasion a petition was presented to the Archbishop for the creation of a new parish but he did not deem it wise to establish it too close to two other parishes. He suggested founding one instead on Rua Petrópolis. This project, together with that of a high school, was soon abandoned. It was decided, instead, to build a center of assistance and irradiation on Rua Barros Cassal. And so the “Centro Cultural e Assistencial N. Sra da Pompeia para a Emigração” was born, known later on as “Centro Italo-Brazileiro Assistência Imigrantes (CIBAI), and still later, since 1968, as “Centro Italo-Brazileiro de Assistência e Instrução do Migrações (CIBAI-Migrações). In 1959, the Italian community, that still attended Mass, in the meantime, at the church of Holy Angels, was prepared and ready, and the Archbishop created, at last, the Personal Parish for the Italians of the archdiocese of Porto Alegre with a decree of December 30, 1959, with headquarters at 220 Rua Barros Cassal. Fr. Giuseppe Corradin, first pastor, and Fr. Emilio Delmi, took possession of it on January 1, 1960; in October they were joined by Fr. Florindo Ciman.

Another piece of property had been purchased in 1959; it was levelled over and made into a much needed parking lot. Hence the idea was born for the construction of a garage which was to contribute to the financing of the work for the assistance of migrants. Still another property was bought in 1962 and plans were drawn up for the construction of a complex of buildings including the church, the rectory, the offices for the parish and the assistance of migrants, halls for meetings and entertainments and the garage. Works began in August 1963. In this same year there arrived from Italy a statue of the Child Jesus, a reproduction of the one venerated in the church of St. Charles, in the mother House of Piacenza, previously blessed by Pope John XXIII. The wooden statuary group that reproduces the classic image of Our Lady of Pompeii was moved in 1962 to Rua Bar-

ros Cassal. It had been sculptured by order of a group of Ladies of Porto Alegre, and until then venerated in the church of Our Lady of Sorrows. The personal parish was dedicated in fact to Our Lady of Pompeii. The rectory was ready in May 1965. On September 5 of the same year Archbishop Scherer blessed the corner stone of the church, opened for services on June 29, 1967. Fr. Giuseppe Corradin was pastor until 1970 and succeeded in 1971 by Fr. Mario Ginocchini. Fr. Ciman began serving as spiritual director of the "Cursilhos" of Rio Grande do Sul since 1970.

#### PROTÁSIO ALVES: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

Fr. Antonio Serraglia, pastor since 1910 and actual founder of the town, died on May 22, 1944, just a few days after the inauguration of the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. Fr. Aneto Bogni succeeded him until the day of his death on April 13, 1950, at the hospital of Nova Bassano, where he was brought on Holy Saturday: he had been suddenly taken ill while reading the last prophecy. Following a brief interim tenure by Fr. Giuseppe Chiappa, the parish was successively held by Fr. Angelo Todesco (1950-52), Fr. Emilio Delmi (January-July 1953), and then, till December 1963, by Fr. João Casaril, who built the new cemetery and the bell tower, inaugurated on April 26, 1961. On January 1, 1962, Fr. Antonio Cerato was appointed pastor. He built a grandiose parish hall, dedicated on May 14, 1967. In 1971 the parish had 2,584 inhabitants, of whom 90% were of Italian extraction. Fr. Vittorio DeLorenzi is the pastor since December 1973.

#### PULADOR: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

As mentioned in the preceding volume, the parish of Pulador was directed by the former Scalabrinian priest Fr. Luigi Guglieri until 1948. From January to September of that year it was served by Fr. Mario Bianchi and Fr. João Casaril, who used to go there from Guaporé. In September 1948, Fr. Giuseppe Chiappa began residing there, but only in 1949 was the parish officially entrusted to the Scalabrinians who accepted it, though very small, because it was close to that of Guaporé and in order to avoid quarrels about boundaries. Fr. Chiappa remained until October 1950. Fr. Roberto Roncato succeeded him

until February 1951, followed for one year by Fr. Bianchi, who built the rectory. It had then 6 chapels and 1,500 people, 250 of them in the central town.

The following pastors or acting pastors succeeded one another from 1952 to 1970: Frs. Alfredo Antonelli until September 1956; Antonio Cerato, who built the parish hall, until June 1959; Francesco Bordignon until July 1961; Carlo Seppi until January 1964; Rodolfo De Candido until January 1965; Augustinho Sopelsa until March 1966; João Casaril until September 30, 1970, when the parish was relinquished.

### **PUTINGA: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF SEAFARERS**

Fr. Vittorio De Lorenzi, pastor from May 1940 to September 1948, completed the refinishing and decoration works of the church. He was succeeded by Fr. Alfredo Antonelli, who organized the Apostleship of Prayer and the Eucharistic Crusade. Fr. Paolo Bortolazzo was the pastor from February 1952 to July 1953. He reorganized the teaching of catechism and built the rectory of bricks, dedicated on August 15, 1953. By then, Fr. Luigi Zandonà had been pastor a short while. To him is due the construction of the parochial school completed by Fr. Antonio Marcon, and inaugurated on August 16, 1957. School and kindergarten were entrusted to the Franciscan Sisters of the Aparecida, who already in 1950 had assumed also the direction of the hospital.

These Sisters withdrew from both the school and the hospital in 1966, and were replaced by the Sisters of Divine Providence who became, eventually, the owners of the school. Fr. Marcon directed the parish from January 1956 to February 1959. In this year the parish was placed under the diocese of Santa Cruz do Sul and Fr. Antonio Cerato was named pastor, remaining there until December 1963. He built the parish hall. Fr. Emilio Delmi succeeded him from 1964 to 1970. Fr. Joaquim Micheletto is the present pastor since 1971. The parish numbers about 8000 people, almost all of them of Italian extraction and given to farming. There are no industries and the young prefer to move out.

## RODEIO BONITO: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE SEAFARERS

In the 1800s, the region where now Rodeio Bonito is located was populated by a few natives who lived on game and fish. By the end of the century two families appeared on the scene, which exerted a certain influence on the others. But the actual colonization began only in 1926 on the part of a few families, almost all of Italian origin, moving in from other places of *Río Grande do Sul*. In April 1930 they build a chapel in honor of Our Lady of the Seafarers, and on May 8 Fr. Quattro Pani said mass in it for the first time. From then on, the population began a rapid growth. A second wooden chapel was dedicated by Bishop Antônio Reis of Santa Maria on April 5, 1937; he made it a parish ten years later on August 19, 1947, detaching it from that of Palmeiras das Missões and Irai. The first pastor, Fr. Umberto Puntel took possession of it on May 17. He was succeeded by Frs. Florindo Grassi (1950-1955) and Pietro Rubin (1955-1960).

In 1951 the Sisters of the Congregation of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph arrived, who remained until 1962. The Farmers' Society of Assistance was established which founded the St. Joseph's Hospital, inaugurated on July 20, 1952. The first parochial hall was dedicated on December 5, 1954. The new rectory, which would become the seat of the Sisters' college, was built in 1960.

Frs. Tranquillo Lorenzin and Bruno Busatta arrived there on December 31, 1960 and on the following day they took possession of the parish. In 1962, the Daughters of Devine Love took charge of the "St. Joseph Hospital" which was turned over to them, later on, in ownership. In 1963 they assumed the direction of the "Our Lady of Fatima" college. In 1962, the parish was placed under the jurisdiction of the diocese of Frederico Westphalen. On September 2 of the same year Bishop Hoffman blessed the new rectory. On February 6 the corner stone of the new parish church was laid, which reached the roof within the year.

From February 21, 1965 to February 26, 1967, the parish was in the care of Fr. Attilio Lovato, with Frs. Emilio Bernardini and Bruno Busatta as his succeeding assistants. On February 26, 1967 Fr. Mario Ginocchini took over the parish with Fr. Waldomiro Pieta as assistant. He completed the church and began services in it on August 20, 1967.

On this same date, the parish numbered 2,870 families, 154 of them in the central town, the rest scattered around in about 30 chapels distant between 4 and 32 miles: 23,660 people in all, of whom 50% of Italian origin, 7% German, 3% Polish, Portuguese and others. Presently, the population amounts to 15,000 people; there are 33 chapels.

On July 3, 1968 the parish was entrusted to Fr. Waldomiro Pieta. The hospital was rebuilt, and the Scalabrinian Congregation bought it in 1969. Fr. Guerrino Invernici became pastor on March 3, 1970. He built the new parish hall, inaugurated on July 23, 1972, and completed the church, which was solemnly dedicated on December 9, 1973. Fr. Antônio Dalla Costa became pastor on March 3, 1977.

#### **RONDINHA: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY**

Fr. Eugenio Medicheschi was pastor of Rondinha from the date of its founding in 1936 until 1951, but in his later years the parish was practically administered by the former Scalabrinian Fr. Alfredo Trinchero, who went to Rondinha as assistant at the beginning of 1940 and stayed until December 16, 1951, when Fr. Luigi Vigna became pastor. A pavilion for the parish feasts was built in 1943, and the high altar of the parish church was inaugurated in 1944. The bells were purchased in 1952 and installed on a wooden steeple.

In 1951, the Sisters of the Congregation of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph took the administration of Our Lady of the Rosary Hospital that had been dedicated in August 1948. They began to teach in 1954 at the "Santa Rita da Cascia College", whose construction, begun in January of the same year, was completed in October. Fr. Vittorio De Lorenzi took possession of the parish on March 1954. In 1956 he set up a brick factory for the construction of the new masonry church and had a new parish hall built, that was dedicated in 1956 by his successor since February 1965, Fr. Aroldo Murer. Since 1964, people and authorities had been insisting on having a high-school. Finally, in September 1966, the Provincial Council of the Scalabrinians solved the main problem, that of the personnel, entrusting the direction of it to the priests who were in charge of the Sarandí high school.

The first wing of St. Carlo High School of Rondinha was ready in 72 days and was inaugurated in March 1966 with 90 students. Pastor

since 1968, Fr. Francesco Lollato completed the construction of the parish church, begun in July 1970 and dedicated on October 3, 1971. "Fr. Luiz Vigna School" was founded in January of the same year and dedicated on June 13, 1978 by the Bishop of Passo Fundo. A large parish library was also set up. The Ursuline Sisters of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus are present in the parish since 1971 cooperating in all the activities of the parish. The parish numbers now about 8,000 people, almost all of them of Italian origin.

### SARANDÍ: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Fr. Bruno Paris was pastor at Sarandí from 1933 to December 1952. To him, especially, is due, the construction of the new great parish church, built in the years between 1942 and 1944, and consecrated by the Bishop of Santa Maria on June 13, 1945: he is credited also for the building of the parochial hall (1949-1950), turned into a high school in 1951, and declared a property of Scalabrinians in 1965. The Radio Station of Sarandí was also purchased in 1951. From December 1952 to December 1956 the parish was headed by Fr. Quintilio Costini, who strengthened all its institutions, especially the high school. Fr. Secondo G. Zago took over in January 1957 until July 1959. He built the new rectory. Fr. Florindo Ciman was pastor from August 1959 to February 1960, succeeded in March 1960 till February 1967 by Fr. Mario Ginocchini, who is credited for the construction of the new parish hall. Fr. Augustinho Sopelsa followed him for the years 1967-1976. The parish is presently under the direction of Fr. Enio Bottan.

In 1962 there began to function the Patronato Agrícola Julio de Mailhos, which houses several poor or ill adjusted boys on a piece of property secured in 1956 by Fr. Roberto Roncato, then rector of the Sarandí High School. In 1967, a printing shop was also purchased which was set up in the premises of Sarandí High School, that had extended its activities, in the meantime, to include the classics, industrial classes, night classic courses, a technical school of commerce, and a teachers' college with an adjoined elementary school, with about 1000 students in all.

In 1967, the parish numbered 6,500 people in the main town, and 9,500 more scattered around its 31 chapels. In 1972 there were



thought to be some 8,000 inhabitants in the central community, and about another 10,000 spread over 42 points for worship, with 34 chapels and 8 schools.

The most distant chapel stands 38 km away from the parish church. At the present time, 13,700 people live in town and about 9,000 in its outlying territory. The rural population is almost entirely of Italian extraction; several families of German origin live in the central town, some one hundred families of "lusa (Portuguese)" extraction and many more of poor immigrants from the Brazilian North East live in its poor outskirts. The Scalabrinian Sisters still have the administration of the St. Anthony Hospital founded in 1938.

#### SERAFINA CORRÊA: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

Its pastor since 1926, Fr. Luigi Pedrazzani died on December 6, 1956. He had been semi-invalid for many years, but only in 1941, when almost blind, was he given an assistant in the person of Fr. Antonio Cerato, who was succeeded by Fr. Guerrino Invernici in 1942, Fr. Giovanni Simonetto in 1946, and by Frs. Onorio Benacchio, Paolo Bortolazzo, Fernando Zanchetta, Antonio Marcon, and Francesco Lollato, successively from 1948 to 1956. The parish was cared for by Fr. Alfredo Antonelli from January 6 to April 4, 1957, on which date Fr. Francesco Lollato was appointed pastor.

Among the main events of the parish in all these years, one must single out the arrival of the Scalabrinian Sisters to care for the kindergarten set up in the parish hall in 1950, the blessing of the bell-tower on May 8, 1953, the beginning of the school in March 1954 in the sacristy of the church, and the founding, at the same time, of a Committee for the parochial hospital. The "Our Lady of the Rosary" parish school was opened on March 9, 1956, which was directed by the Scalabrinian sisters and is now a retreat house. Also directed by the Scalabrinian Sisters, the new wing of the parish hospital was inaugurated in May 1958, and the old sections, built during the war, were restored. On August 15, 1958, the parish passed over to the diocese of Passo Fundo, and Serafina Correa was made a municipality.

The "Our Lady of the Rosary" high school was solemnly inaugurated on February 28, 1960; the opening of the "Stella Maris" Normal



School took place on June 3, 1962 together with the laying of the corner stone of the “Serafina Correa Family Club” with halls and rooms for celebrations, theatrical representation, and social assistance, respectively inaugurated in its three floors on October 31, 1956, May 29, and September 30, 1966.

While numbering some 4,000 people in 1946, it had about 9,000 people in 1978, with 850 families in the main town, and 600 more in its 17 chapels. Serafina Correa is home town to ten Scalabrinian missionaries. Fr. Roberto Ciotola was its pastor from March 1968 to May 1978. He built a new rectory. Fr. Luigi Salvucci was called to succeed him.

#### VESPASIANO CORRÊA: PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Fr. Davide Angeli died suddenly on December 18, 1945, while visiting the Chapel of St. Jerome. He had been pastor since 1936. A few days afterwards, the new parish of São Valentim was detached from that of Vespasiano Corrêa.

Following a brief tenure by Fr. Remigio Dalla Vecchia, Fr. Giuseppe Chiappa served as pastor from March 1946 to January 1948, followed from March 1948 to September 1952 by Fr. João Casaril, who inaugurated the wooden hall of the parish in January 1950. Fr. Beniamino Basso directed the parish for the next three years, succeeded by Giuseppe Foscallo, who completed the new stone rectory. Fr. Carlo Seppi was pastor from February 1954 till August 1960. On the February 11, of 1957, the corner stone was blessed of the parish school which was dedicated on March 8, 1959 and entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters, who were given later on the title, of ownership. To the same Sisters was also transferred in 1960 the ownership of St. Luis Hospital, that had been founded on August 3, 1942. On August 15, 1959 the parish passed under the diocese of Caxias do Sul, and part of its territory was taken away from it for the creation of the new parish of Santa Barbara. In 1967, the parish of Vespasiano Correa numbered about 3,500 souls, 700 of them in the main town, and the rest in 13 chapels around it. 95% of its people were of Italian extraction, the others of Polish descent.

Fr. Attilio Lovato was pastor from August 1960 to February 1965. He was instrumental in securing electricity and the aqueduct. Fr. Vittorio De Lorenzi took over the parish in February 1965 until September 1972, when he was succeeded by Fr. Carlo Seppi. On February 22, 1977 the Scalabrinians left the parish to the diocese.

#### PORTO ALEGRE, VILA NOVA: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH

On May 15, 1941, Fr. Rinaldo Zanzotti was succeeded by Fr. Alfredo Antonelli who directed the parish until September 1948. By the end of WWII it numbered about 20,000 people, but only 500 of them attended Sunday Mass. Much lower numbers of inhabitants were registered in the following years; some 7 or 8000, due, perhaps, to the fact that until 1947 also the people of Belem Novo were included in the census, as they too were actually a part of the parish of Vila Nova from 1941 to 1947. From October 1948 to March 1949 the parish was entrusted to Fr. Vittorio De Lorenzi, and to Fr. Giovanni Lazzarotto from April 1949 to November 1952. On April 15, 1951, the corner stone of the new parish church was blessed. It was dedicated by Archbishop Scherer on December 11, 1960. Fr. Ernesto Fabbian headed the parish from December 1952 to May 1957. It was he that collected the funds for the construction of the new church. Fr. Fernando Zanchetta succeeded him from June 1957 to December 1958. Then came Frs. Bruno Todesco, December 1958-June 1959; Onorio Benacchio, July 1959-February 1965; Antonio Benetti (1965-1970), who began construction on the parish hall; Fr. Emilio Delmi, February 1971, and Fr. Antonio Bortolomai in May 1978.

In 1967 the parish had some 8,000 inhabitants, 7,000 of them Catholic. Financially, 35 % were well to do; 45% workers of modest means; and 20% poor. With the help of another missionary and two Scalabrinian Sisters a more intense and specific apostolate was begun in 1975 for poor immigrants. At the present time the parish numbers about 18,000 people, 80% to 85% of them of Brazilian stock, the rest of foreign origin. There are many Spiritists and Evangelical Protestants. Some 50% to 60% are looked upon as "emarginated", that is under-employed and 30% in dire need.

## CHAPTER IV

### PARISHES AND MISSIONS IN THE STATES OF SANTA CATARINA AND PARANÁ, THE FEDERAL DISTRICT AND IN PARAGUAY

#### CAMPOS NOVOS, SC: PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

On September 14, 1926, a certain merchant, Ricardo Brandalise of Estação Perdizes, in the state of Santa Catarina, asked Fr. Enrico Prete to send there an Italian missionary, because the people of Italian extraction living in that region had a Brazilian Franciscan of Porto União visiting them only once or twice a month. Besides, "neither his sermons nor his prayers touched their hearts, so that, not finding any satisfaction, many ceased going to mass, thus loosing little by little their faith." The missionary could assist Campos Novos and the 10 chapels enclosed between the Uruguay River and Caçador. He was an Italian, one of the many who had begun to migrate from *Río Grande do Sul*, where he had known Fr. Prete, into Santa Catarina and Paraná in quest of new land.

Ten years later, in 1936, the Scalabrinians were offered the parishes of Chapecó, Capinzal, Cruzeiro, etc., almost entirely inhabited by people of Italian origin, but they had to decline the offer for lack of personnel: and so they were entrusted to other religious Congregations. As seen above, in 1948, when the bishop of Lages offered Campos Novos to the Scalabrinians, the first objection raised against it was that the parish had no Italians. The Superior Provincial Fr. Zanzotti pointed out that the parish numbered 25,000 people, with about 50 chapels, of which 10 were made up of Italians, the others of mixed origins, the majority of Brazilians, including the central town included. There was a neighboring area to the parish, however, about 90 km wide, entirely inhabited by Italians, and the bishop had in mind to offer the Scalabrinians also that region which included Anita Garibaldi and Celso Ramos. Campos Novos had been a post station since 1636 for soldiers or traders passing through from São Paulo to *Río Grande*

do Sul. The “campo” or prairie began to be settled by the 1800. The first Baptism in Campos Novos was registered in 1876. The parish was created in 1882 and it belonged to the diocese of Curitiba; in 1908 it passed to the diocese of Florianópolis, and to that of Lages in 1927. In 1975, Campos Novos and the other parishes of the region, directed by the Scalabrinians, except for Anita Garibaldi, were made a part of the diocese of Joaçaba.

Campos Novos had no resident pastor until 1920, but it was attended to by the Franciscans of Curitibaanos. In 1908, there were 346 baptisms but only 730 communions; 492 baptisms in 1912, and 1,174 communions. In 1913, the pastor Fr. Gaspar Flesch visited all the chapels in two months, but only 200 people made their Easter duty. In 1930 the parish was taken over by the diocesan clergy. In his pastoral visitation of 1940, Bishop Daniel Hostin found the parish in a state of complete neglect. He ordered the construction of a wooden rectory, which was inaugurated and named after Fr. Rogério Neuhaus, the Franciscan friar who between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries had scoured the immense parish and had died in odor of sanctity. In 1944, the church built 35 years earlier by Friar Rogério was demolished, and the foundation stone was laid of the new church that was completed afterwards by the Scalabrinians. The hospital was opened in 1946. In November of the same year, the Pastor, Fr. Frederic Peters, made the request either to be given an assistant or to entrust the parish to a religious congregation. In 1947, negotiations were begun with the Premonstratensian Canons, who provided some help only during the first half of that year. On April 4, 1948, the parish was entrusted to the Scalabrinians Fr. Giovanni Simonetto and Fr. Giuseppe Corradin. In spite of the divisions carried out for the creation of the new parishes of Abdon Batista (1946) and Erval Velho (1950), in 1951 Campos Novos numbered 20,000 souls, of whom 1,700 in the main town, and the rest scattered around its 35 chapels. In 1951, the church was roofed, and the first Mass was said in it on Christmas Day of 1952. A wooden parish hall was also constructed. Fr. Giuseppe Corradin became pastor on September 21, 1952, when Fr. Giovanni Simonetto was appointed Provincial Superior. The new parish church was inaugurated on June 24, 1953, feast day of titular St. John the Baptist. The Salesian Sisters

arrived in 1924. The parish donated them a piece of land for the construction of a stone school building, whose corner stone was blessed by the bishop on March 25, 1956.

Fr. Onorio Benacchio was pastor from February 13, 1955 until February 28, 1959, and was succeeded by Fr. Quintilio Costini until 1968. A stone rectory was built in 1959-1960, and a new parish hall in 1962. Plans had been proposed in 1958 for the construction of a parochial high-school because the normal school stood very far away from Campos Novos and the Jehovah Witnesses were about to take such initiative. Fr. Costini succeeded in opening one on March 3, 1960, in an old wooden building offered by the bishop. The Trade Technical school was opened in 1963 and the "Gemma Galgani" Professional school for girls in 1969. In the meanwhile a piece of land had been purchased in 1963 for a new seminary, whose foundation stone was laid in January 1967. This grandiose building was used, instead, as we said before, as the seat for the high school, the trade school, and the professional school for girls. Fr. Costini was the principal. The section that the blueprint had set aside for the Sisters, became eventually the minor seminary "Paul VI" in 1975. The radio station "Radio Cultura" was also bought in 1963. Fr. Achille Zanon was pastor in 1968-1974. Fr. João Granzotto succeeded him on February 24, 1974. Formed out of a territory formerly pertaining to the parish of Campos Novos, the new parish of Vargem had been created in 1965. The parish of Palmiras was detached from it in 1969. Still, the parish of Campos Novos has now 30 thirty chapels with a population of about 25,000: 40% "caboclos", 30% of Italian extraction, and 15% of German origin. Of the 130 sawmills that had been the main attraction of immigrants, only 30 there now remain.

#### **ANITA GARIBALDI, SC: THE PARISH OF ST. BARBARA**

Anita Garibaldi owes its name to the wife of Garibaldi, who arrived at this place in 1842 after swimming across the river Canoas to join the "hero of the two worlds". Of the people living there we have a rather vague information about a certain Manoel Ribeiro, who was breeding horses in the years between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth on behalf of José Maria

Antunes, the only owner of the immense estate. A number of Italian families arrived there in 1900. They built a small chapel in honor of St. Barbara in a place known at the time as “Rincão dos Baguais”, and then, shortly afterwards, as “Colônia Hercílio Luz”. In 1932 a new wooden chapel was built in the land where there now stands the municipal building at the behest of a committee formed by Miguel Babbi (Baby), arrived in 1919, by the merchant Paulino Granzotto, arrived as a vendor from Caxias, and by few other traders. In the same years Celso Ramos also began to be colonized. These localities were visited three or four times a year by the Franciscans of Lages Frei Rogério and Frei Lourenço. By 1945 the population began to grow fast, attracted by the great quantity of lumber, for whose processing about fifty sawmills were set up. As said above, in 1948 the region was offered to the Scalabrinians. After some disputes between Anita Garibaldi and Celso Ramos vying for the privilege of being made the seat of the parish, the former was chosen as more centrally located. The parish was created on December 4, 1950, and dedicated to St. Barbara. Fr. Remigio Dalla Vecchia was the first pastor from April 1, 1952 to the end of 1952. A wooden rectory had been built in 1950. Fr. Elias Bordignon was pastor in the years 1953- 1957. In 1953-54, he built out of wood the Frei Rogério Hospital, thus meeting one of the most urgent needs of the town distant about a hundred km from cities with hospitals. Later on, he started construction on a stone building. Fr. Antônio Stella’s substituted for him from July 1957 to July 1958.

In 1967, the Diocese of Lages transferred the hospitals title of ownership over to the Scalabrinian Congregation in recognition of the merits it deserved for the religious and social development of the two vast parishes of Anita Garibaldi and Campos Novos, together combining a territory of about 5,000 square km, larger than the whole archdiocese of Milan. The Sisters of Divine Providence arrived at the hospital in 1954, and began to care also for the “Padre Antônio Vieira elementary school” in 1955. The Santa Maria Goretti High School was added in 1962. On March 13, 1957, the corner stone of the new brick parish church was laid; the church was blessed in March 1960, but gradually completed in the following years. From January to August 1959 the parish was directed by Fr. Tranquillo Lorenzin, and then, to February 1960, by Fr. Antônio Stella, who was succeeded by Fr. Sex-

tílio Miotto, and Fr. Angelo Todesco after him. In February 1970 the parish was entrusted to Fr. João Granzotto and to Fr. Achille Zanon on February 24, 1974.

The population of the parish remained always at the level of about 20,000 people: 2,000 in the central town and the rest living around the 40 chapels and 17 other worshipping places scattered over a territory 40 km. long and 20 km. wide, 20% of them of Italian descent, most of the others "caboclos".

The living standard of 30% of the people is fair, the remaining live in poverty. The number of sawmills, the early source of income for many immigrants, decreased, and agriculture has not been properly developed as yet.

#### **BARRA DO LEÃO, SC: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH**

Moving in from Caxias do Sul, Gramado and Canela, the first Italian families arrived at Barra do Leão in 1911. They found there just a few "caboclos" scattered in the woods. They were assisted at first by the priests of Campos Novos; later on, part of the territory was joined to the parish of Capinzal, and the rest became a part of the new parish of Lacerdópolis in 1938. The first wooden chapel was raised in 1928. In March 1951, bishop Hostin of Lages founded the autonomous quasi-parish of Barra do Leão, and appointed Fr. Emilio Rosa its first curate. The parish was created officially on May 3, 1952, and the same Fr. Emilio Rosa served as its first pastor until December 1957. He built a parish hall of wood, which served as church in the years 1958- 1962. The stone church was started in February 1958 and inaugurated on February 16, 1964, by the bishop of Lages.

Fr. Rosa was succeeded by Frs. Tranquillo Lorenzin (1958), Guerino Invernici (January 1959-August 1960), Antonio Benetti (August 1960-July 1962), Fernando Zanchetta (July 1962- March 1966), Onorio Benacchio (March 1966-February 1968), and finally Carlo Seppi, who remained there until May 1972, when the parish was surrendered to the Diocese of Lages as a move towards a better use of the personnel in regions of recent immigration.

The parish of Barra do Leão extends over an area of about 500 km. The residence is very small and located at the extreme corner of



the municipality, only two km. from the River Peixe that separates it from the other two parishes; but it was not possible to have a more central location. Lines of communication are poor. 75% of its 4,000 inhabitants are of Italian origin; the rest are “caboclos” or Germans. Industry is practically non-existent and standards of living are very modest.

#### **BARRA FRIA, SC: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS**

Upon pressing insistence of local influential people, the Bishop of Lages created in December 22, 1951 the autonomous quasi-parish of our Lady of Sorrows of Barra Fria, with only 250 families, almost all of them of Italian extraction. For the first 6 months it was headed by Fr. Alfredo Trincherio, for the remaining part of 1952 by Fr. Giuseppe Foscallo, and from 1953 to 1959 by Fr. Angelo Todesco. In 1959 it was made a part of the parish of Erval Velho.

#### **ERVAL VELHO, SC: PARISH OF ST. SEBASTIAN**

In 1883, when Erval Velho was made a district of Campos Novos, a chapel existed there, served by the priests of Lages. It belonged at different times to the parishes of Curitibaanos, Campos Novos, and Joaçaba. A new chapel and the rectory were built in 1935 in the hope a parish would be created. But it was established only on February 21, 1950, and entrusted to the Scalabrinians.

Already since 1949 Fr. Paolo Bortolazzo had been there to organize the new parish which was directed afterwards by Fr. Luigi Zandonà from February 26 to December 1950.

Fr. Antonio Cerato was pastor from December 1950 to February 1954, followed by Fr. Beniamino Basso until February 1936, who built the parish church, inaugurated on March 19, 1961. Together with the church he had also a new rectory built, but adapted it, later, into a hospital, opened in May 1968 and entrusted to the Sister Servants of Our Lady of Sorrows of Adria. In February 1963 the hospital was closed because thought to be too near to the larger ones of Joaçaba and Campos Novos and no resident doctor could be secured. In 1965 the pastor, Fr. Guerrino Invernici (1963-1968) was able to have the Sisters of St. Camillus. In 1966 they were given the house and the



land in hope of reopening the hospital; but in 1967 it was decided on the construction of a new building on land of the diocese, one kilometer from the church, with pharmacy, medical center for outpatients, and quarters for postulant sisters.

Fr. Invernici deserves credit for the restoration and decoration of the church. From May 1968 to February 1971 the parish was directed by Fr. Ernesto Fanni; between March 1971 and the end of 1972, by Fr. Avelino Garbin, and then by Fr. Florindo Chiggi. Fr. Onorio Benacchio is pastor since 1975. The parish numbered about 5,000 people, 60% of them of Italian origin, arrived there from Río Grande do Sul, from where they began to migrate in 1920. As said above, since 1969 the pastor of Erval Velho takes care also of the quasi-parish of Barra Fria.

#### MARARI, SC: PARISH OF ST. ALBERT

#### MONTE CARLO, SC: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

Italian and German colonization entered the forests of Marari in 1931-32. Religious assistance was provided by the priests of Campos Novos since when the first chapel was built in 1933. In 1935 it was made a part of the parish of Tangará. On August 14, 1952 it was raised to the rank of a parish and entrusted to the Scalabrinians upon request of Fr. Angelo Corso. Fr. Alfredo Trincherro, an aggregate of the Scalabrinian Congregation, was its first pastor until February 1959. The construction of the rectory is due to him. Fr. Angelo Todesco was his successor until March 1966. In 1961 a proposal was made to transfer the parish to a locality more accessible to by communication lines. The problem became acute in 1966 when it was question of building the new parish church. From November 1966 until June 1967, the parish was assisted by the missionaries of Campos Novos. The priests' council of Lages in April 1967 decided that the seat should remain in Marari. And so, Fr. Todesco returned to it and prepared for the construction of the church which was carried out by his successor Fr. Onorio Benacchio who had been made pastor in 1968 to be replaced by Fr. Antonio Cerato in 1975. The parish numbers 6,000 people. The most important of the 22 chapels is Monte Carlo where great sawmills are still in operation. It was in this locality, in fact,

that the seat of the parish was fixed in place of Marari on November 18, 1976 under the title of the Immaculate Conception. Fr. Guerrino Piccini became its pastor on December 13, 1978.

#### **PALMARES, SC: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH**

In 1967, the diocese of Lages decided to divide the parish of Palmares from that of Campos Novos. The new parish was created on March 3, 1969, and Fr. Bruno Paris took possession of it on the March 16. It counts about 6000 people almost all of them "caboclos"; about a hundred families reside in the central town; the rest is spread out in fifteen chapels.

#### **SÃO MIGUEL DO IGUAÇU, PR: PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL**

In 1948 the "Colonizadora Pinho e Terras Ltda" decided to establish a center of colonization in the region of São Miguel do Iguaçú which was called "Colonizadora Gaucha Ltda", because its first colonizers were coming from Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina. Later on, the families of Italian extraction were joined by many others of German descent, a few Poles, and other Luso-Brazilians. Still some time later, numerous semi nomad families arrived in from other states, especially of the North East. A great part of these remain for four years, until land produces a crop of mint, and then they move on to other lands. About 1/5 of the land comes under the note of "posses", that is, without formal juridical title of ownership. The municipality São Miguel do Iguaçú was established in 1961 and numbers 50,000 inhabitants, devoted to farming, cattle raising, and lumbering. The parish covers the same territory as the municipality, an area of 1,208 square km. One third of it will be submerged under water by the dam of the grandiose electric power plant under construction at Itaipú. The parish was created in early 1958 by the Prelate of Foz do Iguaçú. In 1959 it was joined to the diocese of Toledo, but now since 1978 belongs to the new diocese of Foz do Iguaçú. The first church was built in the lower section of the town, where it first started and the first mass had been said under the shade of a tree in 1949 by a priest of Foz do Iguaçú. In 1958, another church was built on the upper side of town.

The first four pastors were religious priests of the Society of the Divine Word: José Gärtner, from January 1958 to April 1965; Walter Bonten, until March 1966; Guilherme Heyer, until January 1968; and finally Luis Braun, until March 1968. The contract between the Diocese and the Society of the Divine Word expired in 1967, and it was not renewed. It was then that Bishop Armando Cirio of Toledo offered the parish to the Scalabrinians together with that of Santa Teresinha. On March 31, 1968, Fr. Bruno Busatta began taking care of the parish of São Miguel, of which he was made pastor on February 1, 1969. On June 15, 1969, the corner stone was blessed of the parish brick church and it was inaugurated, though not completed, on September 27, 1970. By 1974, the new rectory had also been finished.

On February 23, 1977 Fr. Bruno Busatta was named rector of the quasi-parish of Itacorá, detached from the parish of St. Miguel and distant about 50 km. By a decree of the Bishop, Fr. Onorio Benacchio directed, from early 1977 to the beginning of 1978, the parish of Santa Teresinha, about 20 km from São Miguel, which had been without a priest for a while. In the meantime, the parish of São Miguel of Iguaçu was given to the care of Fr. Augustinho Sopelsa. As said before, the small minor seminary was opened in 1978, and a new parish hall was built.

#### CASCAVEL, PR: PARISH OF ST. CHRISTOPHER

In 1968, Bishop Armando Cirio of Toledo invited the Scalabrinians to take one of the three new parishes he was planning to create at Cascavel, a city founded after WWI and made a municipality in 1953. It had then only a few houses and a chapel, but by then it already had 32,000 inhabitants, against the 100,000 of 1978!

The General Administration authorized the Province of Rio Grande do Sul, in May 1972, to accept the parish of St. Christopher, created on the preceding April 16. It included the north-western portion of the municipality of Cascavel and a section of the municipality of Corbelia, with 25,000 people and 15 chapels, the most distant of them about 50 km away from the mother church. The parish church was built in 1973-1975, replacing an oratory of St. Christopher venerated by truck drivers.

The metropolitan area is getting filled in by the day with tenement houses and factories. Thanks to industry, part of the population enjoys a fairly good standard of living, but the great majority is made up of a steady influx of unskilled workers with segments of extreme poverty. About half are of Italian extraction, who moved in from *Río Grande do Sul*, *Santa Catarina*, and *Espirito Santo*; 30% of German, Polish, and Ukrainian origin; 15% from the regions of *Paraná*, and the remaining 5% from the states of *São Paulo*, *Minas Gerais* and of the North-East. After the Fr. Santo Pelizzer (July 1971-April 1972) and Fr. Valentino Dal Pozzo (April-July 1972), Fr. Armando Da Costa became the first Scalabrinian pastor. The parish presents serious problems, such as the presence of spiritism and prostitution, and the usual difficulties connected with the masses of new immigrants. They are dealt with by means of an all-embracing organization of catechesis conducted with the collaboration of more than 200 catechists. The scarcity of priests was openly shown by the fact that when Fr. De Costa took possession of the parish of St. Christopher on July 2, 1972, he was the only Brazilian priest of *Cascavel*. Fr. Bruno Todesco was his assistant.

Upon completion of the church, the rectory was also built and inaugurated on August 8, 1976. The Scalabrinian Sisters, who have been working with the missionaries from the very beginning, moved into the old rectory.

The parish, with some 50,000 people and 33 places of worship outside of the city, gave life, in October 3, 1977, to a Charitable Social Center, with the CEMIC (Center of Studies for Minors and their Integration into the community) named after Renato Festugato, that plays host during the day to about 300 youngsters between the ages of 3 and 14, from the most abandoned class; and the "Recanto da Criança" (The Children's Shelter), a home where over 100 orphans and unwanted orphans are housed and cared for.

#### FOZ DO IGUAÇU (ITAIPÚ) P.R: PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER

In 1974, works were begun on the cyclopean hydroelectric power plant of Itaipú, on the *Paraná* River, next to *Foz do Iguaçu*. Already by the year 1976 close to a thousand houses had been built there for

the laborers (barrageiros), while the Scalabrinian Province of St. Peter had made plans since 1975 to open there a mission, also in response to an invitation by the Bishop of Toledo (Foz do Iguacu was made a diocese in 1978). On September 5, 1976, Bishop Armando Cirio entrusted to the first pastor, the Scalabrinian Fr. Alcides Angonese the new parish with headquarters in an old chapel dedicated to St. Joseph. On April 3, 1977 he inaugurated the new "ecumenical chapel" of St. Joseph the Worker, built by the government. The Scalabrinian Sisters had already arrived in February. At that time, the parish numbered 7,000 people, on a steady increase, with four other centers of worship.

#### PARAGUAY: MISSION OF ST. THERESA

By 1962, there began a great flow of Brazilian migrants into Paraguay, in the region of Alto Paraná", geographically, an extension of the Brazilian States of Paraná and Santa Catarina. The lands on Brazilian side of the river had been exhaustively exploited through farming and by the lumber industry; on the other side a vast, fertile, and uninhabited territory, still covered with virgin forests, provided a strong attraction. The conditions for buying land were enticing, even if they frequently concealed the deception of lands sold twice or of contracts entered into by word of mouth. The government of Paraguay was interested in manpower and colonizing companies did the rest organizing a movement that had been spontaneous at first. As of 1978, some 200,000 Brazilian emigrants are thought to live in the Eastern regions of Paraguay. They have very little contact with native Paraguayans, they only speak either Portuguese, or German, Italian, and Polish, and are inclined to keep in close touch, culturally especially, with neighboring Brazil. The social and relief organizations are still at their early stages, lodging and eating habits are often the primitive ones of pioneers.

From the religious point of view, people presented the characteristics of their regions of origin: more solid the formation of the Brazilians from the south; easy prey to numerous Protestant sects, those from the North. The Clergy was very scarce: the Prelature of Alto Paraná, with 100,000 inhabitants, had thirteen priests scattered

over an area of 20,000 km: nine of them, foreigners, and only one, Fr. Nicolas Cunha, S.V.D., was Brazilian and taking care of the tens of thousands of his fellow countrymen. It was thanks to his initiative that in 1970 Bishop Augustín Van Aachen invited the Scalabrinians to take care of these immigrants. The following year the director of the Center of Migration Studies of São Paulo and the Scalabrinian religious students of the João XXIII seminary conducted a survey of the region and later on the missionaries of Rio Grande do Sul, especially Fr. Giuseppe Corradin and Fr. Beniamino Basso, visited several times those settlements.

In 1973, it was finally decided to found the mission of St. Theresa in the municipality of Caagazú. The colony had been set up in 1971 by the La Greco-Paraguaya Co. setting up in the area a few saw-mills and numbered about 800 families. A wooden barrack was used as a chapel, while eight Protestant churches were already in existence. A committee was charged with the construction of a wooden structure for the missionary, Fr. Beniamino Basso, who took up steady residence in it as temporary pastor of the new mission on May 12, 1974. In 1975 he was joined by Fr. Florindo Chiggi and a few Scalabrinian sisters.

In the first four years, Fr. Basso and the Sisters were visiting every two months two groups of settlements over 150 km from the mission of St. Theresa. By the end of 1977 the group of "Las Nuevas" was handed over to the Claretians; that of Sapiré was attached to Santa Rosa del Monday, and "Los Cedrales" was made a part of the Mission of Santa Teresa.

The parish of Santa Rosa del Monday, distant 86 km from St. Teresa, was erected on June 13, 1976, and Fr. Chiggi was appointed its first pastor. Still incomplete, the rectory also was blessed on the same day. A convent was built afterwards for the sisters, and construction on a new stone parish church was begun in 1978. The parish extends to 13 chapels as far as eighty km away! There are some 50 base communities.

**SOBRADINHO, DF: PARISH OF THE BOM JESUS DOS MIGRANTES**

As stated in Part IV of this volume, in 1974 the two Provinces of Brazil jointly accepted the parish of Sobradinho, a suburban city of Brasilia, and the Province of St. Peter sent to it Fr. Giuseppe Corradin, as pastor, who arrived in the new capital of Brazil on June 11, 1974, while the Province of St. Paul supplied the assistant in the person of Fr. Natale Ubaldi.





PART VI

PROVINCE OF  
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

France – Belgium – Luxembourg - Portugal



## CHAPTER I

### PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

#### AN OVER-ALL VIEW OF THE STATE OF THE PROVINCE

The Province of the Immaculate Conception includes the Scalabrinian Missions of France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Portugal; it was officially erected on the January 6, 1946. From March 9, 1955 to May 14, 1964, the missions of Belgium belonged to the Missio Sui Juris Regina Mundi, which included also those of England, and, in its early years, the missions of Germany as well. But then the missions of Belgium were again joined to the Province of the Immaculate Conception.

List of the Provincial Superiors in order of succession:

Fr. Mario Ginocchini, July 16, 1946 to January 9, 1948

Fr. Francesco Milini, January 9, 1948 to July 15, 1951

Fr. Giovanni Triacca, July 15, 1951 to July 11, 1958

Fr. Enrico Larcher, July 11, 1958 to June 1, 1964

Fr. Delisio Villa, June 1, 1964 to June 1, 1970

P. Marcello Bertinato, June 1970 2 April 5, 1976

Fr. Flaminio Gheza, April 5, 1976

The Missio Sui Juris Regina Mundi was headed by:

Fr. Ugo Cavicchi, March 9, 1955 - July 24, 1957

Fr. Vittorio Michelato, July 24, 1957 - August 31, 1961

Fr. Luigi Casaril, August 31, 1961 -

Scalabrinian Missions in chronological order of foundation:

France	<p>1936-Paris, Ital. Cath. Miss. of the Holy Family (rue de Montreuil )</p> <p>1942-Hayange, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1944-Agen, Ital. Cath. Miss. and direction of the Corriere, closed in 1962.</p> <p>1946-Herserange, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1947-Chambery, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1947-Grenoble, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1949-Marseilles, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1951-St. Maur-des-Fossés, Maison Nazareth (closed in 1972)</p> <p>1953-Paris, Ital. Cath. Miss. of Our Lady of Consolation (rue Jean Goujon)</p> <p>1955-Fontenay-Trésigny, Maison de Retraite</p> <p>1957-Mulhouse, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1962-Roubaix, Ital. Cath. Miss. (closed in 1969)</p> <p>1962-Sin-le-Noble, Ital. Cath. Mission (closed in 1965)</p> <p>1962-Carrières-sur-Seine, Parish of St. John Baptist</p> <p>1965-Lyons, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1967-Haucourt, Parish of St. Charles (left in 1978)</p> <p>1970-Strasbourg, Community of Young Men (closed in 1977)</p> <p>1976-Avignon- Ital. Cath. Miss.</p>
Belgium:	<p>1946-Quaregnon-Flénu, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1946-Marchienne-au-Pont, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1947-La Louvière, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1951-Maurare, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1952-Peronnes-Lez-Binche, Italian Missionary Center</p>
Luxemburg	<p>1946-Esch-sur-Alzette, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1970-Luxemburg City, Ital. Cath. Miss.</p>
Algeria:	<p>1958-Algiers, Ital. Cath. Miss. (closed in 1963)</p>
Missions for Portuguese	<p>1967-Carrières-sur-Seine, Port. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1971-Amora, Portugal, Parish, joined to the Province in 1976</p> <p>1973-Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg Port. Cath. Miss.</p> <p>1975-Fonteney-Trésigny (France), Port. Cath. Miss. (closed in 1976)</p>

## THE YEARS BETWEEN 1941 AND 1945

As all know, in the beginning of WWII in the European countries now making up the Scalabrinian Province of the Immaculate Conception there were only two missionaries: Fr. Mario Ginocchini and Fr. Giovanni Triacca, who, together with Msgr. Costantino Babini,

formed the Italian Catholic Mission of rue de Montreuil in Paris. Another one, Fr. Vittorio Michelato, joined them in 1943, while four more arrived in 1943: Frs. Luigi Casaril, Attilio Bersani, Antonio Bocchese and Ilario Fiorese.

Our missionaries in Paris were able to carry on most of their apostolate, always kept under surveillance but never harassed by various authorities succeeding each other in the French capital. The increase of available missionaries allowed for the acceptance of new missions: in 1942 that of Hayange, in the Moselle district, then under German occupation; and from 1944 the mission of Agen following the assassination of Msgr. Toricella. The first hosted the largest concentration of Italian immigrants employed in steel works; the latter was located in the midst of the largest concentration of immigrant farmers; while the Italian immigrants of Paris fell quickly prey to the phenomenon of urbanization. Such were the three typical situations.

At Hayange, a region once incorporated by the German into the Grand Reich, the ordinary activities of the mission had been curtailed; the Sisters had returned to Italy, all gatherings were forbidden. Classes of catechism could be instituted, however in the public schools which all children of Italians were obliged to attend; then, in the years 1943- 1944, the missionaries had to fill in, as far as possible, for the Italian Teachers no longer credited by the Germans following the Italian surrender to the allies on September 8, 1943. After its liberation on September 1, 1944, Hayange remained caught at only 5 miles from the battle line with all its consequences, the most dreadful of all being the political reprisals. The political situation of Agen can be looked upon as typical of the time because of the assassination of Msgr. Toricella by Italians: a very tense situation, indeed, a period of an often indiscriminate purge in the midst of a great mass of Italians, most of them in a state of servitude. Under such circumstances all efforts were employed to continue the missionary activities among farmers whose problems were mostly material and the formation and information office by means of the press by the revival, in April 1944, of the *Corriere*, a newspaper founded by Msgr. Torricella.

The mission of Paris became a refuge for stray Italians because of situations brought about by war and politics, especially after September 8, 1943. Our missionaries of both Paris and Agen devoted

themselves heart and soul to the assistance of Italians locked up in concentration camps.

During the war, the first reactions began to surface to the pastoral methods inherited from the group of the Italian missionaries for the European countries that had taken the place of the Opera Bonomelli in 1928 and was operating under the direction of Msgr. Costantino Babini, under the direct dependence of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. Fr. Francesco Tirondola was urging a better organization of the missions: each mission must have a chapel and a house of its own where the missionaries may live together and restore their spirit when they return from preaching missions. (Letter of Fr. Francesco Tirondola to Card. Rossi, Cermenate, March 5, 1944. Arch. Gen. Scal.,34/5). At that same time, Msgr. Costantino Babini, director of the missionaries for Italian migrants in Europe, resumed pressuring the Scalabrinian Congregation to take into its hands the religious assistance of all the missions. One must keep in mind that several former Bonomellians had to abandon their missions because of the war and political reprisals.

#### FR. MARIO GINOCCHINI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR 1946-1948

Though in favor of unity in apostolic work, Cardinal R.C. Rossi did not cherish the hypothesis that Scalabrinians have the direction, or even any indirect influence, over secular priests. He wished, however, that they, as religious, should be autonomous. For this reason he constituted on January 6, 1946 the religious Province of the Immaculate Conception, which was to include all the Scalabrinian missionaries of Western Europe. Fr. Mario Ginocchini was appointed Provincial Superior of the Scalabrinian religious on July 16, 1946. Following laborious procedures, French authorities granted in the same month, finally, the entry visa for Frs. Rino Amabilia, Vittorio Cavaliere, Alfredo Centofante, Mario Consonni, Giovanni Guadagnini, and, shortly afterwards, for Frs. Guglielmo Ferronato and Ottorino Andreatta.

They were given orders not to spread thin into small missions, but to close ranks in the largest cities and in places of greatest migratory inflow. But right at that very period of time there was the resumption

of a migratory flux of enormous proportions from Italy to the European Countries: 227,000 Italians migrated to France in the years 1946-1951, while another 146,700 entered the Benelux, with a particularly high inflow into the coal mine district of Belgium.

And so likewise a wide geographic expansion of Scalabrinian missions took place in 1946: the mission of Herserange-Longevy on the Moselle was opened, along with those of Quaregnon-Flénu and Marchienne-au-Pont in Belgium and of Esch-sur-Alzette in Luxembourg, the missions of Chambéry in Savoy, Grenoble and La Louvière in Belgium. The first missionaries to take charge of these missions had served Italian workers and prisoners in Germany during WWII: Frs. Vittorio Michelato, Luigi Zonta, Luigi Casaril, Gino Macchiavelli, Adolfo Centofante, joined by a few younger men. In 1947 the French bishops expressed the desire to organize the religious assistance for the Italian immigrants, with the intention of placing a Scalabrinian to direct and coordinate it. In December of the same year Msgr. Babini made an analogous proposal for immigrants of other nationalities in an open letter. His project was that the Sacred Consistorial Congregation would appoint a Provincial Superior for France, one for Switzerland and surrounding German speaking countries, and another for Belgium, Luxembourg Holland, and England. Besides, it could name also a Scalabrinian supervisor in charge of coordinating the work of his confreres in harmony with the other missionaries and the local clergy, while maintaining contacts, at the same time, with the migrants' relocation centers in Italy, in Milan particularly. At the same time, relations between migrants and local churches were stimulated by Msgr. Jean Rupp, national director of the French apostolate for migrants, who was to become later auxiliary bishop of Monte Carlo, and later Pro-Nuncio in Iraq.

#### FR. FRANCESCO MILINI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR 1948-1951

Msgr. Babini's project was carried out in part after the death of Card. R.C. Rossi (September 17, 1947). Appointed Provincial Superior of the Scalabrinians on January 8, 1948, with Frs. Giovanni Triacca and Pietro Corbellini as his Councilors, Fr. Francesco Milini was also named on January 1, 1949, director of all Italian missionaries work-

ing for migrants in France, and for a time even of those of Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg until the Consistorial Congregation could provide for the appointment of a director for those nations.

The missions formerly under the direction of the outgoing Msgr. Babini in France were those of Marseilles, Lyons, Tolouse, Annecy, Moyeuivre, Nancy, Saint-Etienne, Clermont Ferrand, Marmand, Montauban, Lille. 14 Scalabrinians had charge of the six missions mentioned above. The Scalabrinian Fr. Luigi Casaril was stationed in Luxembourg there were in Belgium 4 Scalabrinians and 3 Franciscans at Charleroi (Brussels) and Vervier (Liège); 4 diocesan priests (at Seraing, Liège, and Charleroi; one service at Brussels. With all his long parish experience in Brazil, still Fr. Milini pointed out that the Italian communities of France were always a minority and in a weak position, therefore, when faced with the local organization, customs, and mentality; the preaching of missions centers, or Missions, were to be retained and continued. That is, the missionaries were to get in touch with as many Italians as possible by means of periodical visitations, flying missions, the press, assistance centers, and secretariats for filing legal papers, which the migrants could not take care of by themselves or caused them to waste precious weeks away from their jobs. The local clergy too were against the setting-up of Italian parishes or of similar organisms. An example in point on this attitude is represented by the Vicar General of the diocese of Nancy who said one day to our missionaries of Herserange-Longwy: "It surprises me to find out that you have organized a true Italian parish in the strict sense at the chapel of Saint Louis with High Mass, parochial institutions, etc. Such an organization does not seem respondent to your character as religious missionaries; you are here to help the diocesan clergy in their ministry on behalf of your countrymen and not to take the place of the local clergy." To the objection that integration could only be gradually achieved through the parishes by the second or third generation in the respect for their language, mentality and Italian customs he retorted that it was all a question of sentimentality and that all aliens had to become right away an integral part of the French civil and religious community. But facts disproved this. A 1950 report clearly shows that, while well integrated into the social and civil context of France, the Italians of the old immigration were



still very much left out of the parish life because of diversity of culture. The presence of the Italian missionary was therefore thought still necessary as the connecting link by which immigrants might integrate into the French parishes. Besides, and much more so, the conditions of immigrants after WWII, confined in barracks and canteens, with no family, at the industrial outskirts of cities, occupied in the heaviest jobs, almost completely neglected by the French clergy, confirmed the absolute need for the presence of Italian missionaries, who directed centers with chapel and secretariats in the most important cities, from where they reached out, on a more or less regular basis, at the same time, to the Italians at large with visitations, whose frequency varied between the space of a month or a year.

In 1949, the Scalabrinians took charge of the mission of Marseilles which included the region of the Bouches-duRhône, fourth in order of importance for the number of Italian immigrants. In early 1951, Fr. Milini petitioned the Sacred Consistorial Congregation for permission to purchase a house at Saint Maur-des-Fossés (Seine), in a suburb of Paris, in order to open a minor seminary for children of Italian immigrants. Permission was granted and the project was encouraged, but the majority of confreres opposed the founding of a seminary, saying that young aspirants could continue to be sent to study in Italy, that an institution of this kind would absorb all the revenues of the Province, that the Archbishop of Paris allowed admittance only to boys of Italian citizenship and not to their children, who are French citizen by the very fact of being born in France. In 1951, the General Administration gave its consent to a different project, that is, to turn the house into a social institution as a rest home for retired Italian women.

#### FR. GIOVANNI TRIACCA: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR 1951-1958

After the election of Fr. Francesco Milini as Vicar General of the Congregation in 1951, Fr. Giovanni Triacca was named Provincial Superior with Councilors Frs. Pietro Corbellini and Silvio Stefanelli until 1952; Silvio Stefanelli and Adolph Centofante until 1954, when the latter were replaced by Frs. Vittorio Cavaliere and Giovanni Guadagnini. Fr. Milini continued on as Director of the Italian Missionaries for

Migrants; in March 1952, Fr. Triacca succeeded him also in this office. By that year the Province numbered 28 priests and 13 houses. All of them had a secretariat; only five had a chapel for migrants while the rest could only make use of local churches, in general, which did not guarantee convenient hours and facilities. The pastoral action of the missionaries continued to be carried out through the preaching of periodical missions in the various cities where Italians lived. The missions' season lasted from October to June. Each mission occupied generally a week of intense work which included the visiting of every house, the preaching at night from Thursday to Saturday, confession, and communion at the Sunday Mass that concluded the mission.

Such set-up was usually referred to as a continuation of the Bonomellian way of pastoral care. Actually, only three or four missionaries of Bishop Bonomelli's institute had remained in France and Luxemburg after it had been dissolved.

With the support of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, 20 new missions had been established in the years 1928-1936, inheriting only in part and through Msgr. Babini's influence the methods of Bishop Bonomelli's Institute, whose inspiration was not heeded with regards to the secretariats as envisioned by the statutes of institute, with a few exceptions, especially lay associates were involved. Neither were the structures foreseen by Bishop Bonomelli were generally set in place which were meant to turn the center of the mission into parish, a family, our homeland Italians in a foreign land.

The Scalabrinians sought to establish a minimum of such structures, and for the rest they continued to be the "flying missionaries, without much reference to the local Church or concern for a Christian animation of the workers' movement, beyond the traditional forms of Italian type of Catholic Action.

In 1953 another Italian Catholic Mission was opened in Paris by the church of Notre-Dame de Consolation on Rue Jean Goujon. It became the center of action for the whole west side of the city and of the suburbs of Paris. The mission of Rue de Montreuil was left with the east half of Paris. In 1955, the Maison de Retraite rest home was opened at Fontenay-Trésigny (Seine-et-Marne), which took in also the old ladies of the Maison Nazareth of Saint Maur-des-Fossés. In

1957, the Scalabrinians took charge of the mission of Mulhouse, in France's Haut-Rhin.

In 1951 a mission was founded in Maurage in Belgium, near the La Louvière, and a missionary center was opened at Péronnes-lez-Binche and entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters. And so the Scalabrinians settled in the places they still hold today, including a territory about 50 km long, and between five and 15 km wide, that held four centers of the coal industry of Hainaut, Louvière, Marchienne, Maurage and Quaregnon, all of them in the diocese of Tournai.

#### FR. ENRICO LARCHER, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR: 1958-1964

Fr. Enrico Larcher was named Provincial Superior on July 11, 1958 with councilors Frs. Giovanni Triacca and Eliseo Marchiori until 1959; Frs. Eliseo Marchiori and Luigi Casaril until 1961; and Frs. E. Marchiori and Bruno Zannini until the end of his second term.

In 1959, a mission was opened in Algiers for the religious care of about 20,000 Italians, originating mostly from Campania, living in that city. And since almost all of them returned to Italy during the war between France and Algeria the mission was closed in July 1963.

In the meantime something new happened in 1962! The Scalabrinians accepted a territorial parish at Carrière-sur-Seine, in the Diocese of Versailles, which was also to serve as the mission center for Italians first, and then, in 1967, also for Portuguese immigrants. In the same year 1962, while the mission of Agen was discontinued, two other ones were accepted in the North: Sin-Le-Noble in the region of Douai, and Rubaix in that of Lille. These two missions were respectively left in 1965 and 1969.

72,469 Italians had migrated into France in 1959, but only 20,264 in 1963. Immigrants were aging, while their higher level of education helped Italians to integrate more rapidly into French society. The Italian missions, then, began experiencing the risk of isolation, and more so because together with the lack of parochial structures, the scarcity of catholic association was getting acute, due mostly to stagnation in the traditional forms; stagnation and fossilization that must be viewed from the wider range of a poor participation in the life of the local church and in centers of social interest for immigrants. Several

attempts were made to prevent isolation: revitalizing the chapels in the *missiones cum cura animarum*; collaboration with religious and lay social workers; widespread use of the press through a subscription campaign to *L'Eco-Missione* that reached 50,000 copies. In 1962 the seat of *L'Eco d'Italia* was moved to the residence of Saint Maur-des-Fossés in Paris.

Shortly before Fr. Enrico Larcher's six-year term expired, in May 1964, the missions of Belgium were returned to the Scalabrinian province of France. In the following June, Fr. Livio Bordin succeeded Fr. Larcher as director of all (about 70) Missionaries for Italian immigrants of France and Luxembourg.

#### FR. DELISO VILLA: SUPERIOR PROVINCIAL, 1964-1970

Fr. Deliso Villa was appointed Provincial Superior on June 1, 1964 with Frs. Vittorio Michelato, Cesare Zanconato, Enrico Morassut, and Flaminio Gheza as Councilors. In 1965 Fr. Guadagnini replaced Fr. Zanconato. In 1967 the councilors were Frs. Walter Pigato, Enrico Morassut, Flaminio Gheza, and Marcello Bertinato; in 1969 Frs. Gheza and Morassut were substituted by Eliseo Marchiori and Arri-go Marcato. The headquarters of the Provincial Administration was transferred from the Mission of Rue de Montreuil to the residence of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés in July 1965.

After prolonged and laborious negotiations the Italian Catholic Mission of Lyons was entrusted to the Scalabrinians in 1965, and so was in 1967 the territorial parish of Haucourt in the diocese of Nancy together with the mission of Herserange. On the occasion of his canonical visitation to the French Province in 1966, the Superior General, Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo had pointed out, as a basis for action, that the stability and effectiveness of the missionary work be insured by providing it, wherever possible, with a center of a parochial character. This project was realized only in the two instances mentioned above: the parish of Saint John the Baptist at Carrières-sur Seine, definitely accepted in 1966, combined in the same year with the new neighboring parish of Réveil-Matin, under one pastor for both; and that of Haucourt. Only in 1973 was the parish of Cité Bosment taken over by the missionaries of Hayange. In the meanwhile a new type

of missionary presence was attempted with the missionary vicars, that is, with Scalabrinians as a part of the French parish structures: but it lasted only a few years. A much greater impact instead was exerted within the Province by a deeper awareness of the need for a new approach to the pastoral care for migrants, first surfaced at the encounter held in Maredsous, Belgium, in February 1965, and continued since afterwards, in the annual provincial assemblies. Out of it there flowed a movement of the Italian Catholic Mission, viewed as an Italian style parish, as a local Church, taking upon itself its main burdens: the evangelization or instruction in the faith before the reception of the sacraments; the direct or indirect insertion in the organizations for the evangelization of workers (JOC and ACO: Christian Young Workers and Workers' Catholic Action), with a greater contact with the laity; the promotion of small groups able to evangelize; the widening of the migrant's vision as such and no longer only as Italian, and therefore a greater concern for the social, economic, and political milieu or context in which the great majority of migrants lived.

Msgr. Costantino Babini died at Noisy-le-Grand, on June 10, 1988. In February 1970, in agreement with the Episcopal Commission for Italian Migration (CEMIT) the Youth Community was opened in Strasbourg for young workers and civil servants in search of their vocation in life.

#### **FR. MARCELLO BERTINATO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR 1970-1975**

Fr. Marcello Bertinato was named Provincial Superior on June 1, 1970, with Frs. Enrico Larcher, Eliseo Marchiori, Benito Gallo, and Gino Dal Fitto as Councilors until 1973 and with Frs. E. Marchiori, Vittorio Gnesotto, B. Gallo, and Emilio Lorenzato thereafter. In December 1970, Fr. Walter Pigato succeeded Fr. Livio Bordin as Director of the Missionaries for the Italians. By the end of the same year a new mission was opened in Luxembourg and precisely in the capital of Luxembourg, while the Portuguese Catholic Mission was opened at Esch-sur-Alzette in 1973. Another Portuguese mission was established in 1975 by the residence of Fontenay-Trésigny, in the vicinity of Paris for the Portuguese immigrants of the diocese of Meaux. At

the close of the same year it was decided to annex the Scalabrinian mission of Amora, Portugal, to the French Province, which was to take effect on February 1, 1976.

An attempt was initiated in 1973 for an updating of the Scalabrinian presence in Paris. Already in 1971 an agreement had been reached with the local church authorities: the Scalabrinians would have taken up residence by the chapel of Our Lady of Compassion in the parish of Saint Ferdinand de Ternes in the XVII, devoting themselves to the pastoral care of the place in collaboration with the French clergy, while attending at the same time to the tourists and migrants of the ward. There had been even thought, in fact, of moving the mission of Rue Jean-Goujon to the new location, but the negotiations for the purchase of the land were unsuccessful. And this was one of the reasons why the Scalabrinians discontinued the experiment of Place de Porte de Ternes in February 1974. Other reasons were the inadequacy of the premises and the risk of giving precedence to the pastoral care of tourists in preference to that of migrants. In September 1972 a position was begun in the Mission Ouvrière de France with the presence of a Scalabrinian in the group of the priest-workers of the Moselle region, at Villerupt.

#### FR. FLAMINIO GHEZA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR SINCE 1976

Fr. Flaminio Gheza was named Provincial Superior on April 5, 1976. A new criterion was adopted in the choice of his councilors: they had to be the coordinators of the four pastoral regions into which the Province has been divided. Thus, Fr. Vittorio Gnesotto was appointed for Belgium, Fr. Gino Dal Fitto for the region of Paris, Fr. Francesco Danese for Southern France, and Fr. Livio Bordin for the Eastern zone (Eastern France and Luxembourg).

In 1976 the mission of Amora in Portugal, until then directly dependent on the General Administration, was joined to with this Province; a mission was opened at Avignon for migrants of all nationalities: the Italian Catholic Mission of Metz was accepted *ad personam* and entrusted to Fr. Walter Pigato whose term of office as National Delegate for the Italian missionaries of France had just expired. He

took possession of the mission, located in Place Sainte-Glossinde on January 1, 1977.

In 1976 the territorial parish of Saint Charles at Haucourt was returned to the Diocese of Nancy and the Youth Community of Strasbourg died out. The second parish of Carrières-sur-Seine, precisely that of Rèveil-Matin was given back to the diocese of Versailles, and Fr. Silvio Pedrollo was appointed by the Italian Ministry of Public Instruction to teach Italian Literature at the European School of Bergen in Holland.

In 1978, the Province of the Immaculate Conception had 64 priests, distributed throughout 13 residences in France, 5 in Belgium, 2 in Luxembourg 1 in Portugal, and one in Holland, just mentioned.

### STATISTICS AND THE ACTUAL PASTORAL CARE OF THE PROVINCE

According to 1973 statistics, in order of number, immigrants in France were

Algerians	798,690	Tunisians	119,546
Portuguese	742,894	Poles	108,264
Spaniards	608,759	Yugoslavians	75,828
Italians	573,817 (in 1978: 586,660)	Belgians	65,428
Moroccans	218,146	Turks	24,531

1972 statistics show that Luxembourg with a population of 348,200 had:

Italians	23,000	Germans	7,800
French	9,000	Belgians	7,000
Portuguese	25,000 (estimate of 1974)		
In Belgium there were:			
Italians	328,924	Greeks	23,418
Spaniards	67,058	Turks	66,563
Moroccans	92,479	Portuguese	13,433

Italians have generally climbed over the crucial stage of emigration, characterized by the basic needs of survival such as work and lodging, and are now in a position that enables them to take an ever more active part in the political, social and religious life of the nation

that hosts them. The Italian Catholic Missions no longer carry the notes of urgency, assistance, and civil service of earlier times. They are called, instead, to form in Italians a sense of involvement by which an exchange of values is made possible that redeems and enhances the worth of migrants. Their task is to sensitize the local Church and society to the respect and appreciation of such positive contribution without risking destroying them through a too rapid and indiscriminate process of assimilation. Furthermore, they will enkindle in the Italian communities the spirit of solidarity with the more recent and needy immigrants.

Amongst the latest arrivals, Spaniards and Portuguese deserve a special attention. The Spaniards, however, are sufficiently organized both as regards religion and social assistance. But the Portuguese are still in a state of emergency in all respects. And so, as mentioned already, the Scalabrinians began to devote themselves to them too. Still more painful are the conditions of North Africans! The missionaries are here confronted with a problem complicated by differences of religion, mentality and race. In general, they have only the possibility of an encounter by which to show esteem and appreciation, and of forming the Italians to a disposition of acceptance and solidarity.

In the French Province one notices the tendency to go beyond ethnicity, though respecting it, and to stress the common condition of immigrants as workers: a pastoral care of migrants is foreseen, therefore, that is strictly bound to a preferential choice for the working classes. In a document undersigned by the national Delegate of the Italian Missionaries in France, Fr. Alfredo Ferrari, and by Scalabrinian Fr. Antonio Perotti, Director of CIEMM (Center for Information and Study of the Mediterranean Migrations), and the state of emigration in France is thus assessed in 1978:

Citizens of the CEE (a juridical position of privilege), long settled in France (360,000 have been naturalized since 1943; 30% are over 60), distributed on the various categories of the social and professional scale thanks also to the strong presence of the young, originating from a country with common boundaries and analogous culture, THE ITALIANS, keenly aware of their solidarity with the working classes and of their diversified cultural status favored by the encounter between two sister-nations, though mediated by the disadvantag-



es of emigration, could be in a position to condition in a positive way both the Church and the government of France by means of their actions also on behalf of other migrants in search of real brothers, who are mature in their own experience and are open to the problems of emigration.

The following facts are meant to be a challenge:

- 1 million and a half Muslim immigrants, 350,000 of them boys.
- 100,000 black African immigrants and 180,000 French immigrants from former overseas colonies (Dom-Tom);
- 870,000 foreign school-age children, 265,000 of them Arabs;
- the large geographic concentration of immigrant workers (1,500,000 in the district of Paris, 500,000 in the regions of the Rhine and the Alps, 400,000 in Provence and Côte Azure);
- exploitation of the immigrants in their work and lodging;
- their being limited to a few industrial sectors and to the lower levels of retribution and professional skills (manual jobs or skill works);
- the increasing frequency of racist attitudes and episodes, easily fueled by a historic context of old colonial relationships.

In the presence of these problems that demand a priority attention (respect of the person, just relations between nations and social classes), an integrated vision of emigration, an ecumenical and cultural openness, the Italian Missions cannot help but become involved in the society and in the churches in which they are, by assuming responsibility for making the Italians play their role as foreigners in a position of privilege and part of the system on behalf of immigrants of later date and from more remote shores."

#### PRINTED MEDIA AND SENSITIZATION

From 1926 to 1971, a weekly in Italian represented one of the most effective means for the missionary work on behalf of Italian immigrants especially in France. It was founded at Agen in 1926 with the title: *Il Corriere - Organo delle Missioni Cattoliche Italiane in Europa* " (The Courier -Publication of the Italian Catholic Missions in Europe) by the Bonomellian Msgr. Noradino Eugenio Torricella, who had a first journalistic experience in Italy, though abruptly interrupt-

ed, because he was antifascist. Msgr. Torricella owned newspaper. This periodical, however, upon the request of Msgr. Babini, was purchased on February 23, 1933 by the Sacred Consistorial Congregation and transferred to the Italian Missionaries for Emigration, that is, to the former Bonomellian missionaries and others Msgr. Babini had under his direction. The weekly continued on as the official publication of the Italian Catholic Missions of France, and Msgr. Torricella remained as its director until January 7, 1944, the day he was murdered. Msgr. Babini immediately sent there Fr. Giovanni Triacca to take his place. Against all the odds of the political situation of the time and of the lack of paper, he succeeded in resuming publication, though limiting it to a bimonthly one sheet. He was, however, able to do so only for a few months, because in August 1944, the French Liberation Government decreed its suspension because it was printed in Italian, even though the Director had kept it strictly religious in nature. When relations between France and Italy normalized, publication was again resumed on April 3, 1947 with the title *L'Eco Missionario*. By the end of the year it resumed as a weekly, and it took a four page format within the following year with the simple title of *L'Eco*. By 1950 it had 8,700 subscribers and more than 2,500 copies were being sold by activists. A special edition for Switzerland began publication in January 1952.

By the year 1953, including the Swiss edition, the number of copies climbed to 16,000. Fr. Giovanni Triacca retained the title of director also after being appointed Provincial Superior in 1951. The actual work, however, was entrusted to the head of the editorial staff. Fr. Deliso Villa became its director in 1957. In March 1953, the weekly was moved to the Italian Catholic Mission of Marseilles. On January 1, 1958, it began to be published in 6 pages and two colors, under the title of *L'Eco d'Italia*. In 1959, it published in 13,000 copies, 4,000 of them for Switzerland. In the same year a special edition, *L'Eco Mission* came to life, incorporating the monthly *Missione*, published until then by the Italian Catholic Mission of Paris. At first it had two editions: one for the district of Paris and the other for the Eastern regions; later on 8 more were added thus reaching 45,000 copies in all. But, in the meanwhile, subscribers to *L'Eco d'Italia* had dwindled to 7,000. Launched by the Provincial Superior Fr. Enrico Larcher, a

promotional campaign brought the number of subscribers back to 8,350 in 1960, while the number of pages had by then gone up to twenty. In 1964 there were 9,730 subscribers to revert in 1966 to 7,370, while the pages were decreased to 16, and then to 12. The first serious difficulties, common to all the Italian press in foreign lands, began to be experienced. Besides, expenses had grown high, the support of an effective promotion was lacking, and even that of some missionaries, who preferred their own local publications. The monthly edition also had fallen to 21,000 copies.

In the spring of 1962, the direction and printing of the weekly were moved to Saint Maur-des-Fossés in Paris. By 1970 subscribers had come down to 6000 and 75% of them were over 60. In 1971 the missionaries began questioning whether this effort was worthwhile. Subscribers had been reduced to 5,000, and the financial deficit was becoming a source of serious concern. In September an attempt was made to stop the drain by making it a biweekly and suggesting that it be taken over by the whole body of the Italian missionaries of France, under the responsibility of the National Delegate of the Central Office of Italian Emigration (UCEI), but the attempt was unsuccessful. Publication was discontinued with the first issue of 1972.

The monthly *La Missione* instead was continued, and in 1972 it came out in a new format, in Italian and French, with 18,000 copies. In 1975 it began to carry the title *Missione - Nuovi Orizzonti Emigrazione*, no more in the format of a newspaper or of a parish bulletin, but as a Christian formation magazine, meant to sensitize emigrants of all nationalities and the local Christians to the social, religious, and political problems of emigrants. In 1976 it began publishing a special edition for Luxemburg; and this caused the *Vita Italiana* which had begun in 1969, go out of existence with its 7,000 copies. Thus, in 1977 *Nuovi Orizzonti-Emigrazione* was published 8 times a year with 25,000 copies. It did not absorb, however, the two monthly publications of Lyons and Belgium. The *Voce Italiana* of Lyons was founded in 1971 and by 1978 it had a circulation of 5,000 copies. *Missione*, instead, had its start in 1948 as a means for binding together the missions and the Italian families of the three coal mine districts of Charleroi, Center and Borinage and as of 1978 it had a circulation of 40,000 copies.

The small monthly *Courier Jeunes*, organ of the Young Community of Strarsbourg began in 1974: by 1977 it was mailed to 1,300 youths. And so, by the year 1978, the overall number of the copies of the periodicals printed in the Province of the Immaculate Conception amounted to 45,000.

The sensitization of public opinion, especially among the decision-making centers of both Church and Civil society, is one of the tasks of the CIEMM (Center for Information and Study of the Mediterranean Migrations). The beginnings of this Center go back to 1973 as a part-time task entrusted Fr. Luigi Taravella. A first impulse was given the Centre in early 1975 with the assignment to it, also part-time, of another priest, Fr. Antonio Perotti. But it was only by the end of 1976 and the beginning of 1977, with the full-time appointment of these two missionaries already partially in charge and with the hiring of two lay associates that this Center of Documentation (Migration Studies) gave start to its present internal organization (of a juridically established corporation) and began its editorial activities beyond the range of the Scalabrinian circles. Up to early 1977 the Center had in fact limited itself to providing points of reflection only for the Missionaries. By early 1977, the two sectors, information and documentation, were beginning to differentiate from each other more and more, through an organization activated by various publications focused on reviews on the French press and of the countries of origin of the immigrants, and by issues on themes concerning the most significant events of the migratory situation. A well planned and very close collaboration developed since early 1978 between the CIEMM, the National Services for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, the local churches, and the GISTI (Groupe d'Information et de Soutien des Travailleurs Immigrés); sensitization and information services are now beginning to expand. The publishing work of the CIEMM extends to include external publications on order especially by associations of immigrants or in solidarity with them. Since 1977 the CIEMM is recognized by the French Episcopate as the center of studies and documentation of the Bishop's Committee on Migration. As of the end of 1978 the question of the Pastoral care of migrants is gaining momentum, something which the two sectors of the CIEMM should better specify. The problem concerns first, the creation and develop-

ment of personal relations between the CIEMM and the sources of its documentation (pastoral care movements, associations or organisms of immigrants or in support of immigrants, workers' unions, political parties, etc.); second, an answer, to be more clearly defined, to the continual requests of information from the local churches (Bishops' Committee and National Service).

Another center of documentation, on a much smaller scale, has been started by Fr. Abramo Seghetto at Péronnes-lez-Binche, in Belgium.



## CHAPTER II

### THE MISSIONS OF FRANCE

#### AGEN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Italian Catholic Mission of Agen (Lot-et-Garonne) was founded in 1924 by the Bonomellian Msgr. Noradino Eugenio Torricella at a time when immigration of Italian farmers, especially from the Veneto and Friuli into the farmland of France's south-west, abandoned by the French was at its peak. Msgr. Torricella thought of reaching out to the Italians scattered around the farmlands by means of the press, and in 1926 he gave life to the weekly *Il Corriere*. Later on he was given some assistants who devoted themselves to the preaching of periodical missions, usually every year, to the numberless groups of Italian farmers. Among them the most noteworthy are Fr. Maggi, who visited 180 parishes in only one year, and Fr. Borsella, who died suddenly in November 1943. On January 7, 1944, Msgr. Torricella was murdered by two young Italians on false pretenses of a political nature.

Three weeks later, Msgr. Babini sent Fr. Giovanni Triacca to Agen, to keep the "*Il Corriere*" going, and Fr. Antonio Bocchese, to preach the missions. The *Il Corriere* continued publication, reduced to a bi-weekly one sheet, because of lack of paper and especially because of political reasons. In August 1944 the French government suspended its publication which could be resumed on April 3, 1947 with a new title: *L'Eco Missionario*, reverting to a weekly by the end of the same year.

Fr. Bocchese preached about sixty missions around the countryside, with no interference from the partisans. In July 1944, he took a trip to Paris and was cut off there by the war. In the following winter, Fr. Triacca succeeded in obtaining with the help of Archbishop Feltin of Bordeaux, the permit for visiting the concentration camps of Italian prisoners of war, to whom he brought the material help of the Italian communities and the Christian comfort of faith. He gave particular attention to the infamous camp of Germignan, the sick es-

pecially; he helped in speeding up their liberation, which was effected in September 1945, while those in good health were repatriated in October. He accorded equal assistance to the Italians imprisoned after the "hunting-down of fascists" carried out upon the liberation of Agen of August 19, 1944.

In early 1945, things settled down, he was able to resume the preaching of missions among the 22,000 Italians of the Lot-et-Garonne's region and to reopen the social service office. In the summer of 1946 Fr. Vittorio Cavaliere came to his help, who could devote himself entirely to the missions among the 300 inhabited centers of the regions of Lot-et-Garonne, Dordogne, and Gironde, where 40,000 Italians were scattered. In summer 1948, Fr. Deliso Villa joined them.

When in 1951 Fr. Giovanni Triacca was named Provincial Superior, Fr. Villa was put in charge of the L'Eco and Fr. Cavaliere was made director of the mission. In 1953, the L'Eco was moved to Marseilles. After Fr. Saraggi's temporary tenure, Fr. Ilario Fiorese became director of the mission, succeeded in 1958 by Fr. Luigi Lorenzato. In the summer of 1962, the Scalabrinians moved out of the mission of Agen.

#### AVIGNON: CATHOLIC MISSION

The religious care of the Italian immigrants of the region of Vaucluse was started by the Capuchins of the Province of Genoa. In 1921 Fr. Saverio preached the Easter mission in the parish "des Carmes" in Avignon. His confreres paid ever more frequent visits to the Italians, and in 1950 the Italian missionary of Nimes, Fr. Gazzola, criss-crossed frequently the region visiting and preaching missions. Beginning with 1958-59, the Capuchin Fr. Albino of Taggia, whose dynamism is still remembered today by Italians, took up permanent residence in Avignon and founded the Italian Catholic Mission on Rue Paul Sain 35, building there a large church and various premises. For more than ten years he had the help of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Incarnate Word of Fiesole. In 1975 the Capuchins withdrew from the mission, probably because their pastoral approach, of a traditional type, did not meet with the demands of the one adopted by the diocese.



In compliance with an invitation from the Archbishop and the National Service for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, the Scalabrinians took over in June 1976 this mission and the pastoral care of the immigrants of the diocese of Avignon, and placed Fr. Mario Stefani in charge of it. He fixed his residence at the Italian Catholic Mission on July 9, 1976, though still remaining a part of the Scalabrinian community of Marseilles. By an agreement with the diocese, Fr. Stefani took care of all immigrants of the Vaucluse region. In 1977 they amounted to about 42,000, thus distributed: 17,000 Spaniards, 7,500 Algerians, 5,500 Moroccans, 5,181 Italians (and an equal number of Italian origin), about 1,500 Tunisians and 1,000 Portuguese. Of them, 18,500 immigrants were employed in farming, and 7,500 in construction.

The pastoral action of the mission of Avignon is fully integrated with that of the diocese which devotes special attention to the working classes, having catechesis as its principal aim. The missionary is also the diocesan subdelegate for migrants.

#### CARRIÈRE-SUR-SEINE: PARISHES OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND OF OUR LADY OF RÉVEIL MATIN - PORTUGUESE CATHOLIC MISSION

Already for a good number of years the Scalabrinians had been caring for about the 10,000 Italians of Carrière-sur-Seine and surrounding countryside. In 1950, Fr. Silvio Stefanelli had organized there a group of Catholic Action. In February 1962, Bishop Alexandre Renard of Versailles, pointing out the scarcity of priests in his diocese, asked the Scalabrinians to set up a community that would assume the task of assisting the 30,000 Italians living in it, while staffing at the same time, a territorial parish. Both the General and Provincial Administrations showed interest in the proposal in view of attempting an experiment utterly new in France: taking charge of a territorial parish with the attached *missio cum cura animarum* for Italians. In July 1962, the Bishop of Versailles made good his proposal by offering the parish of Carrière-sur-Seine with its 8,200 members. The old neighborhood stood cuddled around the parish church of St. John the Baptist, inhabited by people employed in growing legumes and by workers, and surrounded by a vast zone of bungalows and by land divided into lots for the construction of 1,200 homesteads. There

existed in the midst of the bungalows a chapel dedicated to St. Maria Goretti, and the diocese was conducting the procedures for the purchase of a piece of land among the building under construction for a new church that was to become the seat of the parish of Réveil-Matin. Abbé May, a sickly priest, had been pastor there for eleven years. The Scalabrinians accepted the parish as an experiment for one year, and appointed to it, Frs. Walter Pigato and Italo Chiarot, respectively as Pastor and Assistant, on September 15, 1962. At first they had to care only for the parish; then, as soon as a third priest should be available, the *missio cum cura animarum* for Italians would be established. The occasion came in the following year when a certain Fr. Pietro Belforti offered his services and he was appointed personal pastor for the Italians on October 12, 1963: on the same day the mission cum cura animarum for the region between Argenteuil and Poissy was also erected.

At the close of the experimental year, a deal was stipulated on March 31, 1965, with the chancery of Versailles for the handing-over of the parish of Carrières to the Scalabrinians for three years with the possibility of renewal. The rectory, in miserable conditions, was restored in the same year, and construction was started on the new church of Notre-Dame of Réveil-Matin, which was to become the parish church. The new church was blessed on September 24, 1966 by Archbishop Bernard of Versailles. But both parishes were kept under one administration: while remaining pastor of St. John the Baptist, Fr. Pigato was also named acting pastor of Réveil-Matin.

However, the care of the new parish was actually entrusted to Frs. Luigi Taravella and Gino Dal Fitto. Meanwhile, Fr. Belforti, who had been a missionary in Brazil, already in 1963, had started taking an interest in the Portuguese immigrants, arriving by the hundreds. Also coming in from Brazil, Fr. Giuseppe Magrin arrived in 1966. And so a Catholic Mission was opened in 1967 for the Portuguese: immigrants of the Vallee de la Seine, then amounting to 11,000. The mission was canonically recognized by the diocese on October 11, 1968. In 1971, Fr. Magrin moved to Portugal and the Portuguese mission was taken over by Fr. Giuseppe Fochesato, assisted by Frs. Belforti and Luigi Vaghini. The latter was appointed its director in 1977 with Fr. Gelmino Costa as his assistant, one of the three Brazilians who had com-

pleted their theological studies at Freiburg, Switzerland. Another one of them, Fr. Pedro Granzotto was assigned to the Portuguese Mission of Luxemburg, and the third, Fr. Vilson Zanini, to the community of Amora in Portugal.

The direction of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, instead, was entrusted to Fr. Rino Amabiglia from 1970 to 1972, and then to Fr. Gino Dal Fitto. Since 1976 Fr. Raffaele Zanella is serving as "aumônier" of the "Jeunesse Chretienne" (J.O.C.) as member of a team of diocesan priests. To the end of devoting more personnel to the care of migrants, in 1978 the parish of Réveil-Matin was returned to the chancery of Versailles.

### CHAMBERY: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Italians of Savoy had been given religious assistance from the early years of twentieth century by the diocesan priests of Turin who were travelling to Chambéry on the most important festivities of the year. Later on Bishop Bonomelli's Institute opened there an office of social assistance (secretariat) and in 1927 bought for this purpose a building with 15 rooms in downtown on Rue St. Real, 6. Its first missionary, Fr. Vignola built in 1929 the hall for social and recreational activities. In 1930, the premises were taken over by the Fascist Secretariat; in the same year Fr. Forte founded the Italian Catholic Mission on Rue du Laurier. In 1944, the French Government confiscated the buildings of Rue du Laurier and Fr. Forte was forced to leave Chambéry. In 1949, French authorities returned the premises not to the legitimate owners, represented by the National Association for the Support of Italian Missionaries, but to the Italian Consulate. In 1954 the National Association, heir to the Bonomelli Institute, regained ownership of the building and in April 1955 rented it to the Scalabrinian missionaries.

They had accepted the Mission of Chambéry in 1947. The first Scalabrinian was Fr. Ilario Fiorese, who fixed his residence in the only and poor apartment of Rue du Laurier by the church of St. Benoît, which served as chapel of the Maison de Repos and was granted for use by the Italians in their religious services. Fr. Antonio Bocchese succeeded him in 1950, followed by Fr. Giuseppe De Rossi in March

1952, and in 1953 by Fr. Luigi Tacconi, who in 1954 moved the seat of the mission back to the Rue St. Real, 6. From January 1955 till September 1965 the Mission was directed by Fr. Guglielmo Ferronato, succeeded by Fr. Arrigo Marcato until September 1972. Since then, Fr. Rino Amabilia has been in charge.

In 1967, work began for enlarging the hall and the internal Saint Anthony chapel of the Mission. The kindergarten, with maximum attendance of 14 children, was closed down in 1973, and so the Sister Workers of the House of Nazareth, who had been working for many years in the Mission of Chambery, were free to devote themselves fully to apostolic activities. In the last few years the missionaries have accorded first place to the catechesis of both the young and the families.

Besides the Italians residing in the city, the missionaries of Chambery assisted also those of the whole territory of the region of Savoy reaching them by the regular preaching of missions. The total number of Italians was estimated at 15,000 in 1950 and 18,000 in 1966: of whom 60% immigrants after WWII.

#### FONTENAY-TRÉSIGNY: "MAISON DE RETRAITE" AND "CENTRE D' ACCUEIL"

In 1953, plans were made to enlarge the home for Italian ladies of St. Maur-des-Fossés, but high costs called for a different strategy. Charged with the task, in October of the same year Frs. Silvio Stefanelli and Giovanni Guadagnini fell upon a profitable occasion: the Castle d'Ecoubly, in the municipality of Fontenay-Trésigny (Seine-et-Marne) was up for sale for one third the sum budgeted for an addition to the house of St. Maur: it could host some 70 guests; it was surrounded, besides, by 16 hectares of land on which there stood another three rural buildings.

In May 1964 a sale arbitration agreement and purchase was signed, and so the "Villa Scalabrini" or "Maison de Retraite" (rest home) for aging ladies, with room for 65, was officially inaugurated. The assistance of the patients was entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters. The following priests served the Villa as directors: Fr. Walter Pigato (1955-1957), Fr. Bernardino Corrà (1957-1959), Fr. Vittorio Cavaliere

(1959-1961), Fr. Ermildo Napetti (1962-1969), Fr. Luigi Tacconi (1970-1975), Fr. Giovanni Guadagnini as of 1975.

Fr. Paolino Rizzi resided there from 1954 to 1966 as chaplain. Work was started in 1970 on a new wing, completed in 1974, which allowed for an addition of 25 more beds. The other buildings were also restored, so that the compound can also serve as a "Centre d'Accueil" for retreats, study groups, formation camps, and other activities of the Missions of the Parisian region. The missionaries of Fontenay-Trésigny always took care as they could of the Italians of the area, belonging to the diocese of Meaux, and in 1975-1976, of the Portuguese as well.

### GRENOBLE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Italians of the Isère Region, in great part from the South (about half of them from Corato-Bari) had Fr. S. Falco, of Busca, Cuneo, as their first missionary. In early 1928 he fixed his residence at Voiron, but moved to Grenoble for good in December of the same year. Fr. Marco Camerini succeeded him in 1935 until 1945, followed by Fr. Pietro Solero in 1945-1946. In 1947, a few Italians, former members of the choir, asked Msgr. Babini for a priest. In early May there arrived the Scalabrinian Fr. Antonio Bocchese. In the beginning he was taken in by a private family with an office in the attic! At the close of 1947 the archdiocese rented out to the Mission an old building on Rue du Visux Temple,<sup>4</sup> by the church of St. Laurent, in a section inhabited by many Italians! It consisted of two damp and dark rooms and a garage, adapted as best for the welcoming of Italians. For their religious services they could use the chapel of the La Salette Fathers. The missionary periodically visited the most important centers in the regions of the Isère and the Drome where there were some 30,000 Italians. In September 1950, Fr. Bocchese was succeeded by Fr. Antonio Bilancia. By the end of 1951 the Archbishop requested the restitution of the premises occupied by the missionary; but only in 1954 was it possible to rent a seven-room house on Rue du Lycée, 5, in downtown and transfer their the seat of the Mission at the close of the year. Fr. Attilio Bersani became its rector in July 1956; in 1962 he was replaced temporarily by Fr. Giovanni Bernardi, who was joined in 1963 by Fr.

Bilancia. In 1964 the Mission was entrusted to Fr. Enrico Larcher, succeeded in July 1965 by Fr. Mario Stefani.

Sometime earlier, precisely in 1964, the problem of the headquarters of the Mission had finally been solved. The little chapel obtained in the building of Rue de Lycée was utterly insufficient. On Sunday, the mass for the Italians was said in the church of the Sister Adorers, but it was lent only for one hour and no other service or preaching was possible. Meanwhile, the Italians of the Isère region had grown to 39,000. The attention of the Archbishop was therefore called to the immediate need of a chapel and an adequate locale for the Italians, and of creating the *missio cum cura animarum*. In June 1964, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese offered the monastery of the Sisters of St. Clair, on Rue Anthoard, 10, which was bought in hope for restoration. In 1966 the Archbishop established the *missio cum cura animarum*." As to the building itself, however, it was decided to demolish it and to build a new construction with a chapel.

The new premises were inaugurated in June 1971. At the end of 1974, Fr. Flaminio Gheza was named director. The new building provided space for organizing regular cultural, recreational, and especially educational, encounters in view of preparing a few teams of lay people involved in family catechesis, marriage instruction, and in the creation of communities of faith among emigrants. In 1976, Fr. Gheza was named Provincial Superior and his place at Grenoble was taken by Fr. Francesco Danese.

#### HAYANGE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The first groups of Italians arrived at the industrial district of Hayange, in the Lorraine region in 1975-1980, and they were hired at first as diggers for the huge De Wendel steel plant. On January 21, 1889, Fr. Roberto Biasotti, who was to become a Scalabrinian and was at that time a missionary at Freiburg (Baden Germany) as an employee of the "secretariat for Italian Workers (instituted by Dr. L. Werthmann, founder of the Caritasverband, and made in 1900 the first secretary of the Institute of Bishop Bonomelli) wrote to Bishop Scalabrini:

“Professor Werthmann Erbisch. Geistl. Raht and President of this Secretariat instructed me to write to your Most Illustrious and Reverend Lordship to solicit a special favor. There live in Luxemburg and in German Lorraine about 10,000 Italian workers employed in iron mines and in steel mills. They keep steadily rotating unable to resist for long in such heavy work and roam around France, Belgium and Germany picking up the worst vices wherever they go and retaining none of the Christian ways brought along from Italy! It would be necessary in those regions that an Italian missionary should reside permanently, who, changing residence from Sunday to Sunday, may take spiritual care of the Italians living at Gross Moyevre, Clouange, Hayange, Knutange, Audun-le-Tiche, in Villerupt, Thil-Marne, Husigny in France; the towns of the Lotharingia region; Esch-sur-Alzette, Dudelange, Rumlange, Oberkorn in Luxemburg; in each which there are about 1000 Italian workers together with six or seven hundred more Italian women. This way, these workers could have the missionary at least once every two months. The Secretariat would pay for all travel, room and board, and day-to-day expenses the missionary should incur in the exercise of his ministry; so also he would be accorded a mass offering of at least one mark each and paid trips to Italy should he choose to spend there the two or three coldest months of the year. The bishops of Metz, Nancy, and Luxemburg would be glad to grant the missionary all the faculties needed for the pastoral care; the pastors also would gladly give hospitality to him for the days he should need to stay. All this we know from statements made by bishops and priests.

The president of this secretariat hopes that Your Most Illustrious and Reverend Lordship, who does so much for Italian emigrants, will send here one of your Congregation of St. Raphael or other you may deem qualified, and more so because amongst so many Italian workers quite a few come from your diocese of Piacenza.

Kindly asking for your prompt answer so as to give us time to work out a definite plan, I, the undersigned, also on behalf of Prof. Werthmann, present to you my most respectful and humble homage, and in kissing your sacred ring, I profess myself of Your Most Illustrious and Reverend Lordship a most devoted servant,

Fr. Robert Biasotti, Missionary”

Bishop Scalabrini did not accede to this request because he had decided to limit himself to the emigrants of America. The pastor of Hayange requested Card. Ferrari, Archbishop of Milan for a priest



for the Italians because the great majority of emigrants were from Lombardy. He sent Fr. Giovanni Battista Ripamonti, who founded the Italian Catholic Mission of Hayange in 1900, when Italians were counted there in the thousands already. Fr. Ripamonti remained at Hayange until November 1904. He was succeeded by Fr. Alberto Ribert of the Bonomelli Institute, who fixed his residence on Rue De Wendel and gave great impulse to social assistance. The Bonomillian Fr. Giovanni Pavesio directed the Mission in the years 1905- 1913. It suffered a decline in these years because the missionary had to commute back and forth between Germany and Lorraine, occupied by the Germans. With the arrival of Fr. Pietro Donadio in 1913, the Mission rebounded. Right after WWI, he obtained from the De Wendel Society the construction of a mess hall for 250 Italian unmarried men, of which he himself was the manager. Alongside the hall a first small chapel was opened and dedicated on December 23, 1920. A bigger one was built later on and blessed on November 27, 1927. The Sisters of St. Giuseppe of Cuneo came to help the Mission in December 1920 and remained until 1940. Fr. Donadio retired in 1942 and the Mission was then turned over to the Scalabrinians.

Fr. Vittorio Michelato took possession of it on October 14, 1942. In January 1943 he was joined by Fr. Attilio Bersani, who succeeded him as director of the Mission in 1947 until 1955. In July 1943, Fr. Luigi Casaril, who had arrived in Germany as chaplain to the workers, took residence close by Hayange and established the seat of Algrange in Lotharingia area, then annexed to the Reich.

The Italians assisted by the missionaries of Hayange were about 30,000. Gradually the number of young or unmarried workers housed in the barracks diminished and families and family homes multiplied. Those of the first immigration, who had arrived from Northern Italy were well integrated already; those of the second immigration from Northern and Central Italy after the WWI spoke current French; those of the third immigration from Central and Southern Italy after WWII retained in greater part there Italian identity. One could say that the mission had assumed the typical status of a bilingual parish, with a chapel for 300 people, a hall, a secretariat, a school, social, and recreational activities. The Scalabrinian Sisters arrived in March 1947, to take care, at first, of the mess halls and barracks. Later on they set



up a kindergarten, founded in 1961 for an attendance of 70 children. Then they devoted themselves also to the visitation of the families and to direct apostolic work. Three Sunday Masses were celebrated at the center and one more each at Thionville and Algrange; in other towns the Mass was said either once a month or every other month. The *Missio cum cura animarum* of Hayange was created on April 1, 1956. Fr. Giovanni Guadagnini was named Director in September 1955. He set up two prefab buildings for a theatre and a kindergarten. Fr. Giacomo Sartori succeeded him in January 1962, followed by Fr. Bruno Zannini in August 1964. The new hall and kindergarten were inaugurated in March 1966. The local press pointed out that it was the only kindergarten in the city, indeed of the region, opened to children of all nationalities and creeds. This activity ceased in 1975. The Sisters were thus free to devote themselves entirely to the pastoral care especially of the families.

Fr. Antonio Simeoni took over the Mission in 1976. Upon request by the Bishop of Metz, the Scalabrinians accepted in October 1973 the direction of the territorial parish of Cité Bosmet within a restructuring plan of the Mission respondent to the evolution of the religious and social conditions of the time: decreasing jobs, urban changes, demands for human advancement and social security, personalization of one's religious experience. In 1978 Fr. Italo Chiarot took over from Fr. Simeoni.

#### LONGWY – HERSERANGE - HAUCOURT: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION AND THE PARISH OF ST. CHARLES

The Mission of Herserange - Longwy was founded by the Bonomellians about the year 1924 for the Italian of the mining district of Longwy and entrusted to the Scalabrinians in 1946. It was a small house on Rue de Paris, 5, at Herserange with no chapel or hall. For religious services the missionaries were using the chapel of St. Luis, which belonged to the parish of Longwy-Bas in the diocese of Nancy. The first Scalabrinian to head the mission was Fr. Mario Consonni, followed in December 1948 by Fr. Mario Schiaffonati and in 1953 by Fr. Vittorio Cavaliere. In 1955, an attempt was made at giving the Mission an adequate setup to make it a functional center of social and

religious activities for the 12,000 Italians of the region, but the plan failed because of the opposition of the local hierarchy.

Fr. Ilario Fiorese was named its director in 1959, Fr. Cesare Zanonato in 1962, and in 1964 Fr. Eliseo Marchiori, who, however, was a member of the community of Esch-sur-Alzette. A decision, in fact, had been reached in 1964 to close the Mission of Herserange for lack of proper facilities for an effective apostolate. Relations with the diocese of Nancy took a complete turn for the better, instead, following a study presented to it in 1966 by Fr. Marchiori on the religious and political situation of the Italians of the region of Longwy. The report showed that, in the need of finding a solution of their own to their difficulties, especially in the years between 1929 and 1940, the great mass of Italians had thrown themselves into the arms of communists because they were the only ones who had welcomed and helped them. According to Fr. Marchiori, a retrieving action was still possible provided the entire local church were to work in support of and with the Italian missionary.

The problem was submitted to the study of the bishop's Council and in September 1966 the Bishop offered to the Scalabrinians the parish of St. Charles at Haucourt, two and a half kilometers from the Mission of Herserange, with a population of about 3,000, half of them Italians. The Italian Catholic Mission was to retain its character with its quarters, its secretariat always open, and its usual activities in the field of religion and social services, through the ministration of another missionary. The two missionaries would this way be fully made an integral part of the internal life of the local Church collaborating in sensitizing it to a Christian welcome to immigrants.

Fr. Marchiori took possession of the parish of St. Charles on June 25, 1967. In 1973, Fr. Chiarot was appointed pastor, while Fr. Marchiori continued on as director of the Mission of Herserange, taking pastoral care of immigrants of all nationalities also in his capacity as chaplain of the "Action Catholique Ouvrière" (ACO). At the close of 1978 the parish of St. Charles was returned to the chancery of Nancy, while the Mission of Herserange was entrusted to Fr. Ugo Fent for the religious assistance to Portuguese immigrants. In the meantime Fr. Mario Tessarotto, a member of the community of Herserange administered at Villerupt as a worker-priest.

## LYONS: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Started in the beginning of the century by the Bonomellians, the Italian Catholic Mission of Lyons began offering regular services only in 1925 when its direction was placed in the hands of Fr. Ravera of the Bonomelli Institute. He was succeeded soon afterwards by the Jesuit Fr. Pitre, who lived in a modest house on Rue Montèe Fourvières, 4. In 1929, Card. Maurin, Archbishop of Lyons; offered the mission to the Salesians. Fr. Giuseppe Bono, the first director, opened the residence of Place Tolozan, with rooms and facilities in the lower floor. He died in 1940. Fr. Valle had been with him since 1931. Between 1940- 1945 the following succeeded one another: Frs. Vargin and De Rosa, Salesians; Fr. Leo, a Jesuit; and Fr. Divina, a Salesian. At the end of the war, the Salesians surrendered it to the bishop and the Mission was entrusted to Msgr. Domenico Forte, who, in 1950, was appointed Director of the Italian missionaries of Belgium and Luxemburg.

From 1950 to 1958 the Mission was directed by Fr. Italo Padoan; in 1959-1961 by Fr. Dino Donadoni who retired discouraged, suggesting that the difficult Mission be entrusted to a Religious Community. The Sacred Consistorial Congregation sent an invitation to the Fathers of the Sacred Heart who appointed to Lyons Fathers Francesco Gaglione and Giuseppe Persico at the end of 1961: but they gave it up before Easter 1963, because of the usual difficulties of inadequate facilities and of the limitations imposed by the local clergy. During the Easter season the assistance was taken over by Fr. Arrigo Marcato, a Scalabrinian. Upon insistence by the Consistorial, the Salesians resumed the direction of the Mission on condition, agreed on with the chancery of Lyons, which they were to be given a territorial parish. Card. Gerlier placed at their disposal the parish of N.D. du Bon Secours, which, however, had to be directed by French religious: two Italian religious would set up the headquarters of the Italian Catholic Mission in the premises of the parish itself. The experiment lasted a short time. The Salesians preferred to move back to the residence of Place Tolozan, but they withdrew soon after. The Salesian Fr. Chiavarella was in charge in 1964-1965 and was taken out in 1965. Such long vicissitudes suggested the opportunity of entrusting the Scalabrinian

Congregation with the direction of that mission, one of the most important, since in the end of 1964 the non-naturalized Italians of the Rhone region amounted to 29,357. Counting children below 16 and the naturalized ones, the Italians of Lyons and of its regions were estimated to be about 100,000. Most of them had totally abandoned any religious practice. Already in the years 1959 and 1960 Fr. Enrico Larcher had petitioned to take charge of the Mission. When the Salesians declined the direction of the Italian Catholic Mission of Lyons, in 1965, Card. Villot, Archbishop of Lyons, and his Auxiliary Bishop Ancel agreed on having the Scalabrinians. The post had been held provisionally from June to August 1965 by the Scalabrinian Fr. Luigi Taravella. On August 12, Fr. Enrico Larcher took possession of it, joined, on January 12, 1966, by Fr. Luigi Lorenzato, as his assistant. The early logistical difficulties the Missionaries had to cope with regarded their residence, confined to the fourth floor of the building on Place Tolozan, 21, and with no elevator to reach it; the chapel of the Sisters of Our Lady of Help, lent with much kindness but only for a few hours; the lack of a clear juridical status though the *missio cum cura animarum* had been officially created already in 1954.

In 1966 the Scalabrinians sought a solution to these problems by asking for a territorial parish with attached to it the *missio cum cura animarum* for Italians. But the local clergy held the formula of the zone "vicaires" as the only valid one, that is of Italian priests inserted into the French parishes as assistants or coadjutors. Various attempts were then started in search of a building where to set up a decent Missionary Center, but in June 1970 a solution was found with the purchase of an apartment on Rue Dr. Dollard, 7, at Villeurbanne. The new residence was inaugurated on October 3-4, 1970. However, the chapel of the Sisters of Our Lady Help of Christians on Rue de Crequi, 6, seat of the so-called Italian parish, continued to be used for Sunday services. Another mass was said at the church of St. Policarp, and a third one in the little chapel set up in a room of the Mission, which was also used for the meetings of the various Catholic associations and of the societies of the Mission. Three Sisters of the Congregation of the Pious Disciples of the Eucharistic Jesus had arrived to the help of the Missionaries on September 1970. In 1972, a hall was built for

meetings and other activities, and a chapel in 1977, inaugurated by Card. A. Renard on June 12, 1970.

### MARSEILLES: ITALIAN CULTURAL MISSION

Before 1931, several priests had attended to the Italian communities of Lyons. Special mention must be made of Msgr. Druetti, a Bonomellian, who left Marseilles in 1927 as a protest against the Italian authorities, who had taken possession of a piece of land belonging to the Institute of Bishop Bonomelli to build on it the Casa d'Italia. Fr. Carlo Rossi, the future Bishop of Biella (1937), arrived on February 9, 1931 and he secured a seat for the Mission on Rue d'Endourne. Msgr. Luigi De Biasi came in on September 14, 1934. He further strengthened the Mission and moved its quarters into the center of town, on Rue Senac, 23. In 1935 he was joined by Fr. Ancillotto, and the two canvassed the city and suburbs visiting Italians, preaching missions, organizing a variety of activities. Fr. Ancillotto returned to Italy in 1940, while Msgr. De Biasi shared with the Italians the sufferings of war and was locked up in a concentration camp. In 1947 he was ordered out of France, but the order was withdrawn because all accusations were found groundless; but still he had to retire, on February 20, 1949.

The Mission of Marseilles was then entrusted to the Scalabrinians, and Fr. Vittorio Michelato took possession of it on March 13, 1949. Fr. Antonio Guarise came to his help in September, but he was forced back to Italy the following March stricken with a sickness that brought him to his grave in 1958.

Before WWII, the Italian community was flourishing and active. The political vicissitudes consequent to those of the war left an aftermath of divisions and suspicions of which Msgr. De Biasi was also a victim. The reconstruction was slow and the missionaries themselves were seriously put to the test. Fr. Michelato was succeeded in 1950 by Fr. Ilario Fiorese who secured from the Italian government the free lease of the premises of Rue Gurin, 31, presently Rue Jean Cristofol, in Belléde-Mai, the former quarters of the Italian school Dante Alighieri. The agreement was signed on December 1, 1952. The Mission's quarters moved in and a chapel was inaugurated in April 1953

carved out of a room of the building. In the same month the administration of the weekly *L'Eco di Italia* was transferred there until 1962.

In September 1953, the picture arrived of Our Lady of Pompeii, venerated as the Patroness of the Mission, and at the end of the year the Scalabrinian Sisters too came in, who, among other things, took charge of the public dormitory with some twenty beds, as a condition posed by the Italian government at the signing of the lease on the building. At the close of 1953 Fr. Fiorese was replaced by Fr. Giuseppe De Rossi. On December 15, 1953 the Mission was officially erected into a *missio cum cura animarum* for the 50,000 Italians of the city and of the region of Bouches-du-Rhone.

In September 1955, Fr. De Rossi left the post to Fr. Cesare Zanonato because of illness. Many of the 30 annual missions usually preached in the course of the year for Italians in the various cities were discontinued one by one: only the three Sunday Masses of the Mission's chapel remained with another for the Italians of La Ciotat, and one for those of L'Estaque.

The new director, Fr. Rino Amabiglia, arrived on February 2, 1962. In 1964, a kindergarten was opened for 50 children in the premises left vacant by the closing down of the public dormitory, with the approval of the Italian government, and by the transfer of the *L'Eco d'Italia* to Paris. Works had to be done in 1968 for the strengthening of the chapel's foundations resting on shifting ground.

Fr. Giovanni Bianchi became director of the mission in January 1971. In 1977 the kindergarten was discontinued. The pastoral care became devoted to finding and creating "communities of faith", diligently directed afterwards, in the region of the Rhone's delta, with an actual population of 33,000 Italians.

## MULHOUSE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

In 1947, Bishop Weber of Strasbourg asked Msgr. Babini for some priests and sisters for the Italian immigrants of the Upper and Lower Rhine valley. In 1950, Fr. Francesco Milini, Director of the Italian missionaries of France, in compliance with the request of the bishop of Strasbourg, petitioned the Sacred Consistorial Congregation for a missionary and the Congregation offered Fr. Carlo Agorrini, who

arrived at Mulhouse on February 12, 1951. At first he lodged in Abbé Lidy's house, a chaplain of the (ACO) "Action Catholique Ouvrière, and in November he bought on behalf of the Mission a rundown and unsanitary bar on Rue de la Wanne, 1. Another missionary, Fr. Otello Angeletti, arrived on February 15, 1953, but he was replaced in June by Fr. Annibile Facchiano, and in March 1954 by Fr. Mario Balletta. In May 1954, a barrack was purchased at Thann to turn it into a dormitory for 60 workers. The *missio cum cura animarum* of Mulhouse was officially created on August 15, 1964: the same was done at Strasbourg with Fr. Facchiano.

In 1955, Frs. Agorri and Balletta left Mulhouse, replaced by the end of the year by Fr. Pietro Belforti who asked to be transferred the following year. The thought then came to entrust the Mission of Mulhouse, which served 25,000 Italians in the Upper Rhine, to the Scalabrinians. Fr. Eliseo Marchiori received it on August 25, 1957. Fr. Abramo Seghetto joined him in September. The two missionaries lived a year and a half in miserable conditions. Fr. Marchiori launched an appeal for a new location with a new chapel for 250 people. The project met the opposition of the Strasbourg curia, especially regarding the chapel thought to be too big. A compromise was reached: a chapel was to be built sufficient for use during the week, but with flying doors that could be opened to the other ground floor rooms whenever needed. The first section of the Mission was built in 1959, which included the living quarters of priests and sisters, and the offices. Inauguration was held on December 5-6, 1959. Three Sister Workers of the Holy House of Nazareth arrived on December 18. The church basement was inaugurated on December 10-11, 1960. The chapel was open for worship on June 7, 1964, but completed only in 1967.

Assistants to Fr. Marchiori after Fr. Seghetto (1957- 1960) were: Fr. Bernardino Corrà (1959-1962), and Fr. Lino Celeghin (1961-1965). A change of the guard came in September 1964: Fr. Vittorio Michelato was named director, and Fr. Emilio Lorenzato the assistant. From 1965 statistics we find that there lived in the region of Haut-Rhin (Upper Rhine) 17,149 Italians, 4,461 of them at Mulhouse and 1,464 at Colmar, the two most important centers of the apostolic work of



the missionaries since the beginning. The number of Italians was the steady up to 1978.

In the summer of 1966, Fr. Michelato began to experience serious health troubles. He was relieved, therefore, of the office of director of the Mulhouse mission and transferred to Paris. The following year he was admitted to the "Casa di Cura Villalba" in Bologna, Italy, where he expired on November 7, 1967. The direction of the Mission was entrusted to the care of Fr. Emilio Lorenzato, assisted by Frs. Silvio Moro and Luigi Lorenzato. The Sister Workers left the Mission in 1968. They were replaced by three religious of a secular institute, who also left in 1976.

The chapel now serves as a place of worship for all the people of the ward. During the last years, particular attention has been given to the formation of associations of workers in Mulhouse and in the principal centers of Alsace, to bring them later into cooperation with the "Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique" and the "Action Catholique Ouvrière".

#### PARIS: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION OF THE "HOLY FAMILY"

During WWII, Frs. Mario Ginocchini and Giovanni Triacca had to cope with the serious problems facing the Italians because of Italy's declaration of war against France on June 10, 1940. That very night Msgr. Babini was arrested and sent to a concentration camp together with another 700 fellow countrymen from Paris. On June 13, Paris was occupied by the Germans. The missionaries continued to carry on their work of charity and assistance through the Secretariat; to keep in touch through weekly missions with the Italian communities of the city and the suburbs; to visit the sick; to provide religious services at the chapel of the Mission; to perform and especially to regularize marriages (about 900 from September 1939 to June 1942).

Once freed from the concentration camp, Msgr. Babini devoted himself particularly to the teaching of religion in Italian schools. The weekly "La Divina Parola" was increased to a circulation of 18,000 copies. Suspended in 1940-1941, the annual pilgrimage to Notre Dame Basilica was resumed on June 14, 1942, the only manifestation



that for ten years had been able to gather together several thousands of Italians.

By the end of 1942, the missionaries could obtain permission, finally, to visit every week the Italian political prisoners. Frs. Ilario Fiorese and Antonio Bocchese arrived in August 1943. In January 1944, Frs. Triacca and Bocchese moved to Agen, where the missionary Msgr. Torricella had been murdered. Paris was liberated on August 23, 1944. With Italy's armistice of September 8, 1943, Italians remained without leaders, and many of the soldiers who had laid down arms took refuge in Paris. The missionaries assisted them the best they could, giving them provisional room and board until they found for them a safe hiding place in the city or in the countryside. They continued their work of charity also after the liberation because many Italians who had been seized by the Germans for work in fortifications along the Atlantic coast or in other parts of France or Germany began to flock into Paris. The Missionary Fathers and Sisters were generously helped by the faithful of the mission and by the Apostolic Nuncio. In 1946- 1947, the Mission's buildings were restored. On August 10, 1946, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, which owned the mission, had placed it at the disposal of the Scalabrinians without time limit, and on April 26, 1947, the Holy See made out a deed of conditional transfer of ownership. In 1946, with the erection of the Scalabrinian Province that included France, Luxemburg and Belgium, Fr. Ginocchini was appointed its Provincial Superior. Fr. Vittorio Michelato headed the Mission from January 5, 1947 to March 1949 with the following assistants: Fr. A. Bocchese until January 1947: Frs. Rino Amabiglia, Ottorino Andreatta, and Giovanni Guadagnini until March 1948.

The preaching of missions was resumed with increasing regularity in the various wards of the metropolis and suburbs in the months of October-December and March-June. Usually on Mondays the list of addresses was prepared and plans were made on the map for the visitation of the families; on Tuesdays they began visiting the single families: on Wednesday or Thursday evening they started to preach through Saturday night; the mission was concluded on Sunday morning with the celebration of the Mass. Four masses were celebrated every Sunday in the chapel of the Holy Family on Rue de

Montreuil. Other Masses were celebrated at the La Villette or other places, where several thousands of Italians lived. The Mission served also as headquarters for all branches of Catholic Action and a number of recreational and assistance activities. In the years 1947-1948, for instance, 108 Baptisms were performed along with 172 Weddings, 40 First Communions and 44 Confirmations; the Secretariat found jobs for 362 unemployed, carried out 2,624 interventions, gave out many thousands of food and lodging vouchers. The Bulletin, which since 1946 had taken the title *La Missione* reached 29,000 copies. An essential contribution to all these activities was given by the nuns from Bergamo, who were a part of the Mission in the years between 1930 and 1970.

In 1948, Mr. Ettore Carozza, an engineer and a devotee of the Mission, launched the idea of bringing into Paris a reproduction of the statue of Our Lady of Loreto. Pope Pius X approved the project and charged the Apostolic Nuncio to Italy Archbishop Borgoncini-Duca, Pontifical Administrator of the Holy House of Loreto, to have a copy made of the statue. The wooden reproduction, clothed in an ancient dalmatic formerly worn several times by the original statue destroyed in the fire of 1929, was brought from Loreto to Rome and blessed by the Pope on May 28, 1949. On the same day it was carried in procession from St. Peter Basilica to the church of the Gesù in Rome, where a triduum of prayers was offered for emigrants. On June 11, the statue was flown to Paris where it was welcomed by the Nuncio Archbishop Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli. On June 12, the Italians came together to pay homage to it in the cathedral of Notre Dame and to listen to the address of Fr. Riccardo Lombardi. On June 19, the statue was taken to the chapel of the Rue de Montreuil Mission, where an altar in her honor was built in 1952.

Fr. Michelato succeeded Fr. Pietro Corbellini as director of the Mission in March 1949 until October 1952, followed by Fr. Rino Amabiglia until 1962. On February 28, 1953 the Archbishop Paris decreed the *missio cum cura animarum* for the Italians of the Eastern region of the archdiocese of Paris. In 1954, a new wave of Italian immigrants, to be employed in construction, began to flow into Paris. They grouped together in workers' camps of the city's outskirts. The missionaries

did their best to assist these new arrivals visiting them and saying Mass every Sunday at the two most important camps.

A piece of land of 1500 m<sup>2</sup> was purchased in 1957, close to the Mission on Rue de Montreuil, 48, in view of setting up a great missionary center, but economic difficulties (the property was handed over later on, to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation) and the presence of tenants delayed the carrying out of the project: the new demands of immigration showed afterwards that the plans had to be redesigned. After ten years of work as assistant pastor and Provincial Treasurer, Fr. Silvio Stefanelli was recalled to Italy in 1958. Since 1953, when a second Scalabrinian Mission was opened on Rue Jean Goujon, the assistance of Italian immigrants in the region of Paris was divided in two sectors: the mission of Rue de Montreuil was given charge of the South-East zone and of a periodical visitation to the immigrants of the region of Aube and Yvonne with an overall total of 100,000 Italians, who until 1944 were assisted by the preaching of missions in the most important places. This kind of apostolate could no longer be held relevant as it did not respond any more to the needs of the migrants themselves, was rejected by most of the local clergy and was called in question by the missionaries themselves as being too superficial and ineffective. An attempt was made at to operate in closer collaboration with the local clergy and with the movements of Catholic Action, and the intensification of evangelization of all those who requested the sacraments and during religious services, in general. As said before, the system of the parish "vicaires" did not last long; according to this system the missionaries, though belonging to the religious community of Rue de Montreuil, were inserted in a French parish as assistants for immigrants of the parish and of the surrounding area.

On September 28, 1970, the Franco-Italian Association Ste. Famille was instituted for the promotion of religious, educational, social, and assistance initiatives for migrants. On June 1971 this Association sold the land of the Mission to the SPIM on condition that in the ten story building it was to build the new premises of the Mission would be included. Work began by the end of 1971 and the new quarters were opened in 1974. A section of the premises was placed at the disposal of the Provincial Administration, of the Services for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, of the operative office of the Commission of the

French Bishops for Emigration, and of the National Delegates of Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish missionaries and for a secretariat office. Though still preserving its identity as Italian Catholic Mission for the Southeastern section of the region of Paris, the Rue de Montreuil Mission was opened to all groups of immigrants in collaboration with the local Church and with the missionaries of their respective nationalities, while serving also, as seen before, as headquarters of the CIEMM. The mission was directed in succession by Fr. Giampiero Ceriani (1969-1972); Fr. Arrigo Marcato (1972-1974); Fr. Luigi Taravella (1974-1977); Fr. Giuseppe Fochesato since 1977.

#### PARIS: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION "NOTRE-DAME DE CONSOLATION"

In 1952, Msgr. Jean Rupp, National Delegate for the Works of Assistance to Migrants in France, succeeded in his plan of obtaining for the Scalabrinians a church in a central location of Paris that was to become the seat of the Mission for the Italians of the North-Western region of the city, for employees of the Italian Embassy and Consulate, for the families of the students of the Italian Lyceum "Leonardo da Vinci and for Italians employed in construction and industry. The church, on Rue Jean Goujon, 23, in the VIII Ward, known as the Chapelle de Notre-Dame de Consolation, was built in 1898-1900 on the spot where, on May 4, 1897, a fire had destroyed the wooden booths of the Bazar de la Charité, killing 136 people, almost all of them members of the Parisian aristocracy. Adjacent to the church the convent was also built of the Sister Helpers of the Poor Souls in Purgatory. The Community of Nuns had decided to withdraw by August 15, 1953. On August 3, they turned over, upon compensation, their shares in the real-estate corporation of "Notre-Dame de Consolation" that owned the building, to the Scalabrinians. Fr. Giovanni Triacca, Provincial Superior, and Bro. Ampelio Menelle, were the first residents. In 1954 they were joined by Frs. Benvenuto Fugazzi and Cesare Molinari. In October the Mission was raised to *missio cum cura animarum* for the Italians of the Western side of Paris. Fr. Triacca was named first pastor *ad personam*, and Fr. Luigi Casaril director of the Mission, on February 15, 1955. In 1956 the latter was entrusted with both positions. In August 1957 the charge was given

to Fr. Angelo Ceccato, succeeded by Fr. Triacca in September 1958, and by Fr. Bruno Zannini in October 1959.

The increasing inflow of immigrants of 1958-1959, made the enlarging of the building necessary which was done by covering the inner courtyard. The new addition was inaugurated on February 27, 1960, by Card. Narella, Pro-Apostolic Nuncio, and Card. Felin, Archbishop of Paris. The houses of the missionaries and of the Poor Little Sisters of Bergamo were also restored. These nuns cooperate and share in the activities of the Mission. Five Masses were celebrated in the chapel on Sunday. Other Masses were offered either monthly or annually in the Western wards of the city, in the suburbs and in the regions of Cher, Creuse, and Loire-Atlantique.

Fr. Giacomo Sartori became director of the Mission in August 1964, but in the summer of 1966 he was stricken with the illness that brought him to his grave on March 22, 1967. He was succeeded by Fr. Silvio Pedrollo who had been named in November 1964 as head chaplain of the ACLI in France. Fr. Benito Gallo directed the Mission from 1969 to 1978 when Fr. Antonio Simeoni succeeded him.

Though located in an area of huge office buildings, the Mission stands in a central position of easy access for the Italian community. It serves as headquarters for various religious, cultural, and recreational associations.

#### ROUBAIX: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

A Catholic Mission for Italians was opened in the diocese of Lille by Fr. Giuseppe Giorgi in 1947. He had several successors, among them the Scalabrinian Fr. Massimiliano Zanella who stayed on for five months in 1959. When Fr. Paolo Sicardi left, the Mission was handed over to the Scalabrinians and Fr. Vittorio Cavaliere took possession of it on June 15, 1962. It was a building with a small chapel on Rue Keber, 32, at "La Madeleine" a suburban ward of Lille. By the end of 1963, negotiations were begun for moving the headquarters to downtown Lille, but then, because of ensuing new difficulties, it was deemed preferable to move them to Rubaix, an important center of textile industries with 700 Italian families, seven kilometers from

Lille. The move took place on May 1, 1964; Fr. Severo Cavaliere joined his brother Fr. Vittorio in October.

Besides the cities of Roubaix and Lille, the territory of the Mission included also those of Tourcoing and Dunkerque, but with only 10,000 Italians, half of them living in Roubaix and surrounding area. The Tertiary Carmelite Sisters of Turin came to their help on October 17, 1965. The Mission was handed over to Diocesan priests in 1969 because of lack of personnel.

### ST. MAUR-DES-FOSSÉS: MAISON NAZARETH

In January 1951, the Provincial Superior Fr. Francesco Milini made the proposal to buy a building for sale on St. Maur-des-Fosses (Seine), on 198 de Creteil Boulevard for a small seminary for children of immigrants. In February the General Council approved the proposal and in March authorized its opening. On April 28 the property was purchased and given the title of "Maison Nazareth-École Missionnaire de St. Charles pour l'Assistance aux Immigres."

Fr. Giovanni Triacca was appointed Provincial Superior in 1951. He pointed out the difficulty the institution would face on the financial level, on the part of the local bishops, who had granted permission to admit only boys of Italian citizenship and not those born in France of Italian citizens because by this very fact they were French, and from the opposition of the majority of the confreres. And so he suggested that the house be used as a rest-home for Italian elderly ladies or as headquarters for the weekly *L'Eco d'Italia*: as for opening a seminary, the project could be discussed at a more opportune time. The General Administration, in December 1951, acknowledged the difficulties and approved the proposal.

On January 7, 1952, Fr. Giovanni Guadagnini took residence there with a small community of the Poor Little Sisters (Poverelle) of Bergamo: in April 14 Italian elderly ladies were admitted. In 1953, plans were made to enlarge the building because of increasing requests for admission: but reconsideration over the excessive price of the project led to the much less expensive one of purchasing the Chateau d'Ecoubly at Fontenay-Trésigny. In 1955, also the ladies who were

staying until then at the "Maison Nazareth" were moved into this building.

The "Maison" has been used since 1956 as a boarding house for young Italian students or working immigrant girls. Fr. Walter Pigato was director of both the Maison Nazareth and the Maison de Retraite of Fontenay-Trésigny in 1955-1957, succeeded by Fr. Bernardino Corrà until November 1959, and then by Fr. Vittorio Cavaliere. By the close of 1961, the house of St. Maur underwent still another change. The administration of the weekly *L'Eco d'Italia* was installed in it with Fr. Mario Zonta as administrator until 1965, and Fr. Enrico Morassut afterwards. At the same time the Provincial Administration also moved in. When the weekly ceased publications in July 1972, the house was sold.

#### SIN-LE-NOBLE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Italian Mission for Italian immigrants of the region of the North, in the diocese of Cambrai was founded by Fr. Pasquale Cucuru, who arrived at Douai in August 1958 and resided, at first, in the rectory of Waziers. Later on he fixed his seat on Rue de Douai, 12, in Sin-le-Noble, in his own quarters, inaugurated on May 26, 1960. A section of the building with a small chapel, a living room and an office was reserved for the priests; the other, with the kitchen, the courtyard and a hall for meetings was reserved for the Missionary Sisters of the Diocese of Fossano, who arrived at the Mission in September 1961. When Fr. Cucuru retired in July 1962, the Mission was entrusted to the Scalabrinian Missionaries Frs. Luigi Lorenzato and Nazareno Savio. Fr. Luigi had charge of the 8,000 Italian, mostly miners, of the Douai district, scattered throughout 15 parishes. Fr. Nazareno, who was succeeded by Fr. Abramo Seghetto in October 1963, had the care of the Italians of the region of Pas-de-Calais, formerly a part of the Italian Catholic Mission of Aras, headed by Fr. Angelo Baroni from December 1952 until November 1960, and then by Fr. Giovanni Dalmasso from September 1961 until November 1962.

The Scalabrinian missionaries withdrew to Sin-le-Noble on December 31, 1965, when the reentry of many Italians to Italy had al-



ready begun and the Mission of Lyons was at the same time about to be accepted.

### STRASBOURG: FOYER DES JEUNES (YOUTH CENTER)

Fr. Bruno Zannini gave start to a program of vocational orientation when he was pastor at Hayange, where he took in two young men in 1968. In the same year he made the proposal to open in Paris a house for some 15 adult vocations, that is, for a community of young workers or young whitecollar employees, who, though continuing in their jobs, should at the same time live together sharing their experiences and maturing their decisions in a community environment. In 1969, there were five young men at Hayange, and their number was thought to double in short while. The Mission of Hayange could not afford to keep them there any longer, and was not considered the proper place. Strasbourg was chosen, as a "European" city with ample opportunity for employment and centers of learning. The bishop of Strasbourg approved the project, and so a building was rented on Rue Bernegger, 7, and Fr. Zannini moved in with the five young men on February 2, 1970.

The Commission of the Italian Bishops for Emigrants accorded it its patronage *ad experimentum* with the Scalabrini Congregation sharing the burden and providing the personnel. Both contributed equally in financing it, while the ordinary daily expenses were paid by the students themselves.

By 1977, 30 young men took part in the program: ten of them entered Scalabrinian seminaries or continued their studies for the priesthood, thirteen returned to the working world, and seven prepared for service to migrants in various ways. The community, that had moved in the meantime to Schiltigheim, a nearby town, was discontinued in 1977, but the weekly *Courier Jeunes* continued publications.



## CHAPTER III

### THE MISSIONS OF BELGIUM

#### ITALIAN IMMIGRATION IN BELGIUM

Emigration of Italian workers to Belgium began at the end of the past century but it did not reach 30,000 until 1939. Only after World War II, a mass migration began, made easier by the agreement between Italy and Belgium of June 20, 1946. It anticipated the sending of 50,000 Italians to the Belgian mines guaranteeing them a certain equality of rights with Belgian workers, and therefore a degree of social and financial security, though with serious flaws as to initiation into the risky work in the mines, to lodging, and to protection organisms. Improved conditions were assured by the successive accords of 1947 and 1954; but in 1956 Italy suspended emigration to Belgium following the mining disasters of the time. A third bilateral treaty was signed which gave way to a resumption of emigration in 1958. However, a crisis of the coal industry began to develop, in the meantime, bringing about a diminution of the migration flow. Official statistics provide the following data:

Year	Expatriates	Repatriates	Totals
1946	24,653	3,329	21,324
1947	29,881	6,134	23,747
1948	48,365	16,044	30,321
1949	5,311	10,443	5,132
1950	4,226	4,038	188
1951	33,308	9,431	23,877
1952	22,441	3,297	19,144
1953	8,832	593	8,239
1954	3,278	96	3,182
1955	17,073	1,200	15,873

1956	10,395	1,200	9,195
1957	10,552	1,109	9,443
1958	3,947	1,266	2,681
1959	4,083	1,686	2,397
1960	4,915	1,781	3,134
1961	3,152	1,926	1,226
1962	3,141	2,077	1,064
1963	1,626	1,488	138
1964	2,876	1,815	1,061
1965	4,537	2,472	2,065
1966	3,885	2,891	994
1967	3,939	3,127	812
1968	3,749	3,193	556
1969	3,517	3,234	283
1970	3,338	3,260	78
1971	3,582	2,901	681
1972	3,033	3,104	-71
1973	2,716	2,510	206
1974	2,830	2,551	279
1975	2,325	2,636	-311
1976	2,784	2,761	23
1977	2,440	2,904	-464

According to the statistics of the Italian Foreign Ministry, in 1978 the Italian community in Belgium numbered 130,203 immigrants. Migration in Belgium presented negative and positive aspects similar to those of other early mass emigrations: on one side, an almost absolute lack of instruction, a wanting spirit of association, distrust of public institutions, a scarce sense of national pride, an excessive greed for gain; on the other, the spirit of sacrifice, capacity for adaptation, strong family ties, a peaceful disposition, a basically Christian oriented life. Fr. Guido Piumatti leads the series of the missionaries who took care of Italian migrants in Belgium. He fixed his residence at Seraing in March 1928, attended to the 10,000 Italians of the provinces of Liège and Limburg, and in 1933 he founded a kindergarten

under the care of the Poor Little Sisters of Bergamo. The Franciscan priest Fr. Filippo De Sanctis assisted in 1928-1946 the Italians of the Hainaut province with residence at Montigny-sur-Sambre, close to Charleroi. In 1946, when the trains loaded with Italians began to arrive every week, the bishops of Liège and Tournai petitioned the Sacred Consistorial Congregation for more missionaries. Fr. Gino Macchiavelli and Fr. Adolfo Centofante arrived on June 18, 1946, to be joined soon afterwards by Frs. Guglielmo Ferronato, Luigi Zonta and a diocesan priest. Each was assigned to a different industrial district: Centofante to La Louvière, Ferronato to Charleroi, Zonta to Limburg, Machiavelli to Liège. As the number of Italians kept increasing, the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop F. Cento succeeded in having in 1947 a few Franciscans and Capuchins who were assigned to the industrial districts of Mons and Liège and to the care of the Italians of Bruxelles. The Scalabrinians grouped in the area of Hainaut and founded from 1947 to 1952 the Italian Catholic Missions of La Louvière, Maurage, Pèronnes-lez-Binche, Marchienne-au-Pont, Quaregnon-Flénu and Hensies. The secular priests opened 4 missions in the area of Liège, 2 in Limburg and 2 in the province of Namur. The Franciscans opened 3 missions in Liège, one in Hainaut and one in Limburg; the Capuchins opened 3 missions in Bruxelles, Verviers and Enghien; later on 2 Josephites of Asti and a Priest of the Sacred Heart were added.

In 1953, the bishop of Liège created the parish "ad personam" for the Italians at Seraing. In 1956 Fr. Ugo Cavicchi petitioned the Sacred Consistorial Congregation to put pressure on the Belgian bishops for securing observance of the Apostolic Constitution "Exul Familia", because the religious assistance of Italians was almost everywhere conditioned to the approval of local pastors. The work of the missionaries was limited to the visitation of the families, preaching, hearing confessions, baptizing, and performing marriages. They were absolutely forbidden to conduct the preparation for First Communion and Confirmation, and so forbidden were also the popular religious practices so dear to Italian traditions. Finally in 1958, the bishops of Liège and Tournai granted also to the other missions, though with a few limitations the status of *missiones cum cura animarum*.

The Catholic Action began to be organized gradually especially for men, a good portion of them within the ranks of the ACLI (Cath-

olic Association of Italian Workers), while the younger set enlisted in the JOC (Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique). ACLI and ONARMO (National Institution for the Religious and Moral Assistance of Workers) had been active in Belgium already since 1946.

In 1961, ACLI numbered about 4,000 members; in April 1946 it had begun publication of the weekly *Sole d'Italia* with the purpose of opposing in the social field the influence of the marxist weekly *L'Italia Libera*. In 1962, under the directorship of Fr. Giacomo Sartori, ecclesiastical assistant to the Italian Catholic Action in Belgium and associate assistant to the ACLI, the weekly *Sole d'Italia* had an edition of 25 thousand copies. In February 1947, there appeared a monthly bulletin, the *Missione Cattolica Italiana* exclusively religious in character, whose heading became afterwards *La Scintilla*, and finally *La Missione*.

The Scalabrinians of Belgium enjoyed a certain autonomy from the beginning, with a superior representing them, but only as a "first among equals": Fr. Guglielmo Ferronato from 1946 and Fr. Vittorio Michelato from 1951, who, however, were members of the French Province. In the years 1955- 1964, as seen before, they constituted the *Missio Sui Juris Regina Mundi*, together with the Scalabrinians of England, and for some time, of those of Germany; but then they were returned to the Province of France. Fr. Ugo Cavicchi served as first Superior of this *Missio sui juris*, fixing his residence at Marchienne-au-Pont on May 1, 1955. He was succeeded by Fr. Vittorio Michelato on July 24, 1957, and by Fr. Luigi Casaril on August 31, 1961. In 1962, the region entrusted to the Scalabrinians in the diocese of Tournai included 60,000 Italians out of 175,000 living then in Belgium. By 1978 there were double that number.

## LA LOUVIÈRE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The first Scalabrinian missionary to arrive at La Louvière was Fr. Gino Macchiavelli. He had been in charge of the Mission of Seraing from June 1946 to April 1947, and on May 1947 he took provisional residence as guest of an assistant of the centrally located parish of Saint Joseph. In 1948 he moved to the nearby town of Houdeng-Goeg-

nies, where he rented a house for the Mission on rue Card. Mercier, 5. Fr. Giovanni Bernardi came to his help in June 1948.

When Fr. Macchiavelli arrived there were 2000 Italians, but by early 1948 already 10,000 of them were found scattered throughout 30 villages. Local priests were very helpful and offered him the use of the premises of the Catholic circles in the various parishes. None of them, however, spoke Italian, and this way the whole burden was resting on the shoulders of the missionary! In May 1949, Fr. Luigi Zonta joined the Mission. In July all three moved to Strepny-Bracquignies on Rue des Trivières, 30. On November 10, 1949 the pastor of Saint Anthony in La Louvière granted them the use a house on Rue Faugnard, 28, that had been the convent of a community of nuns, while a chapel was opened at the same time in the workers' camp of Sainte Henriette at Morlanwelz.

In 1950, the Scalabrinian team included Fr. Michelato, Fr. Macchiavelli, and Fr. Sartori. In September, Fr. Sartori started the Mission of Maurage. In October 1952, 4 Scalabrinian Sisters arrived, who gave life to the Center of Pèronnes-lez-Binche. A Sunday Mass began to be said in the Greek Catholic church of Camp-Roland in Ressaix.

In 1956 when the territory of the Mission included 16,000 Italians, Fr. Macchiavelli was replaced by Fr. Marcello Bertinato, and, in 1957, Fr. Gelmino Metrini was added to the community. In 1957 the pastor of Saint Anthony placed at the disposal of the Mission of La Louvière larger accommodations: three class rooms and the land around them; but he had to ask for them back in September 1960 for the needs of the school. In the meantime, the missionaries moved to Rue de Bouvy, 141. The problem of a suitable residence was finally solved in 1965 with the purchase of a house on Rue de Bouvy, 112, that was inaugurated in March 1966. In the same year 4 religious of the Secular Institute of Missionaries of the Royal Priesthood of Christ arrived at the Mission. The following served as directors of the Mission: Fr. Cesare Zanconato, from September 1964; Fr. Gelmino Metrini, 1966-1968; and later Fr. Vittorio Cavaliere. About 20,000 Italians were still living in 1978 in the territory of the Mission, scattered throughout in 15 parishes.

## MAURAGE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Mission of La Louvière worked always in close contact with that of Maurage, only 9 km away. In 1951, the director, Fr. Giacomo Sartori, chose as his particular field of work Maurage, that had a group of 3,000 Italians, lodged in the “lager” of Clos Rivaux, the most famous prisoners’ concentration camp in Belgium. With the help of the Belgian priests Six and Juniaux, respectively pastor and assistant of Maurage, Fr. Sartori was able to take possession of this mission as “vicaire” and director, in September 1951. In 1952 he was joined by Fr. Ottorino Andreatta. The Franciscan Sisters of the Child Jesus arrived at the end of the same year.

Fr. Sartori was transferred to Marchienne-au-Pont and replaced by Fr. Severo Cavaliere in January 1953; followed by Fr. L. Zonta in 1955; Fr. A. Centofante in 1956; and Fr. A. Andreatta in 1958.

The gradual dismantling of the barracks of Camp Clos Rivaux and the building in their stead of the “cités”, or projects for public housing began in 1958. The coal mines were closed in 1962. Yet, the number of Italians remained practically unchanged and larger than that of the native Belgians: many, in fact, bought the houses offered for sale by the owners of the mines. The closing down of the mines meant the loss of revenues for the nuns, who were thus forced to leave Maurage. Fr. Silvio Moro directed the Mission in 1963-1965, while serving also as regional chaplain of the ACLI and of Catholic Action.

## PÉRONNES-LEZ-BINCHE: ITALIAN MISSIONARY CENTER

Also the Italian Missionary Center of Péronnes-lez-Binche has close ties with the Mission of La Louvière, 9km away. In 1952, the Missionaries of La Louvière summoned the help of the Scalabrinian Sisters, who arrived on October 14, 1952 and fixed their residence at Péronnes-lez-Binche on Chaussée Bruneault, 50, for the assistance of some 5,000 Italians living in the region. In the same year the mass began to be said in a chapel of Camp Roland in Ressaix. In the summer of 1960, the administration of the mines of Ressaix placed a “cantine” on Rue Quinteau, at the disposal of the Mission; it was turned into a chapel and the Italian Missionary Center, inaugurated on December

18 of the same year. There the Scalabrinian Sisters fixed their residence. In 1970, Fr. Abramo Seghetto began residing there permanently and the building was purchased by the Scalabrinians. The Sisters withdrew in 1973, but it was decided to hold on to the property where Fr. Seghetto started to a Documentation center even though the region lost some importance because of the closing of the mines.

### MARCHIENNE-AU-PONT: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Marchienne-au-Pont lies on the outskirts of Charleroi, head city of the coal industry of the same name. Before the WWII, there were a few Italians, but these were joined by great numbers of them afterwards. Their religious assistance was provided by the Franciscan Fr. Filippo De Santis. The first Scalabrinian, Fr. Guglielmo Ferronato, arrived in 1946, and received hospitality in the convent of the Sisters of the Saint Joseph Orphanage at La Docherie.

In October 1947, he could move into a residence of his own on 87, Rue Jean Jaures, in Dampremy where he was reached in 1948 by Fr. Zonta who had been residing until then at Zwartberg in the Limburg region. In 1949 he was given by the Mine Corporation the free lease of a spacious building with chapel and meeting rooms on Rue du Chatelet, 7 at Marchienne-au-Pont. But Fr. Ferronato and Fr. Angelo Girardi had to surrender this residence, taken over by the ONARMO and move into one on Rue Gen. Gillain, 106, owned by the Mine Society.

Until then the missionaries used to say the Sunday Mass for the Italians of Marchienne and Marceau in the Chapel of St. Rita on the road leading from Charleroi to Mons. But as the need for a residence and a place of worship of their own was growing increasingly urgent, they bought in 1951 a property on Route de Mons, 73. Fr. G. Sartori was assigned to Marchienne in 1953, and devoted himself to the construction of a chapel. Begun in November 1954, work were completed in July 1955; Bishop Giuseppe Pronti of Nocera Umbra, Italy, consecrated the main altar on July 9, and a procession of 3,000 Italians brought the statue of St. Maria Goretti to the new chapel on the following day. On April 6, 1958 the chapel was declared the seat of the *missio cum cura animarum* for the Italians of the Deaneries

of Marchienne, Beaumont, Fontaine-L'Evêque, Thuin, Solre-sur-Sambre, Jumet and Gosselies.

On August 8, 1956, Fr. Silvio Moro, who was in charge of the Mission in 1955-1962, was the first Italian to arrive at Marcinelle, the place of the mine disaster that took the lives of 262 miners, 136 of them Italian. By the end of 1957, Fr. Angelo Toniolo fell sick and was taken to Arco, where he died on March 14, 1960. A house was bought in 1959 on Rue Gen. Gillain 74 to serve as the seat of Mission. Fr. Giovanni Bianchi was named its director in 1962, followed by Fr. M. Bertinato in 1964.

The Deaneries of Jumet and Gosselies were detached from the Mission in 1962 with the creation of the Mission of Jumet. In 1966 another revision of circumscription's boundaries took place. Yet, the Mission still included more than 20,000 Italians. Besides the three Sunday Masses of the Chapel of St. Maria Goretti, others were said every Sunday in the parishes of Anderlues, Fontaine-l'Evêque, Montsur-Marchienne, Trazegnies, Courcelles-Saouvret, Montigniesle-Tilleul, and at the Circle of Goutroux. In other places, religious service was insured for the most important feasts of the year.

The Missionary Sisters of the Royal Priesthood of Christ arrived in 1966, the year construction began on the new residence of the Mission side by side with the chapel of St. Maria Goretti. It was inaugurated on September 3, 1967 by Bishop Himmer of Tournai. In 1971 the old residence of Rue Gen. Gillain was sold, since the Missionary Sisters had left in 1969. Fr. Gelmino Metrini served as Director of the Mission in 1970-1973, succeeded in 1973 by Fr. Silvio Moro.

22,000 Italians were served as of 1978: they were distributed throughout 15 townships belonging to the deaneries of Marchienne-au-Pont, Fontaine-l'Evêque, and Marcinelle. The Mission became also headquarters to the ACLI of the Province and numerous other associations.

## QUAREGNON: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The first Scalabrinian Missionary to take care of the Italians of the Borinage industrial district was Fr. Adolfo Centofante, who in 1946 fixed his residence at Cuesmes in the convent of the Sisters of



the Immaculate Conception on Grand Rue 2. In 1948, the seat was transferred to Flénu; then to Quaregnon in 1953, on Rue L. Caty 67; and then the residence in Rue de Wasmuel 2 was purchased in 1954 when Fr. Centofante was joined by Fr. Luigi Zonta. In 1956-1964, the Mission was under the direction of Fr. Severo Cavaliere, who in 1956 began construction on the chapel and hall, inaugurated on September 15, 1957. On April 6, 1958, the mission was made a *missio cum cura animarum* for the 20,000 Italians of the Borinage district. On October 18, 1959, the Franciscan Sisters of St. Onofrio of Rimini arrived at Wasmuel to help in the assistance of migrants at a particularly delicate moment. A number of mines had been closed down but the Italians in general were not returning home because they waited for their pensions and family subsidies or were sick with silicosis or their children attended Belgian schools.

Another missionary center was opened at Hensies; besides Hensies, it included also the town of Boussu-Bois. About 7,000 Italians lived there; lodged in workers' barracks, indeed, true concentration camps. In the years 1956-1960, in the modest house adapted as the seat of the Mission, there lived Fr. Romano Pallastrelli, who contributed much in soothing the ills of those miners incapacitated by silicosis, by the ever present threat of mine accidents and by contracts binding them to work inside the mines for ten years. Fr. Emilio Lorenzato succeeded him in February 1960 and Fr. Gelmino Metrini in September 1963. In the summer of 1964 the Mission of Hensies was handed over to a Franciscan.

In September 1964, a change of the guard took place at Quaregnon between Fr. Severo Cavaliere and Fr. Giovanni Bianchi who directed the Mission until 1968; he was succeeded by Fr. Guglielmo Ferronato, followed in 1971 by Fr. Rino Gnesotto. The chapel was restructured in 1967. In 1971, the Mine Corporation, owner of the premises, put them up for sale. The main portion of the property was purchased by the Sisters, and the Missionaries bought the small house nearby. About 30,000 Italians were living there as of 1978.

As pointed out before, before fixing their residence at Quaregnon, the Scalabrinians assigned to the immigrants of the Borinage district had set up their quarters at Flénu in 1948-1953, at which time, in order to put an end to certain disputes arisen between Fr. Centofan-

te and several associations of Flénu, the Bishop of Tournai sent to this parish Fr. Panarotto, a Belgian priest of Italian extraction, but he was transferred to another place in January 1963, and the Chancery charge one of the Scalabrinian missionaries of Quaregnon to resume the care of the 3,000 Italians of the region of Flénu, though remaining in residence at Quaregnon. In 1968, following the closing down of the mines, the Mine Corporation put up for sale the house of the Mission on Rue de Frameries 31. It was bought by the Scalabrinians to serve as a branch residence of the Mission of Quaregnon, taking care that the presence there of a Missionary be assured every week.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MISSIONS OF LUXEMBOURG

#### ESCH-SUR-ALZETTE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

#### PORTUGUESE CATHOLIC MISSION

The first Italians arrived at Esch-sur-Alzette about 1877 to work in mines and steel mills. An Italian Mutual Benefit Society was founded in 1892 when they were just a little more than a hundred. A chapel was built in the ward of Brill in 1902. After a short stay at Dudelange, the first Italian missionary, Fr. Petronio Luigi Zavataro, fixed his residence at Esch in 1902. Fr. Arnaldo Luera, a Bonomellian, followed him in 1907. He restored the rundown chapel with the help of the pastor Fr. Nicholas Olinger and of his Luxembourgers. The Mission was visited by Card. Andrew Ferrari, Archbishop of Milan, in September 1908, and by Bishop Bonomelli in 1912. In 1914, when WWI broke out, the great majority of Italians, who had by then reached quota 3,500, left the country. They gradually began returning after the conflict, but only in 1927 did they reach 3,800. In 1921, the Mission resumed its activities with the Bonomellian Frs. Mario Chiodelli and Luigi Martinoli who arrived in 1922. As the so-called "Italian" chapel had actually become the seat of the parish of the Sacred Heart, erected in 1913, the two missionaries in 1923 bought a house where they set up a small chapel, a kindergarten with the Sisters of Saint Joseph in charge, and a secretariat, accused, later on, of having lent its services to Fascism, and therefore made the target of terrorist attacks. The secretary Abel Tiapago was assassinated on December 4, 1925, and 1928 Father Martinoli himself was seriously wounded by a shotgun. Following these incidents the mission was closed. It was reopened in November 1928 by Fr. Flavio Settin, who had to abandon it in 1946 for political reasons after accomplishing an immense religious and social work on behalf of Italians. The Mission was then entrusted to the Scalabrinians, who first took possession of it through of Fr. Luigi Casaril on March 19, 1946.

Italians were cold and aloof, and neither was the local clergy too well inclined to them. When the new parish church was built, the chapel the Italians used to attend was demolished to force them to frequent the parish. Fr. Casaril courageously got down to work and built a hall and a chapel, opened for worship on March 27, 1949. The Italians residing then in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg amounted to about 10,000, besides 3,000 seasonal workers; but the Mission was also taking care of another 8,000 Italians living in French towns near the border. It also operated a kindergarten for 30 children under the direction of the Poor Little Sisters of Bergamo.

In October 1955, Fr. Casaril was succeeded by Fr. Ermildo Napetti, already an assistant there since 1952. New rooms were added to the kindergarten in 1956, while the front and lobby of the Mission were restored in 1957. In 1962-1975, the Mission was under the direction of Fr. Giovanni Guadagni. On January 1, 1963 the Mission was declared a parish *ad personam* for all the Italians of the Grand Duchy. Actually, though, the Italians of the City of Luxemburg were assisted by a Franciscan, while the Scalabrinians took care of all the others in the Grand Duchy, and in a number of towns of the French regions of Meurthe et-Moselle (Villerupt, Thil, Canteboune, etc. and Moselle (Aumetz, Redange, Bussange, Volmerange, etc. Besides the three Sunday masses at the headquarters of the Mission, a weekly Sunday mass was also said at Dudelange, Villerupt, Audin-le-Tiche; one every other week at Bettembourg and Volmerange, and once a year in other places. The kindergarten, relocated in a new building inaugurated on October 26, 1973, was attended by some sixty children, still under the direction of the Poor Little Sisters of Bergamo, who were helping the Missionaries also in other apostolic activities, especially concerning the families.

The weekly *Vita Italiana* began publications in 1969, reaching a circulation of 7000 copies. A more appropriate publication titled *Nuovi Orizzonti-Emigrazione* replaced it in 1977. Fr. Luigi Tacconi was named director of the Mission in 1975, with a circumscription now including 16,000 Italians.

## LUXEMBOURG CITY: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

During the summer of 1967, Bishop Jean Hengel, recently named coadjutor of Luxembourg, asked the Scalabrinians to take care of the Italians residing in the Capital and suburbs, who had grown by then to 10,000. Lacking at the moment the personnel available for a fixed residence in the Capital it was decided that for the time being a Missionary from Esch should open a secretariat of social assistance and assure a Mass on Sundays. In 1968, Fr. Enrico Morassut was named director of the Mission of the City of Luxemburg, while still remaining a member of the community of Esch.

On October 30, 1970, a building was bought that was made into the headquarters of the Mission and a childcare center directed by the Sisters of Mother Cabrini and inaugurated by Victoria Leone, wife of the President of the Italian republic.

The *missio cum cura animarum* was officially created on November 4, 1971, for the 13,000 Italians of the capital and of the Northern region of the Grand Duchy. In 1977, Fr. Morassut was transferred to Montreal, Canada and the direction of the Mission was placed in the hands of Fr. Livio Bordin.



## CHAPTER V

### THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION OF ALGIERS

The steady religious assistance to the Italian emigrants of Algiers began in 1934. Until then they had been assisted only occasionally by visiting priests. On December 2, 1934, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation sent Fr. Bernardo Nicola, who fixed his residence on 40 Boulevard de Champagne, and was accredited as an assistant of the Parish of St. Joseph in Algiers. He was able to give the Italians, 3,000 of them and mostly fishermen, a form of assistance very similar to that provided by the Italian Catholic Missions of France, until 1942. In November of that year, however, for reasons consequent to the state of war existing between France and Italy, Archbishop Leyland of Algiers forbade him to attend to the Italian Associations, which constituted the ground work of the action specifically for Italians, and entrusted them to French priests. Fr. Nicola remained on as assistant of the parish of St. Joseph, but his work for Italians had been limited to hearing confessions of his fellow countrymen in the parish of St. Joseph and at the Cathedral: these limitations were somewhat relaxed in 1948.

In May 1954, Mons. Rupp visited Algeria and pointed out to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation the need to replace of Fr. Nicola, up in years by then, with a new missionary, who should revive the religious assistance of Italian migrants in Algeria, especially of the 18,000 noncitizens who lived in the diocese of Algiers. Archbishop Duval, who was new, showed himself willing to implement the norms of the Apostolic Constitution "Exul Familia", provided a new missionary were sent. Fr. Nicola asked to retire in 1956 and the Archbishop promised to grant the Italian missionaries the use of Our Lady of Victory, dependent on the Cathedral, close to the old harbor, and located in an area crowded with Italians, Neapolitans especially. In October 1957, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation invited Fr. Triacca to assign one or two Scalabrinian missionaries to Algiers. In 1958 a decision was made to send Fr. Antonio Bilancia; but the Archbishop,

in the meantime, had given the church of Our Lady of Victory to another religious Congregation and Father Nicola was delaying his departure because of some difficulties with the Consistorial Congregation. Fr. Bilancia could leave for Algiers only on March 30, 1959.

Due to the delay, the apartment promised by the Archbishop had already been rented to other people, so that Fr. Bilancia had to lodge for a month at the Seminary, 10 km from the city. Only on April 20 was he able to settle down somehow in a hall of the Catechetical building adjacent to the church of Our Lady of Victory and in two other small rooms near it. At the end of July he was joined for a short while by Fr. Giovanni Saraggi. Fr. Abramo Seghetto arrived in January 1961.

The missionaries efforts and trust allowed the old confraternities of Mary Immaculate, St. Ciro, Sts. Cosma and Damian, St. Anthony, to regroup with quarters at Our Lady of Victories; and those of St. Michael, St. Peter, St. John, and others, with seat at the Cathedral. Fr. Bilancia, who had courageously carried on his ministry in the midst of the bloody fighting taking place around his church, secured a temporary apartment from the Algerian government and devoted himself to the care of the wounded, the sick, and the poor. Because of the war and its aftermath, however, almost all the Italians repatriated or emigrated to France, especially to the South.

With only a few employees remaining at the Italian Embassy and Consulate, the Mission was closed in 1963.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE MISSIONS FOR THE PORTUGUESE

#### CARRIÈRES-SUR-SEINE: PORTUGUESE CATHOLIC MISSION

The Portuguese Catholic Mission of Carrières-sur-Seine traces its beginnings to September 1963 with the arrival of Fr. Pietro Belforti. He had lived in Brazil for a time, where he had the opportunity to learn Portuguese, and began taking care of the numerous Portuguese migrants of the parish of Saint John Baptist, and then, of other parishes, as well. On Christmas Day of 1963 the first gathering of the Portuguese was held at Carrières, and the first "Easter Mission" for migrants from Portugal was preached at Easter 1964. In 1965, Fr. Belforti organized a local branch of the ASTI (Association Solidarité Travailleurs Immigrés), a movement of French laymen and immigrants working for solidarity with and among immigrants.

Following negotiations between the Scalabrinian General Administration and the Brazilian Province of São Paulo, Fr. Giuseppe Magrin arrived at Carrières in 1966; he was invited in November 1967 by Mons. Antônio dos Reis Rodriguez, National Director of the Works for Portuguese migrants in Lisbon, to establish official ties with them and to secure the title of Missionary for the Portuguese migrants. The Bishop's Vicar of the Diocese of Versailles, Mons. A. Venard, in charge of the pastoral care for migrants took it upon himself to obtain the rescript from the Sacred Congregation for Bishops, that was signed on May 27, 1968; on his part, on October 11, 1968, the Bishop of Versailles erected the Mission into a *missio cum cura animarum* for the Portuguese migrants of the Diocese with offices in the rectory of Saint John Baptist Parish in Carrières, and named Fr. Giuseppe Magrin a missionary *cum cura animarum* for the Portuguese, and the Portuguese Fr. Pereira dos Santos assistant *cum cura animarum*.

In fact, the territory of the Portuguese Mission of Carrières included the deaneries of Maisons-Lafitte, Argenteuil and Poissy in the "grand banlieue" northwest of Paris and it had several centers of

activities: Carrières, Houilles (founded in 1968), Sartrouville (1968), Montesson-Laborde (1970), Maisons-Lafitte (1968), Romainville (1967), Conflans Sainte Honorine (1968), St. Germain-en-Laye (1968), Les Mureaux (1970), Maule (1970), Mantes-la-Jolie (1967), Garges-Lès-Goncese in the diocese of Pontoise (1968), Vernouillet (1970). The Portuguese living in all these towns and lesser places, in 1970 amounted to about 11,000.

Their conditions were miserable: the great majority were clandestine, and deprived therefore of all rights, they were forced to accept the hardest and least paid jobs. They were socially and culturally unprepared, oftentimes single and far away from their families; poorly housed, and divided among themselves. From the religious point of view, they suffered deficiencies similar to those of the Italians with a folkloric religiosity that did not often reflect a life of faith and with the difficulty becoming a part of the French Christian movements because of differences of mentality and methods. The Portuguese Mission provided for them a Mass every Sunday at Carrières and another one each month at the other places. At Carrières the parish office was open three days a week; at other places, groups of Catholic Young Workers or the like, were organized, or centers for recreation and a variety of activities. At Carrières, besides the ASTI and the JOC, there were offered courses in preparation for the sacraments, classes of French, and several activities of assistance.

In 1969 Fr. Magrin was jointed by Fr. Giuseppe Fochesato, and by Fr. Luigi Vaghini in 1970, both of them from Brazil. In 1971, Fr. Magrin was given the task of opening the Mission of Amora in Portugal. According to statistics, as of December 31, 1969 there lived in the region of Yvelines 35,379 Portuguese: 25,268 of them within the Portuguese Mission of Versailles, directed by Portuguese diocesan priests. A year later their total number had grown to 45,642 and by 1974 to 59,911, equal to 13% of the whole population and to 43.5% of the foreigners living in the region.

## PORTUGUESE MISSION OF LUXEMBOURG

Fr. Mario Consonni, many years a missionary in Brazil, arrived at Esch-sur-Alzette in June 1973. Portuguese immigration into the

Grand Duchy had begun 4 years earlier and it had already reached 24,000 persons. In the first year Fr. Consonni's activity among the Portuguese was limited to a close collaboration with the Portuguese priest Fr. Manuel Fernandes. In September 1974, consequent to the official recognition by the Emigration Commission of the Portuguese Bishops and to the agreement signed with the Bishop of Luxembourg, the religious assistance to Portuguese immigrants was divided into four zones: The Center, the North, and Moselle were assigned to three Portuguese priests: the South, including Esch, Differdange, Petange, Rodange, Niederkorn, etc., was entrusted to Fr. Consonni. In early 1976, Fr. Ugo Fent arrived, and at the close of the same year, Bishop Hengen resolved a question of jurisdiction between the Emigration Commission of Portuguese Bishops and the Scalabrinians, confirming that the immigrants of the Southern region of the Grand Duchy were to remain the charge of the Scalabrinians. In 1977, Fr. Pedro Granzotto, a Brazilian, was assigned to the Portuguese Mission of Esch, while Fr. Fent began devoting half of his time to the Portuguese of the neighboring French diocese of Nancy, for whom the Scalabrinian Mission of Herserange was appointed as their center.

#### MISSION FOR THE PORTUGUESE OF THE DIOCESE OF MEAUX

The pastoral care for the Portuguese immigrants of the Diocese of Meaux was begun in 1975 with the arrival of Fr. Attilio Barichello. The seat of the mission was the Scalabrinian residence of Fontenay-Trésigny. As agreed with the Vicar General of the Diocese, the new Mission was entrusted with the care of the Portuguese of Coulommier, Guignes, Nangis, and Rozay-en-Brie. But the experiment lasted only one year.

#### THE SCALABRINIANS IN PORTUGAL

Portuguese emigration appears as a mass phenomenon similar to that of the Italians. It started by the middle of the nineteenth century: 15,000 Portuguese migrated in 1886, 150,000 in 1969. A particularly intense exodus materialized in the decade 1910-1920. 1,451,763 Portuguese migrated between 1860 and 1930, more than 90% of them from the rural regions of the North; over 80% took the direction of

Brazil. The period between 1930 and 1945 marked a decline due to the closing down of European immigration to Brazil, the restrictions enacted by the Portuguese government itself, and to WWII. Beginning with 1945, the Portuguese migratory flow was directed in greatest majority towards Europe, especially France. A note characterizing the Portuguese emigration, especially in regard to France, is the high proportion of clandestine migrants: officially estimated at 25%, but actually more than this. Some years it was higher than 50%. Statistics of September 1974 give us a summary of the present situation in round numbers (it should be noted that the reports on Brazil and the United States include the immigrants of 1930-1974), together with the missionaries recognized by the "Obra Catolica Portuguesa de Migrações", dependent on the Commission of the Portuguese Bishops for Migration and Tourism (it does not include, therefore, the Portuguese speaking priests, who care for Portuguese migrants without the official recognition of said "Obra", such as, for instance, those in Brazil and the United States. Five Scalabrinians figure in the list, while 14 were those in May 1975, who were taking care full time of the Portuguese in Europe and in America.

Continents	Country	Migrants	Missionaries
EUROPE	France	845,000	22
	Germany	140,000	20
	Spain	26,350	1
	Luxemburg	20,000	4
	England	18,000	1
	Holland	9000	3
	Belgium	8000	1
	Switzerland	6000	2
	Italy	4150	1
	Sweden	1600	–
	Other countries	750	–
PARTIAL TOTAL	1,078,850	55	
OTHER CONTINENTS	South Africa	137,000	6
	Argentina	40,000	1
	Australia	16,000	2

	Bermuda	3500	1
	Brazil	500,000	1
	Canada	127,500	14
	Rhodesia	10,000	–
	United States	150,000	2
	Venezuela	110,000	3
	Zaire	15,000	–
	Other countries	18,000	–
PARTIAL TOTAL	1,127,500	30	
GRAND TOTAL	2,206,350	85	

As in Italy, this mass migration was caused by inability to absorb the population's growth by lack of a correspondent industrial growth and economic structures; and concerning Portugal, one must add the high percentage of young men who migrated to elude the long and dangerous military service in the colonies: hence the phenomenon of clandestine migrants.

Faced with a migration of such great importance coming into close contact in some places with the Italian emigrants, among whom the Scalabrinians worked, it was natural that, following the internationalization of the Congregation officially declared in 1966, to begin caring also for the Portuguese, and that to do so they should also establish direct contacts with their country of origin. On October 31, 1967, Bishop Antônio dos Reis Rodriguez, National Director of the Portuguese Catholic Obra for Migration, wrote to Fr. Antonio Perotti, then a study aid at the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops, after a personal meeting, enquiring whether the Scalabrinian Congregation was willing to open a house in Lisbon and to send its religious to the care of Portuguese emigrants. Negotiations dragged on a long time, so that the final decision was actually put off until the 1969 General Chapter.

In October 1969 Fr. Francesco Milini was sent to Lisbon for a meeting with the Portuguese National Direction of the Catholic Works for Emigration. The Patriarch of Lisbon offered a parish in the most industrialized district of the diocese with a high percentage of migrants; the Congregation pledged a missionary to serve as pastor,

and another who would be a member of the staff of the national direction. Our presence in a parish and in the administration was to serve as the basis for the collaboration with the Church in Portugal on behalf of Portuguese emigrants, for organizing courses or periods of formation for Scalabrinians assigned to assisting Portuguese, and establishing eventually a seminary for the Portuguese who should devote themselves to the service of the migrants of their own country. The agreement was further perfected by Fr. Rodolfo De Candido, Vicar General, in December 1970. The Scalabrinians were entrusted with the parish of Amora, about 10 km from Lisbon, presently in the diocese of Setubal.

Fr. Ugo Fent arrived there from Brazil on March 3, 1971, and was made its pastor. Fr. Antonio Benetti, also from Brazil, and Fr. Giuseppe Magrin from France, joined him in July, the latter being charged with the task of working together with the National Direction of the Works for Emigration. Fr. Pietro Cerantola arrived in March 1974.

The parish of Amora has a territory of about 10 km<sup>2</sup>, with a population of 50 thousand persons, made up of internal migrants, and immigrants from former colonies, and of a minority of natives. The seat of the parish was a small church built in 1451, and rebuilt following the earthquake that destroyed Lisbon in 1775 in the region of the Abentejo. The people of this region had always been neglected by the Capital. A priest started saying mass there every Sunday in 1911; but only in 1947 did Amora, then numbering 3,000 people, get a permanent priest, who built the parish Center of Assistance. He was succeeded by another priest in 1955, who took care of the parish for 16 years. In the meantime it had doubled its inhabitants due to nearness of large industries and to the construction of a bridge over the Tagus River. When the Scalabrinians came, it included about ten inhabited centers: Amora, Corroios, Miratejo, Val de Milhaços, Alto do Moinho, Crux de Pau, Fogueteiro, Paivas, Santa Marta, Belverde, etc. Corroios, until then a chaplaincy of Amora, became a parish in 1973, under the pastor of Amora until 1976, when the Scalabrinians returned it the diocese.

The parish church stands away from the central sections of Amora, one of the causes of the scarce attendance, but brought about especially by the religious indifference of immigrants. The district en-

trusted to the Scalabrinians is in fact a true sumtotal of the religious and social problem consequent to the phenomenon of emigration. On a more central location one finds the Parish Center of Assistance, founded for assisting poor families, the children of workers, with a kindergarten for 100, for meetings, and recreational activities.

Several clerics of the Italian Province and a few priests of the French Province have taken time for pastoral experience and study in Amora, in view of a specific preparation for the missions among Portuguese emigrants. The work for the promotion of vocations has also been started in view of opening a house of formation in the near future.

Made up of three or four missionaries, the Scalabrinian community of Amora was directly dependent on the General Administration until 1975. On December 19 of the same year a decision was reached to join it to the Province of the Immaculate Conception, effective on February 1, 1976.





PART VII

GENERAL DELEGATION

“REGINA MUNDI”

ENGLAND



## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL DELEGATION "REGINA MUNDI"

#### ITALIAN EMIGRATION TO GREAT BRITAIN

In 1975, there were 215,000 Italians in Great Britain, surpassed only by the Irish (720,000) and the Indians (325,000). Made up of political exiles, merchants, craftsmen, and vagabonds, the first Italian community of London came into being in 1820. Only by the end of the century, the whole total of Italians began to exceed 10,000 units; in 1901 it surpassed 20,000. Afterwards, the migratory flow subsided with the enacting in 1905 of the Aliens Act that gave start to the control of immigration, made stricter by the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 and by the unemployment of the 1920s. Italian statistics between the year 1947 and 1970 provide the following data:

Year	Expatriates	Repatriates	Totals: Positive -Negative
1947	365	112	253
1948	2679	2	2677
1949	6592	10	6582
1950	3451	51	3400
1951	9967	75	9892
1952	3522	641	2881
1953	5502	272	5230
1954	7787	1039	6748
1955	10,400	519	9881
1956	11,520	1150	10,370
1957	10,595	1060	9535
1958	6464	838	5626
1959	7360	1288	6072
1960	10,118	1576	8542
1961	11,003	1868	9135

1962	8907	2504	6403
1963	4681	2476	2205
1964	4979	2308	2671
1965	7098	2971	4127
1966	7346	3357	3989
1967	4392	2495	1897
1968	3777	3082	695
1969	2971	2992	- 21
1970	2476	2838	- 362

And so, while in the first forty years of this century the number of Italians in England was more or less at the 30,000 mark, reaching it again in 1950, in the following years the Italian community increased so rapidly as to reach in 1972, still according to data of Italian sources, quota 213,000. In the last years, the Italian immigration to Great Britain has practically ceased, because of the economic recession in England.

Among the regions of origins, Sicily figures first with 46,000 units, then Campania with 42,000, followed by Calabria (20,150), Lazio (19,000), Emilia-Romagna (15,000). Italians reside mostly in South-Eastern England (55%): over 32,000 (30%) of them in London.

Remarkable is the phenomenon of "Visitors from Italy; Italians who spend a period of three months or less in England as tourists, students, or other: they grew from 13,000 in 1948 to 237,100 in 1972.

As to types of jobs: the most significant numbers are found in the service industry (43,000 cooks, orderlies, ice-cream parlors) and in the industrial sector (16,000 skilled and 14,000 unskilled workers).

## RELIGIOUS ASSISTANCE TO ITALIAN EMIGRANTS

In 1844 St. Vincent Pallotti sent Fr. Raffaele Melia to England to assist the Italian community of London. Together with his confrere, Fr. Faà di Bruno, he built the church of St. Peter in Clerkenwell, inaugurated in 1883, that came to be known as the Italian Church. Alongside the church a school was raised for Italians, attended by 700 students. Other centers of religious activities for Italians were: the parish of St. Patrick in Soho Square, the cathedral of St. George in Southwark, the

schools of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of St. Frances X Cabrini in Forest Hill, of the Canossian Sisters in Welwyn Garden City, of the Salesian Sisters, etc.

"In the early years following WWII religious assistance to Italian migrants had a provisional character and was in the hands of zealous priests belonging to Italian religious orders, missionary usually, who had settled in Great Britain for scopes other than the direct assistance to Italian emigrants. We mentioned the Paulist Fr. D. Valente who was the first priest to take care of the Italian community of London with residence at the Church of St. Peter then directed by the Irish Pallottine Fathers; the Combonian Missionaries, who after writing glorious pages in the years of concentration camps, will assume charge of the direction of the mission of Bradford and devote themselves to the assistance of students and senior Italians in London; the Xaverian Fathers who since 1947 helped in revitalizing the numerous Italian communities of Glasgow and of the various cities of Scotland. The revival and a more adequate organization of the religious assistance derived from three events: the arrival in 1951 of the first missionaries of Emigration, led and directed Msgr. Mario Bigarella; the promulgation of the charter "De Spirituali Emigrantium Cura" of Pope Pius XII, that helped solve the dispute over the church of St. Peter in London, which was thus made a part of the Italian Province of the Pallottine Fathers, and regularized the religious assistance to the Italian community of London in 1953; lastly, the arrival in 1954 of the Scalabrinian Missionaries who put to good use the long experience gained in 70 years of work in the countries of a major Italian migration.

Once the old Italian institutions were revitalized, one will have to wait until well into the Sixties before witnessing the great reflowering of associations, clubs, and different other institutions, because the new Italian immigrants will only slowly realize the need for a more closely associated life and go ahead in pursuing it. And so it was that for almost fifteen years the whole organization of the young Italian communities was pivoted on the Italian Catholic Missions that took it upon themselves to promote well-deserving social works such as: secretariats for assistance, kindergartens, societies, after-school and professional classes, sports teams, recreational activities, hostels, and publications.

Finally, in the sixties, convinced they were only filling in for others, the missions decided to turn certain sectors of social activities over to government's or private organisms: school, sport, particular sections of social assistance. It will be from this time on even to our day that there will begin to spring up protection offices, sport circles, general and regional associations of immigrants, the whole of the gigantic structure of scholastic activities,

supported by parents' associations school and family committees, other societies of various kinds, and finally also some government's consultation offices that will end up with performing even representatives' roles.

The Italian Catholic Missions were the organisms that took their place in the midst of the abandoned young communities of Italians with the greatest urgency. The First Missionaries for Emigration arrived in 1951, and the various missions since founded were: Manchester, Birmingham, and Bradford in 1952; Bedford in 1954; Bristol in 1956; Peterborough in 1957; Nottingham in 1958; Lea Valley in 1964; Swindon in 1964; Watford and Worcester in 1965; South London and Leicester in 1966; and Woking in 1971. In Glasgow the assistance activities had been started by the Xaverian Fathers already in 1947. Concern about integrating foreigners into the local church, and a strongly hierarchical mentality that ill suffers equality of two parish authorities, had made the local Catholic bishops somewhat reluctant in granting the Italian religious centers the juridical status of personal parishes as envisioned by the Apostolic Constitution *Exul Familia* of 1952 and confirmed by the succeeding instruction on the Pastoral Care of Migrants of 1969. On the other hand, it must also be said that the missions were not in a position to guarantee the efficiency and continuity needed in the set-up of a parish. For this reason and other valid considerations (density of Italian population, funds available, social mobility and consequent second thoughts on the feasibility of stable structures) the following different type of organization was devised for the Missions:

There is an Italian national parish centered in the church of St. Peter in London, whose juridical status was defined by the Pontifical document *De Spirituali Emigrantium Cura* of 1953.

The Missions of Bedford, Peterborough and London South, directed by Scalabrinian missionaries, have obtained the juridical title of personal parishes, are endowed with complete parish structures (church, rectory, hall and personnel), and gave life to certain works of assistance (kindergartens, associations, hostels, newspapers).

The Missions of Cheshunt (Lea Valley) and Nottingham, though not enjoying the status of personal parishes, have at their disposal sufficient structures for an organized and steady pastoral work.

The other Missions may have at most a residence for the Missionary: at times, in fact, he is a guest of the local rectory or of some boarding school. In such cases, the pastoral care of migrants is carried on exclusively through the local parish structures.

In the fulfillment of their duties, the Missionaries for migrants are an integral part of the diocesan structures, and so they depend first of all on the

local bishop. On the national level they are responsible to the British Hierarchy through the chancery of the Bishop in charge of foreign communities and to the Italian Hierarchy through the Central Office of Italian Emigration (U.C.E.I.). Some Missions have the collaboration of a number of religious orders of Italian nuns. We point out those of them that are most involved in the pastoral care on behalf of the Italian community: the Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth of Botticino; the Dorothean Sisters of Cemmo; the Elisabethine Sisters of Padua, the Pious Mothers of the African Missions of Verona (Combonian Sisters), and the Canossian Sisters.

Without detracting anything from the merits of priests and religious engaged in the field of emigration, one must point out here too the increasing need for the "declericalization" of the Church, a need highlighted by the Ecumenical Council. In emigration too this is the moment of the laity. These are the people who being moved also by a spirit of association, come to the support of the clergy in ever increasing numbers, pursuing an autonomous apostolate of Christian witness while relieving them of so many vicarious tasks."<sup>1</sup>

## THE SCALABRINIAN MISSIONARIES IN ENGLAND

In August 1950 Card. A.G. Piazza invited the Scalabrinians to start considering the religious situation of Italians in England who were suffering from inadequate assistance. In October of the same year, Fr. Francesco Milini made a tour and a survey of England: in London he found 27,270 Italians, 20,000 of them belonging to the old immigration: the greater portion of the new one was made up of 5,000 domestic servants. In other cities: 10,430 Italians lived in Cardiff, Newport and surrounding region; 2,170 at Birmingham; 1,200 at Manchester; 300 at Leeds; 18,000 in Scotland.

According to the data gathered by Fr. Milini, in 1950 there lived in England 61,460 Italians. 20% of them had to be considered completely alienated from the Church; 40% attended it occasionally; the remaining 40% was still faithful to their religious practices. In the city of London, the religious assistance was geared around the church of St. Peter. The pastor, however, was Irish, and the care of Italians was the task of Fr. Ermete Bonomo with the Anglo-Italian Fr. Chiapponcilli to help him. A mass with homily in Italian was said on Sunday

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<sup>1</sup> (U. Marin, "Italiani in Gran Bretagna", Rome, 1975, pp. 132-133 - 145-147).

and the traditional feasts of Italians were also celebrated, especially that of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. There were located several catholic associations and the night school of Italian for children and adults. Fr. Bonomo paid periodical visit also to the Italians in other places. The Combonian Fathers (Verona Fathers) were likewise offering their services whenever requested by the pastors. Fr. Valente, a Paulist Priest, took care of the domestic servants, but his activity was almost entirely taken up by the editing of the newspaper *La Voce degli Italiani*. The Pious Mothers of the African Missions cooperated in this work.

The Xaverian Fathers provided assistance to the Italians of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Also the Consolata Fathers and the Sons of Blessed Luigi Orione, who were going to England to study English, were lending a helping hand. As a whole, however, the mass of Italians was reached only sporadically. English pastors were asking for Italian priests but they were aiming at making Italians their own parishioners as soon as possible to strengthen the small numbers of Catholics.

In February 1954, Card. Piazza informed the Superior General Fr. Francesco Prevedello that the Director of the Italian missionaries in England, Msgr. Mario Bigarella, had expressed his intention to retire from his office for reasons of poor health, and asked the Scalabrinians to take his place. The choice fell on Fr. Ugo Cavicchi, who arrived at Rochdale, Lanos, and took residence on 40 William St., where formerly Fr. Michelotto had lived. From August 3 to September 23 he took up residence in London, a guest of the Paulist Fathers, substituting for Msgr. Bigarella, who having regained his health, returned to his office. Since the days of his stay in London, Fr. Cavicchi used to go every Sunday to Bedford where there were already 1000 Italians. Upon Msgr. Bigarella's return, he asked to fix his residence at Bedford to figure out a way to insure a steady assistance to that group of immigrants and rented a room on Prebend St. The pastor, Fr. Thompson, placed at the disposal of Italians the dining hall of the Catholic School on Priory St. where a Sunday mass began to be said on November 7, 1957.

Fr. Walter Sacchetti arrived in England on April 6, 1955, taking over from Fr. Cavicchi, who had been transferred to Belgium as



Superior of the Missio Sui Juris Regina Mundi which included the missions of Belgium and England. In October 1956, Fr. Sacchetti was joined by Fr. Aldo Montanari and a regular assistance could be initiated also for the Italians of Kettering and Peterborough.

In May 1956, Bishop Leo Parker of Northampton offered to the Scalabrinians the parish that was to be erected in the new section of Bedford on Goldington Rd. When the chapel dedicated to the Holy Cross was dedicated in November 1956, Fr. Angelo Susin arrived from America, who had to devote himself at first mostly to English parishioners, because the Italian community of Bedford continued to attend the chapel on Priory St., in the ward in which they lived. The missionaries, eventually, came to live together in the same residence on 18 Sandy St. In March 1958, the Bishop erected the Missio Cum Cura Animarum for the Italians of the Diocese of Northampton with headquarters at the chapel of Holy Cross: Fr. Susin was appointed missionary for the Italians of the Diocese, and Frs. Sacchetti and Montanari assistants. Following the arrival of Fr. Susin, at the end of 1957 Fr. Sacchetti fixed his residence at Peterborough, where he opened another Scalabrinian mission, declared Missio Cum Cura Animarum in 1963 for the Italians of the Eastern side of the diocese of Northampton. At Bedford the Sunday mass was said for a number of years in the premises of the school; later on a building was purchased located on Woburn Road turning it into a chapel; in 1959 also the residence of the missionaries was transferred there. On the same piece of property were raised the church titled to St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, inaugurated on March 28, 1965, and a kindergarten, dedicated on November 19, 1961. In the meantime, in May 1960 of the direction of the English chaplaincy of Goldington Road was separated from that of the Italian Catholic Mission of Woburn St. in Bedford. In early 1963, the Paulist Fathers handed over to the Scalabrinians the bimonthly *La Voce degli Italiani*, founded by Fr. Valente in 1946; Fr. Umberto Marin was appointed its director. In 1968 *La Voce degli Italiani* took in also *L'Italiano* (formerly *La Squilla*), the periodical of the Italian Catholic Missions, and in 1966 it was moved to London. In 1963 Fr. Susin was elected General Councilor and the quasi-parish of Goldington Road was assigned to Fr. Angelo Bordignon. In 1966 the chapel of Holy Cross was made a parish and turned over to the

Scalabrinian Congregation. In December 1969 Fr. Susin returned to it as pastor. In May 1971, the parish was given back to the diocese.

On August 7, 1964, the 7 Scalabrinians of England (three in the mission of Bedford, two in the parish on Goldington Road in Bedford, two in Peterborough) were detached from those of Belgium and Germany and constituted into the General Delegation Regina Mundi of England, directly dependent on the General Administration. Fr. Walter Sacchetti was appointed Superior with Frs. Angelo Bordignon and Alberto Vico as Councilors. In May 1968 Fr. Sacchetti's resignations were accepted because of ill health. He was succeeded by Fr. Angelo Bordignon with Frs. Alberto Vico and Mario Dalla Costa as Councilors. On December 11, 1969 the residence of the General Delegation was transferred from Bedford to London. On June 4, 1970, Fr. A. Vico was named superior and Frs. Luigi Bertollo and Umberto Marin Councilors, succeeded in 1973 by Frs. A. Susin and G. Meneghetti.

The Scalabrinian Mission of London, the third one in England, was opened in 1966. Fr. Susin had first contacted the chancery of Westminster in 1962, but the project could materialize only in the summer of 1965 with the consent of Archbishop C.C. Cowderoy of Southwark, upon request by the Director of the Italian Missionaries in England, Fr. Menegardi, the successor of Msgr. Bigarella. This way the pastoral care was assumed for the Italians of the south side of the metropolis. The Italian Catholic Mission had its first residence on 175 Clapham Road in Stockwell, where Fr. Sacchetti moved in on January 29, of 1966; in January 1969 it was transferred to the present location on 20 Brixton Road, where the chapel of the Holy Redeemer, the Club-Hall Italia, the offices of La Voce degli Italiani and of OASI (Opera Assistenza Studenti Italiani) were progressively opened and the General Delegation was installed; while a boarding house for Italian girls and a kindergarten were established on Clapham Road.

The fourth Scalabrinian mission had its start on August 23, 1971 in London as the second center for Italians of that region, and precisely of the counties of Surrey and Essex in the dioceses of Arundel and Brighton. Its first provisional seat was on 19 Monument Road, Weybridge, and the final one was opened in February 1974 on 14 Oriental Road in Woking.

The pastoral care adopted by the Scalabrinians in England was geared around stable structures, better suited for that type of migrants, permanent yet closely tied with Italy. The Missions were organized as centers endowed with social and religious structures from which their activities could be extended to the city and towns around on a diocesan dimension. By the very nature of circumstances, assistance in the peripheries could be but occasional. The need was felt, therefore, to give life to a more systematic presence, by means, for instance, of lay committees formed with the help of the missionary within the communities of the periphery.

Following the progress of the migrants from a state of emergency to a rather advanced stage of social emancipation, the missionary moved on from an action of initiative to the role of animator also through the media, cultural programs and associations. On the other hand, the need for the pastoral care of the young was growing daily more acute due to the fact that the second generation of immigrants of the period following WWII was already fluent in English or at least bilingual. For some time now, the Scalabrinians have begun to care also for migrants of other nationalities.

#### RECAPITULATION OF THE ENGLISH DELEGATION

In the years 1954-1964 the Missions of England had the same Superiors of the Missio Sui Juris Regina Mundi of Belgium and England:

Fr. Ugo Cavicchi, March 9, 1955 - July 24, 1957

Fr. Vittorio Michelato, July 24, 1957 - August 31, 1961

Fr. Luigi Casaril, August 31, 1961 - August 7, 1964

Following the creation of the General Delegation Regina Mundi only for England, the Superiors were the following:

Fr. Walter Sacchetti, August 7, 1964 - 1968

Fr. Angelo Bordignon, May 8, 1968 - June 4, 1970

Fr. Alberto Vico, June 4, 1970

Foundations:

1954 -Bedford: Italian Catholic Mission St. Frances X. Cabrini

1956 -Bedford: English parish of Holy Cross

1957 -Peterborough: Church of St. Joseph  
1966 -London: Church of Holy Redeemer on Brixton Road  
1966 -London: Scalabrini Center - Clapham Road  
1971 -Woking: Italian Catholic Mission

## CHAPTER II

### THE MISSIONS OF ENGLAND

#### BEDFORD: CHURCH OF ST. FRANCES X. CABRINI AND PARISH OF SACRED HEART

As seen before, the beginnings of Bedford's Mission coincided with those of the Scalabrinian presence in England. Arriving from the United States on July 3, 1954, Fr. Ugo Cavicchi started the Sunday mass for the 959 Italians of Bedford, 100 of them women and 60 children, on the second Sunday of August. Almost all of the men were employed in brick factories; the women in a chocolate plant or in services of hospitals, boarding schools, or in laundries. 95% were from the South, especially from Campania and Puglia.

On September 10, when Msgr. Bigarella, director of the Italian Missionaries of England returned to his job in London, Fr. Cavicchi requested permission to fix his residence in Bedford, and on September 23 he rented there a house on 33 Prebend St.. For his meals he was a guest of Fr. John H. Thompson, pastor of St. Joseph on Midland Rd., who, unable of providing a suitable schedule for the celebration of the mass for Italians in the parish church, granted the use of the dining hall of the Catholic school on Priory St. In the beginning some 70 Italians attended Sunday mass in the place which Fr. Cavicchi named after the Immaculate Conception.

Transferred to Belgium, Fr. Cavicchi was replaced by Fr. Walter Sacchetti on April 6, 1955; he found that the number of the Italians of Bedford had grown to 1,265. He lived there three months of 1966 as a guest of the Sisters of Cople, and then he rented a small apartment on 41 The Grove St., while holding an office in the parish rectory. Fr. Aldo Montanari arrived to assist him in early October. It was thus possible to open two more centers with regular assistance for the 600 Italians of Kettering and the 1,500 of Peterborough.

In May 1956, Bishop Leo Parker of Northampton and Msgr. Grant, Vicar General, made the proposal to entrust the Scalabrinians with the planned second parish of Bedford that was to be erected in the

new section of the city, on Goldington Rd., on a piece of land bought by the diocese. The Scalabrinians accepted it, even though it was an English parish, as a necessary basis for a missionary work integrated in the local church, which, in turn, was sensitized to the problem of migration; so much so that on March 23, 1958, the bishop granted the *Missio Cum Cura Animarum*, a quasi-personal parish for the whole diocese of Northampton, with seat in the chapel of Holy Cross which had just been constructed on Goldington Rd. as the church of the new parish.

Fr. Angelo Susin was summoned from the United States to take care more particularly of the English members of the parish. He arrived at Bedford on November 22, 1957. The chapel of Holy Cross whose construction had started on June 3, 1957 and the residence of the missionaries on 18 Sandy St., purchased by Fr. Sacchetti the previous June, were inaugurated two days later. On the same day, Fr. Sacchetti was notified of his transfer to Peterborough.

The set-up of Goldington Rd. and Sandy Rd. had solved the problem of a residence for the missionaries but not that of the assistance to the Italians, who lived grouped together in the center of town and did not want to attend the Holy Cross church three kilometers away. Fr. Susin, who had the task of organizing the parish without neglecting the Italians, had to say a mass every Sunday at the chapel of the Immaculate Conception and two more in English at Goldington Rd., one of them with homily in English and Italian, but not attended by the Italians. And so it was decided that a center should be established in the midst of the Italian community. On June 8, 1958, the religious service was moved from the hall on Priory St. to that of the Holy Ghost on Bromham Rd. which was larger and better fitting. A little later, on August 15, 1958, the new quarters of the mission was inaugurated in a building purchased on 8 Woburn Rd., where Fr. Montanari fixed his residence and opened a small chapel and an office that afforded him to be steadily at the disposal of Italians. Another Sunday mass began to be said at night in the parish church on Midland Rd. and a monthly one was scheduled at Leighton-Buzzard, some 30 km to the south of Bedford. In October 1968, Fr. Montanari was forced to retire from England for reasons of health and was re-

placed by Fr. Albert Vico, who was joined by Fr. Giovanni Alessi the following November.

The Italian Catholic Mission still lacked a fitting chapel. In 1959, the Italian families were invited to contribute one shilling a week; in April a house was purchased on 10 Woburn Rd., where the missionaries fixed their residence in order to make room in the house on 8 Woburn Rd. for the Sister Workers of the Holy House of Nazareth, who arrived on October 28 of the same year. Meanwhile, in the summer, Fr. Susin sold the house on Sandy Rd. and went to live at Woburn Rd., holding on only to the parish office by the chapel of Holy Cross in view of a future rectory. In 1960, Fr. Susin took a trip to America for a meeting with his old friends of the Society of St. Frances Cabrini of Thorton, R.I., and convinced them to raise the funds for the Italian chapel of Bedford, that was to be titled to the same Saint.

It was thus possible to buy a piece of land, which was blessed on July 17, 1960. The corner stone of the chapel, however, was laid only on February 16, 1963, shortly after works were started. The church of St. Frances Cabrini began functioning on Christmas 1964 and was officially inaugurated on March 28, 1965 by Bishop L. Parker in the presence of the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Igino Cardinale. On the same day the church was declared the seat of the *Missio Cum Cura Animarum* for Italians taking the place of the chapel of the Holy Cross. Until then Fr. Susin had officially been the missionary for the Italians, while a separation between the parish of Holy Cross (Fr. Susin pastor) and the mission on Woburn Rd. (Fr. Vico Director) had been practically decided already back in 1960.

Inaugurated on November 19, 1961, a kindergarten had begun to operate the preceding summer in the premises obtained from the ground floor of the house on 8 Woburn Rd. It was moved afterwards to 12 on the same St., because the chapel was built on the land of 8 Woburn Rd. The kindergarten had been insistently requested by the Italians who numbered 5,000 in Bedford in 1962, making up 7.5% of the entire population and 38% of Catholics; with all this, the Italians sent to it only 30 children thus leaving room for English children.

It must be pointed out that the idea for a kindergarten had been raised by the Italians a few years earlier: it was to be opened by the "Casa d'Italia" on 2 Spencer St., and purchased by the Italian govern-

ment and by the members of the Mazzini Club of London, but lacked the funds needed for the works of adaptation. In 1962, the Committee of the Casa d'Italia and the Italian Consul entrusted it to the Scalabrinians. Following stormy negotiations, the members ceded the title of ownership to the Italian Mission in 1963, and the Italian Circle or Leonardo da Vinci Club was officially founded on June 28, 1964.

In the meanwhile, Fr. Susin went ahead with the construction of the Rectory of Holy Cross which was inaugurated in July 1962. In 1963 he was named General Bursar of the Scalabrinian Congregation, and his place at Holy Cross was taken by Fr. Angelo Bordignon. Holy Cross became a real parish on May 16, 1966; the church, enlarged and remodeled, was blessed on June 6, 1967, by Lord Charles A. Grant, the new Bishop of Northampton. The parish numbered then some 450 families and 2,000 Catholics. Directed by Fr. Vico, the Mission of Bedford, instead was busy with the 6,000 Italians of the city and as many others scattered in the western suburb of the Diocese of Northampton: Aylesbury, Rushden, Leighton-Buzzard, Bletchley, Kettering, Northampton, Hitchin, Letchworth.

On December 7, 1969, Fr. Susin returned as pastor of Holy Cross, but by the end of 1970 it was decided, in agreement with the Bishop, to gradually proceed to relinquishing the parish because it was mostly made up of English people and required proper personnel, not easy to find; it no longer had significance, not even indirectly, for the assistance to migrants. The parish was returned to the diocese in May 1971. The property of the Italian Club "Leonardo Da Vinci" was sold out in September 1970 and the proceeds were used in the construction of another section of the kindergarten which was completed in March 1971. Fr. Luigi Bertollo became the Director of the Mission in July of the same year.

#### PETERBOROUGH: CHURCH OF ST. JOSEPH

Fr. Walter Sacchetti was sent to Peterborough on November 24, 1957. For the first few weeks he retained his residence at Bedford until he was able to secure quarters at Peterborough in December by renting a room on 8 Glebe Rd.



The first Italians had arrived at Peterborough in 1952, almost all of them unmarried, with no family, and from the South, lodged partly in hotels on the outskirts, and then partly in the northwestern section of the city. In 1958 there were probably about 600 Italians in town and 650 more in the districts of New Fletton, Old Fletton, and Stanground. A Sunday mass began to be said in the parish hall on Church Walk in downtown; a second one was added on May 18, 1958, for the group of Fletton-Stanground in a hall on High St. The missionary had charge also of the Italians in Kettering (500), Cambridge (200), and other small groups. Before then, the migrants of Peterborough were periodically visited by a missionary from Bedford. In December 1959, a more fitting residence was acquired at 119 Lincoln Rd., and in September 1960 Fr. Sacchetti was joined by Fr. Giovanni Alessi. In April 1962, an old Anglican School was purchased on 221 Gladstone St., which was changed into a church dedicated to St. Joseph, a kindergarten, a social hall, and a classroom for afterschool Italian classes. The premises were inaugurated on September 30, 1962, by Bishop L. Parker, who on March 22, 1963 raised the church to a *Missio Cum Cura Animarum* for the Italians of the Eastern side of the diocese. In December 1962, the house by the church was purchased with the proceeds from the sale of the house on Lincoln Rd. The Sister Workers of the Holy House of Nazareth arrived in April 1963 to devote themselves to the 40 children of the kindergarten and to the other activities of the Mission. They were lodged at first on 279 Gladstone St., and later in 1971 moved to 275 Gladstone St. With a sitting capacity for 300, the Church was insufficient for the 3,500 Italians of the place. On April 11, 1968, Fr. Alessi, director of the Mission since the end of 1965, bought a hall on Fairfield Rd., in Fletton and turned it into a church for the Italians of the region of Peterborough. Fr. Angelo Susin was named its director in July 1971.

#### LONDON: HOLY REDEEMER CHAPEL AND SCALABRINI CENTER

In June 1962, Fr. Susin made known to Msgr. Ellis, chairman of the English Bishops' Commission for Migrants, the desire of the Scalabrinians to work in London where more than 60,000 Italians lived. Msgr. Ellis answered him that he would bring up the matter with

Card. Godfrey, Archbishop of Westminster. There was, however, in the city of London already, as we said before, a church dedicated to St. Peter, where the Pallottine Fathers took care of the Italians, and the seat of the Director of the Italian Missionaries of Emigration. The religious assistance to the Italians of the diocese of Southwark, south of the Thames, was instead practically nonexistent. To such the Scabrinians directed their attention seeking to establish a missionary and social center for Italian families, domestic workers, students, and where to move also the offices of the bimonthly *La Voce degli Italiani*. The possibility for bringing to reality this plan was realized in the summer of 1965. The Director of Italian missionaries Fr. Menegardi, Fr. Francesco Milini, and Fr. Susin carried on all the preliminary negotiation with Bishop C.C. Cowderoy of Southwark and the Sacred Congregation for the Bishops.

Bishop Cowderoy granted his authorization on November 30, 1965. Shortly earlier a house had been found at 175 Clapham Rd. in Stockwell; it was purchased in February 1966, though already on January 29, Fr. Walter Sacchetti had moved into it. He was followed by Fr. Umberto Marin, director of the *La Voce degli Italiani*, and, later, by Fr. Mario Dalla Costa.

And so Frs. Sacchetti and Marin began their activities for the Italians of the South side of the Capital with the opening of a chapel in the Mission's quarters and the visitation of families. Later on they obtained the celebration of a Sunday Mass in the Cathedral of Southwark and in the parish of St. Francis de Sales, within whose territory the mission was located, besides the two masses that were said in the Mission's chapel itself. Other Masses were periodically said for Italians at Lewsham, Croydon, Sutton, Harley, Gillingham, Strood, Kingston-on-Thames, Walton, Weybridge, Godalming, Basingstone. An after-school program of Italian classes for children was also started.

In the spring of 1967 Fr. Sacchetti fell sick. Taken first to the Italian hospital of London he was sent afterwards for a period of rest in Italy. He returned to London in October but kept getting worse. In April 1968, he was admitted to a clinic in Pisa and then to the Flaminia Clinic in Rome where he died on May 24, 1968. He was replaced by Mario Dalla Costa, who together with Frs. A. Vico and U. Marin,

was on the lookout since summer 1967 for a more spacious residence for the Mission. The building on 20 Brixton Rd., the present seat of the mission, was purchased on August 5, 1968. The house on 174 Clapham Rd., to be the boarding house for Italian girls, and the one on 176 Clapham Rd., where the kindergarten was to be established, were respectively bought in July 24 and September 18 of same year.

The new residence of 20 Brixton Rd., half-a-mile from the other and more centrally located in relation to the greater concentration of the Italians of the south side of London, had two halls: one of them was made into a chapel dedicated to the Holy Redeemer. The first mass was offered in it on Christmas night of 1968. The seat of the Mission was moved into it together with the offices of *La Voce degli Italiani* on March 5, 1969.

In the same year the buildings on 174-176 Clapham Rd. were opened with a small boarding house for Italian girls, a kindergarten for 25 children under the direction of Dorothean Sisters of Cemmo, inaugurated on May 27, 1969 by the President of Italy Saragat, and the O.A.S.I. (Organization Assistance Italian Students), which was meant at first to offer reliable information to students desiring to spend a period of time in London, and then developed into an office to secure hospitality with English families for Italian students chosen at branch offices in Italy.

The Mission was headed by Fr. A. Vico since 1971 and numbers within its territory about 10,000 Italians living in South London, in Kent and a section of Surrey. Four masses were said every Sunday in the chapel of the Mission for the Italians of South London, and another one in the church of the Holy Savior at Lewisham. For the Italian communities outside London a mass is said four times a year in Croydon, Thornton Heath, Addiscombe and Gillingham, and one monthly at Sutton and Carshalton. The missionaries became available for pastors who called for administration of the sacraments, visiting the sick and for any other need of Italians in their parishes. The Sisters were helping in teaching Catechism to children 7 to 15 years of age. The Mission was open also to Yugoslavians, Greeks, Indians, Maltese, and Spaniards. It has a hall for 200 persons to be used for social activities, by Italia Club, and after-school classes of Italian. Work was conducted in 1976 for enlarging and remodeling the residence

of 20 Brixton Rd. and a decision was taken to purchase the adjoining house on 22 Brixton Rd. On May 7, 1978, Archbishop Michael G. Bowen of Southwark inaugurated the renewed and widened chapel of the Holy Redeemer.

### WOKING: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

As to the Italians of the suburbs, the most part of the work of the Mission of London was carried on in the territories of the Dioceses of Arundel and Brighton; for this reason, in 1971 the missionaries made plans for opening a new mission for the 2,000 Italians in Woking, a city of 60,000, in the middle of a region that numbered another 8,000 Italians of recent immigration. Archbishop M.J. Bowen was in favor of it on condition it did not become a parish within a parish. The new Mission had its beginning on August 23, 1971; its director, Fr. M. Dalla Costa continued to reside in London; his assistant, Fr. Lino Colosio, moved in with the pastor of the English parish. In September the two missionaries rented a small house at Weybridge, Surrey, on 19 Monument Rd., six miles from Woking, twice changing their residence later on, always in rented houses. They said Sunday masses in the five larger towns of the territory, where they gave life to as many Italian circles and afterschool programs. There was, however, the need for a missionary center, which was finally purchased and opened on February 6, 1974 on 14 Oriental Rd. in Woking. Fr. Giovanni Meneghetti headed the Mission as of May 15, 1973.

### “LA VOCE DEGLI ITALIANI”

In January 1946, Fr. Dominic Valente of the Pious Society of St. Paul, founded the monthly *La Voce degli Italiani*, turned bimonthly in 1957. With the beginning of 1950, at the onset of the new migratory flow, this paper grew into an instrument of information, protection of the rights of Italian immigrants, juridical and social consultation. In 1962 it ran 2,000 copies and was in the red; besides, the Paulist Fathers wanted it stopped so as to concentrate their attention to their English publications. There was also the danger that it might be bought by people interested in making it a means for political, or even immoral, purposes. On the other hand, the director of *L'Eco*

d'Italia of the missions of France was pressing also for an edition for England.

Fr. Susin showed an interest in accepting the offer of the Paulist Fathers to take over *La Voce degli Italiani* in order to reach through the press all the Italians scattered throughout England. But there was a difficulty: the monthly *La Squilla*, the official organ of the Italian Catholic Missions of England, of a purely religious character, was also circulating among the Italians.

The Scalabrinian General Administration remained undecided when faced with the possibility of opposition on the part of the other missionaries, and gave its assent, instead, to the proposal of publishing an edition in English of the *L'Eco d'Italia* with the addition of four pages for England, while assuring Msgr. Bigarella that no obstacle would ensue thereof for the continuation of *La Squilla*. Fr. U. Marin was appointed to the direction of *La Voce degli Italiani*; but he resided at Bedford and so there the editing office was also transferred with the inherited inconveniences of distance from the capital.

In 1968 a merger came about of *La Voce degli Italiani* with *L'Italia-no*, which had replaced *La Squilla*, which had assumed the same features of *La Voce degli Italiani*. In reality, however, the latter absorbed the other publication, and the title of ownership, together with its direction, passed over to the Scalabrinians. On the other hand a separation was effected instead from *L'Eco d'Italia* and a choice was made to have *La Voce degli Italiani* printed in Italy. Fr. Mario Dalla Costa was the director in 1966-1969, and again Fr. U. Marin since 1970, who became a member of the World Federation of the Italian Press Abroad. As of 1978, the paper had reached a circulation of 4,000 copies.



PART VIII

THE SCALABRINIAN PROVINCE  
OF THE SACRED HEART  
ITALY





# CHAPTER I

## PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

### SUMMARY

As envisioned by Card. Rossi since 1935, the creation of the Italian Province of the Sacred Heart was decided by the General Chapter of 1963 and carried out by a decree of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation of August 6, 1963.

Except for the Collegio San Carlo on 11 Via Calandrelli in Rome, and the communities of the Pontificio Collegio d'Emigrazione on 70 Via della Scrofa in Rome, retained under the direct dependence on the General Administration, the new Province was assigned all the Scalabrinian Houses of Italy:

Istituto Cristoforo Colombo, the Motherhouse of Piacenza, founded in 1892 and used as seminary for Theology Students.

Scalabrini Novitiate in Crespano del Grappa (Treviso) opened as a minor seminary in 1913, and as Novitiate in 1935.

Shrine of Beata Vergine del Castello in Rivergaro (Piacenza) entrusted to the Congregation in 1927.

Scalabrini-Tirondola Seminary in Bassano del Grappa (Vicenza), started as a minor seminary in 1930.

Scalabrini-O'Brien Seminary in Cermenate (Como) established in 193 for the Students of Philosophy.

Scalabrini-Bonomelli Seminary in Rezzato (Brescia) inaugurated as a minor seminary in 1947.

Casa Maria Assunta in Arco (Trento) purchased in 1947 for sick and elderly religious.

Parish of the Most Holy Redeemer in Valmelaina, Rome, entrusted to the Scalabrinians in 1950.

Casa Alpina Scalabrini at Villabassa (Bolzano) acquired in 1952 as a summer vacation residence.

Casa San Raffaele in Genoa, given to the Congregation in 1954 together with the direction of the ship chaplains.

Collegio San Carlo in Osimo (Ancona) dedicated in 1959, with a school for children of emigrants.

Pius XII Seminary in Loreto (Ancona) opened in 1964.

Parishes of Santa Maria Regina in Siponto and of Sant'Andrea Apostolo in Manfredonia (Foggia) received in 1966.

Scuola Apostolica Scalabrini in Siponto (Foggia) opened in 1968.

Seminary of Philosophy and Theology in Rome opened in 1970.

Seminario Scalabriniani in Carmiano (Lecce) opened in 1974

Centro Missionario Scalabriniano in Cinesello Balsamo (Milano) opened in 1977

-Parish at Porto Corsini (Ravenna) received in 1977

Parish of Favelloni and Conidoni (Catanzaro) received in 1977.

Succession of Provincial Superiors:

1 -Fr.	Renato Bolzoni, c.s.	1963-1969
2 -Fr.	Bruno Mioli, c.s.	1969-1976
3 -Fr.	Sisto Caccia, c.s.	1976-1980

THE YEARS BETWEEN 1941 AND 1962

In February 1935, Fr. Francesco Prevedello petitioned Card. R.C. Rossi to officially appoint Fr. Francesco Tironbola as Superior of the Scalabrinian Houses of Italy: an office which he in fact already exercised. Card. Rossi accepted the suggestion, indeed responding to a project he himself had been contemplating for quite some time. On March 21, 1935 he named Fr. Tironbola Superior of the Italian Houses of the Scalabrinian Pious Society at the discretion of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation with all the faculties inherent to this office, though remaining rector of the Collegio Cristoforo Colombo of Piacenza. He motivated such appointment upon the advantages of a unified direction, pointing out that it was not prejudicial to the rights and authority of local superiors. Without the formal title, Fr. Francesco Tironbola was exercising the functions of a Provincial Superior. In fact, after the promulgation of the 1936 Constitutions, on September 8 of the same year, Card. Rossi confirmed Fr. Tironbola as Superior of the Houses of Italy with all the faculties and rights proper of a Provincial Superior as spelled out by Canon Law and by the Constitu-

tions of the Pious Society. The same Constitutions, however, pointed out that the Houses of Italy, as well as the missions not yet grouped into a Province, depended directly from the Superior General. (The 1948 Constitutions, instead, no longer speak of the houses of Italy).

On July 16, 1946, Fr. Tironola was named Vicar General of the Congregation: his position in regard to the houses of Italy remained unchanged until 1951, when the Congregation returned to having a Superior General of her own. In the years 1951-1963, the houses, the institutions, and the religious of Italy were under the direct dependence of the Superior General and his Council.

The decade 1941-1951 can be divided into two periods: the stand-still caused by the war until the end of 1945, and the revival and expansion beginning in 1946.

When the war broke out, Fr. Tironola had urged not to let fear get hold of us, to show the greatest firmness possible, also in regard to political and military authorities, and "to avoid taking decisions unless prompted by the superior force". This way, by the help of the "Procurator" St. Joseph at least a number of positions would be saved, thus avoiding the dispersion and breakup of the Scalabrinian family in Italy. The war, of which mention shall be made in the story of each single house, substantially spared all institutions and persons, except for only one religious, Bro. Secondo Bruno Dal Bello, who died gunned down by Anglo-American planes on April 15, 1944, in the vicinity of Acquasparta (Terni). A few others, instead, were stricken with tuberculosis or other ailments consequent to malnutrition.

Since the early days of 1946, while still recuperating from a serious illness that made us fear for his life, Fr. Tironola renewed his proposal to Card. Rossi for opening a seminary in Southern Italy, and another in the North, in Lombardy, halfway between the seminary of Bassano del Grappa, already full to capacity, and that of Cermenate, opened in 1939, but too far from the provinces of Brescia and Bergamo, to which attention was being turned for fostering vocations. The project of another seminary in Northern Italy became reality in 1947 with the opening of the Scalabrini-Bonomelli Seminary in Rezzato, Brescia. In the same year, the Casa Maria Assunta for sick and elderly religious was opened in Arco, Trento, and the seminary of Bassano

del Grappa was completed with the construction of the chapel. An initiative solicited for quite a long time especially by Fr. Tironola, was carried out in 1950 with the taking of the parish of the Most Holy Redeemer of Valmelaina in Rome.

In the years 1941-1945, 216 boys entered the seminary of Bassano; in 1946-1950, immediately following the end of the war, the number climbed to 501. 94 boys entered the seminary of Cermenate in 1940-1942, and 15 more were admitted to the small temporary seminary of Rome.

The seminary of Cermenate since 1942, and that of Rezzato in its early years, took in high-school students. The clerics remained at Piacenza until 1943, when because of the war they were transferred to Bassano del Grappa. The college students returned to Piacenza in 1945, moved to Cermenate in 1946, and the Theology students went back to the Motherhouse.

No new seminaries were opened in 1951-1963. An opportunity for summer vacations in the mountains was offered the students in 1952 with the purchase of the Casa Scalabrini in the Alpine town of Villabassa (Niederdorf), Bolzano. In 1954, the Scalabrinians were given charge of the office of ship chaplains with headquarters in Genoa, and in 1960 the Istituto San Carlo in Osimo, Ancona was opened for the education and training of the children of emigrants.

In these same years two other attempts aimed at an increase of seminaries did not materialize: one in the province of Trento, for which much had been done in 1960-1962 by the Superior General Fr. R. Larcher, who then stopped everything because of the high cost of the project; and the other at Montecorvino, in the vicinity of Battipaglia (Salerno), where a piece of land was bought in 1961 and then sold for the same reason. The opening of a seminary in Southern Italy had been decided as a priority by the 1957 General Chapter. Somehow, the use of part of the San Charles Institute in Osimo in 1960-1964 as a minor seminary fell into this project.

Among the proposals made at the 1963 General Chapter, the following is present:

“The chapter endorses the establishing of the Italian Province, so that the Superior General, relieved of this direct responsibility, may better attend to the government of the entire Congregation.” The

Chapter then resolved: "The houses of Italy are to be organized into a religious Province as soon as possible. Eventual exceptions of direct dependence on the Superior General will be decided by the Superior General himself with the deliberative vote of his Council. All those articles of the Constitutions are thereof modified which refer to the direct dependence of the houses of Italy from the Superior General."

Apart from the reason mentioned in the proposal, the General Chapter, by this decision, intended to provide with a greater assurance of continuity for the vitality and growth of the Italian seminaries in as much as they were necessary for the continuity and growth of the whole Congregation: the task of forming missionaries for the entire Congregation was and had to remain the fundamental and historical character proper of the Italian Province.

#### FR. RENATO BOLZONI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1963-1969)

Fr. Renato Bolzoni was named Provincial Superior of the new Province on August 7, 1963 and on September 24 he was given Frs. Luigi Liber, Mario Francesoni, Antonio Migazzi and Maffeo Pretto as Councilors. In 1966 Fr. Liber was transferred to Rome and his place was taken by Fr. Mioli as fourth Councilor; in 1968 Fr. Francesoni was also summoned to Rome and replaced by Fr. Carlo Galli, also as fourth Councilor.

For lack of financial resources of its own, the Italian Province continued to be supported by the General Administration, which thus kept the title of ownership of all properties, leaving in the hands of the Province a few administrative tasks. The need was always felt, however, of completing its juridical autonomy extending it to finances. The General Administration contributed in this sense with allotting the Province certain modest sources of income and by turning over to it the properties group into the Bishop Scalabrini Society, which, however, yielded revenue of only 2 million liras. Initiatives and efforts were multiplied especially by the religious in finding and increasing the sources of income, and even with the expenses for opening the seminaries of Loreto and Siponto, and the increasing cost of life, in 1969 the Italian Province succeeded in paying 49% of the expenditures for the seminaries, when compared with only 26%

of them in the previous year of its direct dependence on the General Administration.

It must be pointed out that 45 of the 64 priests who belonged to the Italian Province in 1965 were employed in formation and so bound to devote to it practically all of their time; the rest were engaged in pastoral or other works, the two most important of which were the parish in Rome and the Institute at Osimo, still insolvent, and a few others with very limited activities and modest revenues. But the main difficulties the Province had to face were found in the lack of vocations and in the crisis of the formation system; the infamous 1968 had a history of its own also in the internal life of the seminaries!!

The years 1963-1969 saw an endless series of debates and attempts at the updating of the formation process. The distrust in the validity of minor seminaries afflicting all parts of the world did not succeed in discouraging the Province. Indeed, it multiplied efforts, instead, to buffer the general decrease of admissions to minor seminaries exploring places different from the traditional ones: the seminaries of Loreto (1964 and of Siponto (1968), and the little seminaries of Cermenate (1966) and Arco (1969). It also enacted a better selection of candidates training them for the religious and priestly life through systems more respondent to the new mentality.

As to novitiate and minor seminaries, besides implementing the *Sedes Sapientiae* (1956), various innovations were introduced aimed at giving the students a greater sense of personal and community responsibility, but without reaching one of the objectives set down by the Provincial Administration and by the formation personnel, that is, a plan of formation itself; a sign that the situation was in a state of steady and fast-moving evolution.

From the viewpoint of numbers one may compare the statistics drawn for the school years:

School Year	Minor Seminarians	Novices	Religious Students
1962-1963	300	23	124
1965-1966	360	20	123
1968- 1969	300	22	98

For a correct evaluation of the decrease of minor seminarians and clerics in the latter two years we must keep in mind that the personnel, the initiatives, and the structures employed in formation had been notably increased.

The marked inflow of students of the years 1941-1950 mentioned earlier began to dwindle in 1952. The phenomenon provoked a greater effort in vocation recruiting on the part of the first vocation directors (Frs. Giovanni Saraggi and Anacleto Rocca). A certain level of admissions could thus be maintained. However, while before the war (1940-1945) 26% of the seminarians reached the priesthood, in the years 1944-1954 the average declined to 14%. Beginning with 1955 there was a definite decline also in the number of admissions to the seminary. At the time of the creation of the Italian Province the religious in charge of the promotion of vocations were still two; a year later they were six already, climbing up to 9 in 1969. The quest for the coordination of these forces began in 1964 by the creation of the Orientation Group with one in charge. In 1965, all of a sudden the admission of new seminarians was cut in half, while their perseverance continued to decline. The results of the seminary of Loreto were practically nonexistent, something that discouraged somehow the orientation of the Provincial Administration so intent on multiplying small minor seminaries. Its plans therefore were revised, though not abandoned.

With the beginning of 1964, in order to gain personnel and avoid certain disadvantages of a private school, the lower high school grades of the seminaries were made detached sections of the local public state schools, and the official acknowledgement was obtained for the high school grades of Bassano, thus securing for them equal status, as it were, with the state schools.

In 1965, an ad hoc formation team was instituted for the so-called late vocations; a priest was assigned for the recruiting, and after experimenting with a separate section in the seminary of Cermenate, in 1969 the Young Community of Orientation (GGO) was established in Piacenza with the full consent of the other Provinces of Europe.

A rather wide exploration was started in 1966 in Southern Italy to find out the possibility of opening seminaries in the regions that contributed the most to emigration: the conclusion was that the only

way to carry out this project was to give concrete help to the dioceses by accepting charge of parishes and of youth institutions. Thus the presence of Scalabrinians began in two parishes of the diocese of Manfredonia (1966), marking the beginning of our seminary at Siptonto (1968), and 6 years later, also the seminary of Carmiano, in the diocese of Lecce (1974) was opened under analogous circumstances.

Six summer school-camps were first organized in 1968 and increased to thirteen in 1969. In two years they allowed the opportunity for contacting some one thousand young men, involving them, at least at stated times, in the apostolate, in general, and for migrants, in particular, thus offering them the occasion for the discernment of their vocation. These and other initiatives of vocational promotion and Scalabrinian propaganda succeeded in turning upward the downward trend of entries to our seminaries, thus arresting in part the risk of being left without new missionaries because of the dreadful drop in percentage of ordinations. In the six years' period 1963-1969, a good deal of attention was given to the preparation of the personnel assigned to formation and teaching: ten priests received doctorate degrees while others were studying for them; four priests attended biennial courses of educational psychology and professional scholastic orientation. In 1963, the clerics began to be sent to the Scalabrinian missions of Europe for pastoral experiences. At the close of its first six years the Province numbered 64 priests, 68 clerics, 5 brothers and 12 novices.

The Italian Province was officially acknowledged as a corporation with decree of the President of the Republic of Italy in November 30, 1967. The Casa Maria Assunta of Arco served as headquarters of the Provincial Administration in 1963-1968. In 1968 it was moved to the Motherhouse in Piacenza.

#### FR. BRUNO MIOLI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1969-1976)

The second Provincial Superior, Fr. Bruno Mioli, was named on December 6, 1969, and confirmed for another three year term on March 28, 1973. In January 1970 the following were appointed as Provincial Councilors: Frs. Velasio De Paolis, Carlo Galli, Sisto Caccia, Silvio Stefanelli. At the close of the first term in May 1973, the



make-up of the Provincial Council was changed as follows: Frs. Sisto Caccia, Velasio De Paolis, Francesco Zanotto, Pietro P. Celotto. At the 1974 General Chapter, Fr. De Paolis was elected General Councilor, and the place of second provincial Councilor was taken by Fr. Luigi Dal Bianco. During the six years 1970-1976 the Province had to deal with the restructuring of the seminaries, made necessary by the crisis of vocations and other factors deriving from the 1969 General Chapter. The latter had decided, in fact, to delay entrance to the Novitiate after Junior College and before the philosophy/theology courses. Besides, in regard to our major seminaries it reversed the decision of the previous Chapter and instead of gathering all the students of theology of the Congregation in one International Seminary, the large building under construction in the locality of San Cosimato outside Rome, it was thought proper to place the clerics in closer contact with the regions of our missions, and it authorized the students to attend philosophy and theology courses in schools other than the internal ones of the Congregation. Consequently to these decisions, the Italian Province suspended the novitiate and the house of Crespano remained empty. The group of the students of Theology had to be moved to Rome, thus leaving the seminary of Bassano half empty, as half empty was also that of Loreto. Though in uncertain situation, the seminaries of Siponto and Arco, instead, were expanding.

The problem of Bassano was quickly resolved. That seminary in fact, was granted official state accreditation in 1970 and so all students of junior college were gathered in it: furthermore, with the beginning of that school year a larger number of freshmen was admitted (189 of them in the whole Province). The house of Crespano became the seat of the Scalabrini School for children of emigrants, under the responsibility and direction of the Province of Germany-Switzerland for the years 1971-1976. The philosophy and theology students were transferred to Rome in 1970 temporarily housed in Via Calandrelli with at the General Administration until 1975. To make room for them, the General Administration moved to the so-called Scalabrinianum of San Cosimato on Via della Pisana. A group of clerics was sent to Freiburg in Switzerland: for the first experimental year, this seminary remained under the jurisdiction of the Italian Province. In 1971 it was turned over to that of the German/Swiss Province. The

novitiate resumed in Rezzato and in 1973 it found its final residence at the seminary of Loreto, which continued on hard times as to the number and perseverance of the students of the minor seminary. For lack of personnel and room the small seminary of Arco lasted only for three school years, from 1969 till 1973. Another minor seminary was opened in 1974 at Carmiano, in Puglia: in its early years it hosted also the high school students coming in from the seminary of Siponto. Left in great part unused because of the deterioration of the building and the obstacles interposed by the state against its restructuring, a Scalabrinian Missionary Center was instituted in 1970 at the Motherhouse of Piacenza for coordinating the promotion of vocations, the pastoral care of the young, the cooperation with the laity, the press and propaganda, and also, in its early stages, for helping the Youth Group of Orientation. This Scalabrinian Missionary Center gave life also to experiments of neighborhood pastoral care for the young in the suburbs of Milan, that is, in the context of internal immigrants arriving from Southern Italy and the Veneto. In 1973, in fact, the Province decided to devote greater attention to the phenomenon of internal migrations as a proper field of the Scalabrinian activities, an opportunity for an experience in our specific pastoral care on the part of the future missionaries in formation, and also as an alternative outlet for pastoral action offered to the Fathers engaged in the weary work of the seminaries. In 1972 this same idea gave rise to the periodical pastoral activities in Calabria, at summer school camps, in Easter weeks, etc. conducted by Scalabrinian priests and clerics; the young men of GGO, Scalabrinian Sisters, and other groups, especially in the territory of Favelloni and Cessanniti, in the province of Catanzaro. The purpose was dual: to give Scalabrinians an opportunity to understand the mentality of emigrants from the South and sensitize people to all the problems of the migratory phenomenon affecting the local society and church.

In regard to the parish of the Most Holy Redeemer in Rome, all bureaucratic and financial difficulties were cleared at last, and construction of a new church began in 1975. At Genoa, the pastoral care of the Apostleship of the Sea began its work at the Stella Maris house in 1970. The St. Charles Institute in Osimo had a great numerical

growth, reaching 200 children of emigrants; something that engendered, however, serious educational problems.

In 1974 the Italian Province numbered 68 priests, 2 brothers, 42 clerics; in 1976, 70 priests, 2 brothers, 32 clerics. Of these 70 priests, however, 15 were elderly or sick; the rest, 34 were working in the seminaries, 8 in parishes, 6 in the pastoral care of internal migrants, 3 with foreign migrants, 2 at the Institute of Osimo, and 2 with the Provincial Administration.

Apart from the activities works and the numbers, in the years 1970-1976 The Province continued to experience the anguish brought about by the vocations crisis. The intensification of vocation promotion and so also of the number of entries to our seminaries and of the seminaries themselves succeeded in maintaining the number of minor seminarians at quota 300 and more: but in the meantime the percentage of perseverance both in minor seminaries as in novitiate and major seminaries kept decreasing. Hence the need was urgently felt for improving the qualification of the formation personnel, which was also decreasing, and the attempt of orientation towards a new vision of the minor seminary, at the discovery of other forms of pastoral care of vocations, and at a better coordination of the formation curriculum on all levels.

#### FR. SISTO CACCIA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1976-1980)

The new administration of the Province, with Fr. Sisto Caccia, named Provincial Superior on March 25, 1976, with Frs. Pietro Celotto, Carlo Galli, Luigi Dal Bianco, Sergio Morotti, as Councilors, took it upon itself to provide an answer to these shortcomings and needs by means of a better defined and articulate plan of action. This administration can be characterized by its intent of an articulate plan for reaching the final goals through intermediate objectives, especially in the fields of formation and pastoral care. A decision was made in 1976 to move the college students to the Motherhouse of Piacenza, which was properly restored to have it ready to welcome them in 1977. At the same time, after various unsuccessful attempts at turning it into a school for children of emigrants, negotiations were begun for the sale of the Scalabrini-O'Brien Seminary of Cermenate.

In 1977, the experiment of the so called diaspora-seminary was given start at Carmiano, Lecce, and the Scalabrinian Missionary Centre moved to Milan marking the beginnings of the new residence of Cinisello Balsamo, among internal migrants. At the same time, the Province's attention to the places of departure of emigrants took concrete form in the acceptance of two small parishes (Favelloni and Conidoni) in the diocese of Mileto (Catanzaro), and of the parish of Porto Corsini, Ravenna. In 1977 the house of Crespano del Grappa, one half of the St. Charles Institute of Osimo, whose chapel became the seat of a parish for the neighborhood, and part of the Scalabrini-Bonomelli of Rezzato were rented out. The new parish church of the Most Holy Redeemer at Valmelaina in Rome was finally inaugurated on March 6, 1977. In 1978, the Youth Orientation Group, inactive for a year, resumed its activities, and the small parish of St. Andrew the Apostle was returned to the diocese of Manfredonia, Foggia.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SEMINARIES

#### INSTITUTO CRISTOFORO COLOMBO, THE MOTHERHOUSE, PIACENZA

With the school year 1941-1942, theology classes began to be held at home, though without giving up the right acquired with the convention stipulated at the time of Bishop Pellizzari and ratified by the Holy See of attending classes at the diocesan seminary. In the years 1941-1943, the Motherhouse continued to host the students of theology, philosophy and high school. Two pioneers of our missions in Brazil, Frs. Giuseppe Martini and Enrico Preti, died on May 26 and June 29, 1942, respectively, at Piacenza. In the course of 1943, the air raids became increasingly frequent and dangerous. In the night between April 28 and 29 a German plane crashed to the ground close by the Motherhouse; one of the motors rolled down Via Nicolini (renamed, since, Via Francesco Torta) spreading death amongst the passers-by but leaving the seminarians unhurt and causing only material damages to the building. The school year was brought to its close at the regular time, but on June 25 Card. R.C. Rossi gave orders that the students of Piacenza be transferred to Bassano del Grappa, where the two communities of religious and minor seminarians were to live separately under the same roof and rector, Fr. Francesco Prevedello. The community of Piacenza left for Bassano in July 1943. Only Fr. Remo Rizzato, acting Rector, and Fr. Corbellini, diocesan assistant of workers, and some other religious remained at the Motherhouse. Mons. Camillo Mangot, the secretary of our Founder, died in Piacenza on the May 10, 1945. The clerics who had been transferred to Bassano had to adapt themselves to many privations and some got sick because of malnutrition but all got through the war years alive. In January 1944 the students of the first year of philosophy moved to Crespano del Grappa to make room for a group of students from the diocesan seminary of Vicenza under threat of air raids. In June 1945, Fr. Prevedello asked to be relieved of the office of Rector and his place was taken by Fr. Francesco Tirondola. On June 25, two months

after the end of the war, the students of the second year of philosophy returned to the Motherhouse with their new rector Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo; they were joined, later on, by the other philosophy students and thus the community of Piacenza of 62 students was reconstituted in full.

The students of Theology returned to Piacenza the following year, on September 28, 1946, under the direction of Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan. Work began in April 1947 for the restructuring of the Motherhouse: the whole wing facing the garden was raised on story. In the summer of the same year, the theology students spent their vacations in the mountains for the first time, at Varena in the province of Trent. They returned to Piacenza with the new rector Fr. Angelo Corso on September 27, 1947, while Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan returned to America as superior of the Province of St. Giovanni the Battista. Fr. Angelo Ceccato was rector from 1949 to 1951. In 1950, the daughters of St. Giuseppe, who had been in charge of kitchen and wardrobe, left the Motherhouse and were replaced by the Scalabrinian Sisters. Fr. Cesare Zanconato was rector from 1951 to 1955, when the students of philosophy and theology were about 100. Fr. Renato Belzoni succeeded him from 1955 to 1958, followed in turn, by Fr. Francesco Prevedello from 1958 to 1963. In the years 1955-1959, the college students remained in Piacenza, and the junior-college ones were transferred to the Scalabrini-O'Brien seminary in Cermenate.

In 1963, Fr. Luigi Liber became rector of about 50 students of theology. The building of the Motherhouse was still habitable but progressively deteriorating: the urban development plan did not allow its demolition so that a new one might be constructed. The 1963 General Chapter discussed the sale of the Motherhouse and the location of the theological seminary. There was already thought of moving all theology students of the Congregation to a new seminary in Rome. The decision was left up to the new General Administration. In 1963 the Motherhouse was put up for sale, but in 1965 there were still no buyers: then came the obstacles of the urban plan which wanted to turn the area into a green zone. In the meantime, the great majority of the religious openly opposed the decision to sell the Motherhouse because of the historical and sentimental meaning of the cradle of our Congregation, and so did also the public opinion of the episcopal city

of Bishop Scalabrini. In 1966, the students of Theology were transferred to Bassano del Grappa, with Fr. Bruno Mioli, as their rector. In Piacenza there was only a small community to serve the Church of St. Charles and the Center for the Promotion of lay vocations of AMSE (Lay Movement for the Scalabrinian Apostolate of Emigration). In 1967 the General Administration dropped the project of the sale of the Motherhouse and the Province proposed to restructure it and turn it into a minor seminary or a junior high school. In 1968, the new city development plan declared the building a preeminent area landmark dating back to 17th century thus precluding any radical alteration. In the same year the seat of the Provincial Administration was moved to Piacenza. In 1969 it petitioned the city planning administration at the Ministry of Public Works to suspend the environmental restraint and had recourse to the Sovraintendenza delle Belle Arti of Bologna and Parma and to the Piacenza City Hall to obtain the demolition of the section of the building constructed in 1926 alongside the Stradone Farnese, the reinforcing and reclaiming of the part built before 1860. In 1971, the Sovraintendenza (the Office for the Preservation of the Arts) of Bologna and the Piacenza City Hall approved the project. But the City Government did not approve the final blueprints presented in 1973 by Architect Fausto Cammi and entrusted the decision to a committee that granted its approval finally, only in 1976. Work was then started which leaving untouched the external wall, allowed for the remodeling of the internal part respondent to the second cloister and to the sisters' convent. The philosophy students from Cermentate were transferred into this section in October 1977. In the meanwhile, in addition to the Provincial Administration, also the Youth Center of Orientation had been set up in the Motherhouse in 1969 under the direction of Fr. Sisto Caccia, who served as Rector from 1970 to 1976. It began with a class of the so-called late vocations which was to grow to 16 individuals the following year. In 1977 the GGO was temporarily discontinued in view of a new set-up and was resumed in 1978.

The community of theologians was transferred to Bassano mainly for financial reasons. The small number of clerics (about 30) of the house of Piacenza, by now uninhabitable, and the small number of minor seminarians (130 to 140) in the very large seminary of Bassano del Grappa made feasible this coming together in Bassano. The

solution was thought to be temporary, because in Via della Pisana in Rome the great project was under construction, which supposedly was to house also the international seminary of theology of the whole Congregation. The 1969 General Chapter decided to put up for sale these new buildings in Rome, but the students of philosophy and theology were transferred to Rome anyway in 1970, with residence in Via Calandrelli, where they remained until September 1975. Then they lived for a year in a rented building in Via Ulisse Seni 2, and lastly, in September 1976 they were housed in Via Casilina 634. Fr. Velasio De Paolis was rector of the community of philosophy and Theology from 1969 to 1974, followed by Fr. Ettore Ansaldi from December 1974 to 1978. In 1970 the students began attending external universities and institutions.

In the history of the Motherhouse it is worth mentioning the devotion to the Child Jesus, whose statue is venerated in the church of St. Charles. The first information about the image traces back to the middle of the 16th century; it was in the church of St. Gervase, demolished at the end of the 19th century, and was hence carried to the church of St. Charles and adorned in new vestments. Here it used to be exposed for public veneration only on Christmas. Fr. Francesco Tirondola became the ardent promoter of this devotion. In 1924 he had a small niche made at the entrance of the Church and then a rich side chapel in 1939, whose altar was consecrated on December 31 of the same year by Card. Raffaello C. Rossi. On August 23, 1941, Bishop Ersilio Menzani of Piacenza officially established the pious sodality of the Child Jesus with the scope of spreading this devotion and praying for migrants and their descendants. In December 1945, Fr. Anacleto Rocca, Rector of the Church of St. Charles, began the publication of a bimonthly, and then monthly, magazine, titled *Piccolo Messaggero del Bambino Gesù*. (Little Messenger of the Child Jesus) that lasted until 1964. The little statue, endowed with ex-votos, suffered two sacrilegious robberies in 1943 and 1949.



## THE HOUSE OF CRESPANO DEL GRAPPA AND THE NOVITIATE OF THE ITALIAN PROVINCE

Fr. Stanislao Fiscarelli served as Novice Master until 1959. The Novitiate was interrupted, however, for two years, from September 1950 to September 1952, because of a decision taken previously in 1947, that candidates should make their novitiate at a more mature age, and precisely after the first two years of college. During that period, the house of the Novitiate remained under the responsibility of Fr. Luigi Liber, as administrator. The 1957 General Chapter decided to move the Novitiate year back to the end of high school so that there were three classes of students who had to make their novitiate in the year 1958-1959. They were divided into three groups: one at Crespano with novice master, Fr. Fiscarelli; and the other two in the Scalabrini-O'Brien seminary of Cermetate, under the direction of Frs. Luigi Liber and Francesco Zanotto. In the fall of 1959 there was again one only novitiate at Crespano with Fr. Luigi Liber as Novice Master, and Fr. Stanislao Fiscarelli was named rector of the college seminary of Cermetate. Fr. Francesco Prevedello served as Superior of the house of Crespano from September 1963 to January 1965; after an interruption of one year the office of superior was reinstated and entrusted to Fr. Pio Ceccato in 1966-1969. Fr. Luigi Liber was succeeded as Novice Master in 1963-1964 by Fr. Antonio Bua, from the United States followed by Fr. Ernesto Seppi in 1964-1970.

In 1968, a small convent was built for the Sisters of the Child Jesus of Zagabria, who took charge of the domestic services till October 1970. The novitiate was once more suspended for the school years 1970-1972 because it was again delayed to a more mature age. It was resumed on September 2, 1972, with 5 young men from the Youth Group of Piacenza. By a decree of the General Administration dated June 14, 1972 the Scalabrini-Bonomelli Seminary of Rezzato had been designated as the temporary seat of the Novitiate. Fr. Mario Raccanello was appointed Master of Novices. Its transfer to the Pius XII Seminary of Loreto was authorized on July 12, 1973, and the Novitiate year 1973-1974 began there in on September 14, 1973 with a class of eleven novices. In 1974 the office of Master of Novices was

again entrusted to Fr. Ernesto Seppi. Fr. Roberto Zaupa succeeded him in 1978.

In 1970-71, the house of Crespano was the seat of a Center of Spirituality directed by Fr. Giovanni Saraggi; from 1971 to 1976 it was used as a boarding school for the children of Italian migrants of Switzerland and Germany. It was started in October 1971, but its official inauguration took place on May 27, 1972. It had sixty students who attended the public schools of Crespano. It was called Casa Scalabrini and it was placed under the direct dependence on the Scalabrinian Province of Switzerland and Germany! In 1972, its direction was entrusted to Fr. Luigi Zonta, to Fr. Emilio Bernardini in 1973, and to Fr. Angelo Marcato in 1974. In 1976, the boarding school was closed because of the drastic decrease of the students due to the crisis affecting Italian emigration to Switzerland and Germany.

#### THE SCALABRINI-TIRONDOLA SEMINARY OF BASSANO DEL GRAPPA

Fr. Giovanni Favero was its rector in the years 1939-1943. As mentioned above, in 1943, also the community of the Motherhouse was moved to Bassano because of the war. Fr. Francesco Prevedello was then the rector of both communities with two Vice Rectors to help him, one for each community.

Following the founding of the Repubblica Sociale Italiana (Repubblica di Salò, November 9, 1943), the seminary of Bassano was partially occupied for a time by the Air Force of the same Republic. On October 7, 1943, an Air Force Lieutenant Colonel served notice that the seminary would be occupied with the offices of the Air Force! Thus on October 8, the Prefect of Vicenza, Mr. Dinale, decreed the requisition within the following day. On October 9 the authorities gave orders to vacate the ground and first floors, except the church and the church hall, but on the 11th the students re-occupied the classrooms while waiting for the material of the Ministry to arrive from Rome.

In the meantime, on October 10th, Card. L. Maglione, Pius XII's Secretary of State, issued a decree declaring that the seminary could not be requisitioned without an accord with the highest authorities of the Church because it was under the direct dependence of the Holy

See. The decree was handed in to the Prefect Dinale, who suspended the requisition while waiting for an accord between the Ministry of the Air Force and the Holy See. The seminarians of the 4th year of High School were moved to Cermenate. The following days, strong on the decree of the Holy See, Fr. Tirondola resisted the repeated invitations to vacate. On November 3, following one last warning, he answered that he would give in only to force. On November 5, the Prefect of Vicenza confirmed his decree of requisition consequently to the agreements concluded between the Ministry of the Air Force and the Holy See. On November 7, some Air Force officers came up to the gates. Fr. Tirondola asked for the written decree by which the Prefect of Vicenza had threatened the day before to cut off water and electricity; then he had all the seminarians line up by the entrance. After half an hour of a heated discussion, the officers withdrew. Immediately afterwards, Fr. Tirondola presented himself to the City Hall, but the latter authorized the use of force, anyway! On his way back to the seminary he was met by the two Vice-Rectors who gave him a declaration, that had arrived only a few minutes earlier, signed by the Governor of Vatican City and undersigned by the German Ambassador to the Holy See: the Seminary, under the direct governance of the Holy See could not be requisitioned or searched. But at noon of the same November 7th the gates were broken in. The Officers met with Fr. Tirondola in the lobby who read to them the declaration of the Governor of Vatican City and repeated he did not grant any permission to enter the building. Soldiers began to clear out the classrooms with threats to occupy the whole seminary. By November 9, some kind of *modus vivendi* was reached: the Ministry occupied the ground and first floors of the wing facing Viale Scalabrini (Scalabrini Boulevard) and a few other rooms; the rest was left for the seminarians.

After a hazardous trip, a priest arrived from Rome on November 16, with a declaration in which Card. R.C. Rossi denied that any accord had been reached between Government and Holy See. Also from Rome an order reached the Prefect of Vicenza on November 19, to vacate the seminary and Mr. Dinale had no choice but to revoke his requisition decree. The ministry began gradually to leave the premises and by December 16 the seminary was totally free.

During the last two years of the war there were privations due to the great number of seminarians, but classes continued on normally and the seminary was never hit during the air raids. The lack of food, however, caused a few cases of tuberculosis; Bro. Eliodoro Zonta died on July 22, 1944, and Fr. Aristide Pagani, who contracted it in Germany, died on November 20, 1944.

The city of Bassano was liberated on April 29, 1945. On July 21, the clerics arrived from Rome together with the fifteen minor seminarians who had spent the first year of high school in Rome because of the separation of Italy in two opposed war zones. On August 29, Card. R.C. Rossi resumed the tradition of his annual vacations at the Bassano Seminary. On March 1, 1946, work began on the chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart, which was consecrated by Card. Rossi on September 7, 1947. Fr. Tirondola was rector of the seminary from 1945 to 1946, and, following the term of Fr. Renato Belzoni from 1946-1951, again he directed it until 1959, when he went as a missionary to Geneva, Switzerland! He was succeeded by Frs. Francesco Zanotto (1953-1963), Carlo Galli (1963-1969), Pietro Celotto (1969-1975), and Luigi Dal Bianco. In 1970 the junior high school section was given official state accreditation and the junior and sophomore high school students were housed here, whereas during the preceding twenty years it had hosted only junior college students, except for the two periods 1943-1946 and 1966-70, when it was home also for students of Theology.

#### THE SCALABRINI O'BRIEN SEMINARY - CERMENATE, COMO

Fr. Renato Bolzoni was officially appointed rector on August 27, 1941, and directed the seminary till 1946. During those years, the seminary of Cermenate housed junior college; the juniors and sophomores were added in 1943; the newly ordained priests made here their fourth year of theology for the two subsequent scholastic years 1944-1945 and 1945-1946. The war ended without damages, except for a few days of panic due to air raids, a momentary take over on the part of the German army, and scarcity of food. Frs. Augusto Parinetto died here of meningitis on June 12, 1945 at the age of 26. Junior College was transferred to Cermenate in 1946, with Fr. Giulivo Tassarolo

as Rector in 1946-49, and Fr. Marco Caliaro in 1949-51. In the years 1951-58, the Seminary hosted the students of Junior College, separated from the Senior College students of Philosophy. The Seminary was turned into a Novitiate for the scholastic year 1958-59, as noticed before. In 1951-1953 the seminary was directed by Fr. Anacleto Rocca; in 1953-55, by Fr. Giovanni Battista Sacchetti; and in 1955-1959 by Fr. Francesco Zanotto.

All the four years of College were once again joined together here in 1959. In the scholastic year 1964-65, the 5th year of high school was also held here. The Junior College was accredited by the state school system on October 1, 1970. The fourth year of College, devoted to an intensified study of philosophy was eliminated, and philosophy was made an integral part of the four years of Theology!

The Rectors were the following: Fr. Stanislao Fiscarelli (1959-1963), Fr. Bruno Mioli (1963-1966), Fr. Pasquale Viglione (1966-1970), Fr. Carlo Galli (1970-1973), and Fr. Angelo Ceccato (1973-1977).

Within the plan of a reorganization of the seminaries of Italian Province it was decided in 1976 to transfer the College to the Motherhouse of Piacenza: the transfer took place in the summer of 1977, and the General Administration authorized at the same time the sale of the house of Cermenate.

### THE SCALABRINI-BONOMELLI SEMINARY, REZZATO, BRESCIA

No sooner did Fr. Francesco Tirondola get well from the sickness that had made all fear for his life than he was on the trail in search of a building in the territory of Brescia for another minor seminary. By the middle of 1946 he began negotiations for the purchase of Villa Avogadro-Fenaroli in Rezzato, Brescia, owned by the "Spedali Civili" corporation of Brescia, to which the late owner, Lady Rosa Lombardi, had willed it in 1931. The scenic summer Villa of Count Avogadro-Fenaroli had been designed by Architect Giovanni Battista Marchetti, who completed the central section in 1731; his son Antonio added the double staircase and the decorations of the internal façade, and the eastern wing, completed in 1747. The preliminaries for the purchase of the Villa were signed on January 31, 1947, and authorized by the Holy See on February 15, and by the Italian Government on

November 25. Works of restoration and adaptations were immediately begun on the building damaged during the war by Italian, German and American troops. A group of 50 senior high school seminarians arrived there from Bassano del Grappa on December 7, 1947, and on the following day the seminary, named after Bishops Scalabrini and Bonomelli, a native of the diocese of Brescia, was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. Fr. Francesco Milini was the acting rector for a month, when he was named Provincial Superior of France. Fr. Giovanni Favero was appointed rector in January-1948, but he left on July 12, 1949 for Switzerland where he placed in charge of those missions. Fr. Angelo Corso succeeded him until 1951. The following Fathers succeeded each other as rectors since then: Giovanni Battista Sacchetti, 1955-1957; Mario Francesconi, 1957-1958; again Renato Bolzoni, 1958-1963; Valentino Ziliotto, 1963-1966; Giuseppe Contessa, 1966-1969; Carlo Galli, 1969-1970; Ernesto Seppi, 1970-1974; again Giuseppe Contessa, 1974-1975; Ampelio Bortolato, acting rector, 1975-1976; Silvano Guglielmi, 1976- 1977; and Romano Cerantola.

The Scalabrini-Bonomelli seminary was home to the high school seniors in 1941-1949, and again in 1949-1951 and 1953-1954; to seniors and junior high school in 1954-1953; to fifth high, seniors, and third median, in 1954-1955; to all classes of high and median school in 1955-1970, except for the years 1964-1965 and 1967-1968 when no fifth year high school was held; only the junior high school students have resided there since 1970.

In the summer of 1957 work began on the construction of the right wing of the villa as already envisioned by architect Antonio Marchetti, though still leaving its exterior incomplete. The internal section was turned by architect Antonio Mantini into a chapel dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, whose triumph was frescoed on the apse by artist Victor Trainini. The rustic house was in use since June 1958, but its refinishing was completed only in 1964. In 1971, Fr. Francesco Milini gave life to a Migration Documentation Center, with headquarters in the seminary of Rezzato, with the scope of carrying out a work of sensitization, study and research on Italian migration and of collaboration with the diocese of Brescia in the pastoral care for migrants.

## PIUS XII SEMINARY, LORETO, ANCONA

On October 4, 1960, a small minor seminary began at the St. St. Charles Institute in Osimo, with 23 senior high school students with Fr. Giovanni Sofia as rector and director of the Institute, and of Fr. Silvio Stefanelli vice rector. In the school year 1961-1962 there were 8 elementary school students, 22 in junior high school; during the 1962-1963 school year, the 7 high school students were transferred to the seminary of Rezzato. In 1963, Fr. Francesco Zanotto was named rector of the seminarians.

The cohabitation with the other boarding students of the Institute was becoming more and more difficult. The 1963 General Chapter decided to turn a new wing of the Institute, then under construction, into a minor seminary; but not all difficulties could eventually be eliminated by this new arrangement, and so the Provincial Superior, Fr. Renato Belzoni was authorized to seek another solution. On November 21, 1963, he visited the Villa Pius XII or house for pilgrims built by the Bishop of Loreto Gaetano Malchiodi in 1949-1950; he sought information from the Pontifical Administration of the Holy House of Loreto, which owned the property, and he discovered the house was up for sale. The General Administration authorized him in December 1963 to begin negotiations, which were successfully brought to a conclusion in May 1964. In the meantime, it was decided to celebrate the 25th priestly anniversary of the General Superior Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo on June 29, 1964, as an occasion to launch a campaign for the raising of the funds needed for the purchase of the building. The campaign was organized by a Committee under the high patronage of Card. Carlo Confalonieri, Acting-Prefect of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. All Scalabrinian Provinces responded to the appeal, thus making it possible to purchase it and to name it Pius XII Seminary. Adaptation works lasted from July to December 1964. However, already by the beginning of October the seminarians had been transferred from Osimo to Loreto; the official inauguration was held on December 10, 1964, feast of the translocation of the Holy House of Loreto. The seminary was then housing junior high school students. It became the seat of the novitiate in 1973.



The Rectors succeeded each other in the following order: Fr. Francesco Zanotto, 1964-1976; Fr. Achille Taborelli, 1967-1970; Fr. Renzo Marcon, 1970- 1973; Fr. Angelo Bresolin, 1973-1978; Fr. Romano Corradi, 1978.

### SCALABRINI SEMINARY, SIPONTO, FOGGIA

In March 1966, the Provincial Superior Fr. Renato Bolzoni, on the lookout to finally open a seminary in Southern Italy, had a meeting with Archbishop Andrea Cesarano of Manfredonia who offered two small parishes, St. Andrew of the Fishermen in Manfredonia, and St. Mary the Queen in Siponto, with the possibility for establishing there a house of formation. Soon afterwards, the Archbishop made a proposal to place the pastor of St. Mary the Queen in charge also of the bishop's high school of the Sacred Heart of Manfredonia.

In July 1966, Fr. Silvio Stefanelli took possession of the parish of St. Mary the Queen, in Siponto, assisted by Fr. Mario Marchiori, with the special task of vocation recruiting. In August Fr. Ottaviano Sartori was named pastor of St. Andrew and president of the Sacred Heart high school of Manfredonia. All three were residing in the rectory of St. Mary the Queen.

In 1967, Archbishop Cesarano asked Senator Grazuiccia Giuntoli, owner of several buildings around the church of St. Mary, to donate one of them to the Scalabrinians to open a social center and a minor seminary. The Lady Senator promised to rent them a building in March 1968 and in April, Bishop Antonio Cunial, Apostolic Administrator of Manfredonia, granted his approval.

The Scalabrini Apostolic School was opened on October 1, 1968, with 22 students, and officially inaugurated on November 4, 1968. In 1970, the Scalabrinians rented the building next door, the summer recreation center St. Maria Goretti, owned by the Italian Women Association.

It was thus possible to host 85 junior high school students. In 1971-1972, the students had classes at the seminary; in 1972-1973 they attended classes at the Manfredonia public high school; from 1974 to 1977, they were moved to the seminary of Carmiano, Lecce.



The succession of rectors: Silvio Stefanelli, 1968- 1969; Giuseppe Contessa, 1969-1972; Achille Taborelli, 1972- 1978, followed by Fr. Luciano Piccoli with Fr. Angelo Bresolin in charge of the religious community of Siponto which includes the priests assigned to the parish of St. Mary the Queen.

#### THE SCALABRINIAN HOUSE OF CARMIANO, LECCE

In 1972, the Fathers of Siponto established their first contacts with Bishop Francesco Minerva of Lecce in view of securing the Scalabrinian presence in the peninsula salentina. The Bishop hinted at the possibility of a transferal of the title of ownership of the Salesian Institute in the vicinity of Carmiano, about 12 km from Lecce. The Salesians had been using it for almost 20 years and had opened an Apostolic School for 60 or 70 students which had been operating for ten years, and had been closed 5 years earlier, along with an youth oratory. They had decided to withdraw to strengthen their position in more important places. In June 1973 the Bishop renewed the offer to Fr. Silvio Stefanelli; in August, the Provincial Superior Fr. Bruno Mioli had an audience with the Bishop who showed himself willing to secure from the Salesians the donation of the Institute of Carmiano to the Scalabrinians, who could thus start a vocational center and open a seminary, on condition that they would revive the oratory or youth center and work for the diocese in the field of emigration. Bishop Minerva granted permission to open the religious house on August 1, 1974; Fr. Silvio Stefanelli had already arrived on January 24 and was already reorganizing the oratory through religious/recreational activities.

In October 1974, the seminary began functioning with about 20 senior high school students.

In 1974-1976 it was directed by Fr. Carlo Galli, followed by Fr. Ettore Zentile since 1976. In 1977, Fr. Bruno Mioli gave life to a diaspora seminary or a pre-seminary, counting 30 candidates who are followed within their own families and parishes, and are periodically gathered at the seminary of Carmiano for a course of vocational orientation.



## CHAPTER III

### OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PROVINCE OF THE SACRED HEART

#### THE SHRINE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN OF THE CASTELLO, RIVERGARO, PIACENZA

As seen above, (Vol. V), Fr. Carlo Porrini was rector of the shrine from 1937 until 1956. In 1939 the church was lengthened behind the main altar, without touching the apse, so that its length was extended from 16 to 28 meters, the altar, however, remained in the middle of the church. In 1944 the apse was torn down and in 1946 the altar was pushed back to its present location. In 1948 the statue of the Blessed Mother was chosen for the "Peregrinatio Mariae" down the Trebbia Valley. The 50th anniversary of its crowning was celebrated in 1952. In February 1956, Fr. Porrini fell sick and died at Piacenza on March 29.

The Shrine of Rivergaro was under the care of Fr. Guido Agosti for several months, until September 1956, when Fr. Giuseppe Foscaglio, already 75, was named its rector. He had to retire, however, in 1958 to the seminary of Bassano del Grappa, where he died on June 23, 1961. Fr. Giuseppe Favarato served as rector from July 1958 until early 1962. He had some important repair and restoration works done in both the church and the rectory. His successor, Fr. Oreste Tondelli (1962-1966) completed the works with the new decoration of the shrine's interior. Fr. Cesare Zanconato succeeded him in October 1966 until the end of 1969, followed, after a brief return of Fr. Oreste Tondelli, by Fr. Giuseppe Vigolo (1970) who gave start to the construction of the "Casa del Pellegrino".

#### "CASA MARIA ASSUNTA", ARCO

As early as since 1932 Card. Rossi had been urging Fr. Tirondola to set aside one of the Scalabrinian houses of Italy as a rest and nursing home for the elderly and ailing religious no longer able to remain

in the missions. At first several elderly religious were housed at the General House and at the seminaries of Bassano and Cermenate. In 1946, after WWII, Fr. Tironcola, who had always entertained the idea of reserving a special residence for the elderly and sick religious, was authorized to look for one, especially because some religious had to be taken to various sanitariums having contracted tuberculosis during the war. On May 28, 1947, upon the advice of the Superior General of the Combonians, he purchased a property with two houses built at the end of the 19th century in Via Capitelli in Arco, Trent, a resort town famous for the care of tuberculosis. The buildings were owned by the Brothers of the Immaculate Conception who had just moved into a larger building.

Named after the Assumption of Mary, the house was opened on August 12, 1947 with four residents. Its first superior was Fr. Angelo Ceccato (August-December 1947), followed by Fr. Mario Francesconi (January-April 1948), again by Fr. Angelo Ceccato (1948-1949), and then by Frs. Antonio Migazzi (1949-1951), Paolino Rizzi (1951), Giuseppe Bernardi (1951-1954), substituted often first by Fr. William Ferronato, and then by Fr. Paolino Rizzi. From September 1954 until 1957 the community was again directed by Fr. Antonio Migazzi and, from 1957 until January 25, 1959, by Fr. Giuseppe Bernardi, who died on the train from Trent to Bassano. He was succeeded by Fr. Girolamo Angeli in 1959, and then in 1960 by Fr. Cesare Molinari, who died on March 7, 1961.

Though very sick, Fr. Lorenzo Zanellato served as Rector from 1961 until October 11, 1968, when he died. From then until 1970 the house was directed by Fr. Mario Ginocchini, followed by Fr. Achille Taborelli until 1972 and by Fr. Angelo Bresolin until the end of 1973. Fr. Renzo Marcon is superior as of 1976.

The first of the two buildings was restored and a chapel was built in 1948; in the second residence were housed the Sister Apostles of the Sacred Heart, entrusted with the care of the sick. On February 7, 1950, the Commission of the regional government of Trentino-Alto Adige ratified the establishment of the "Maria Assunta" sanitarium with 12 beds for tuberculosis patients. With the disappearance of the sickness in 1969 the same government discontinued authorization. Henceforth the house became a rest home for the elderly and sickly

religious, but it remained almost empty, so that it could be used also as the seat of the Provincial Government in 1969-1973, and of a minor seminary with 28 students in October 1969, 29 in October 1970, 28 in October 1971, and 17 in October 1972.

In the meantime the number of elderly and sick missionaries kept increasing, so that by the years 1972-1974 new improvements became necessary in the first building with the addition of six more rooms on the top floor, and finally with a complete restructuring of the second building in 1977-1978.

### PARISH OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER, ROME

From a letter of Msgr. Pietro Piacenza to Bish. Scalabrini dated February 18, 1901 (A.G.S., 544/2) we gather that the Founder entertained the desire for a church and a house for his missionaries in Rome. Msgr. Piacenza himself informed him in 1905 that the Church of the Stigmata in the Prati section of Rome would probably be placed at his disposal. Bish. Scalabrini sent an immediate petition for it to Card. Respighi, Vicar of Rome:

“For a long time have I desired that the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Charles for Italian Migrants might have a house and a church in Rome. This desire of mine is stronger than ever now, when a project is in the process of realization that will certainly earn great honor for the Holy See and much good for souls.” (A.G.S. 544/2).

These words of March 27, 1905, were in reference to his project of a Central Congregation or Commission “For Catholic Migrants”. Card. Respighi felt caught in the middle: on one side he did not want to deny Bish. Scalabrini’s desire, on the other he wouldn’t have liked to have to “Roman Clergy up in arms”. But the projects fell through with Bish. Scalabrini’s death on June 1! Card. De Lai too had attempted to secure a church for Scalabrinians in Rome. Card. R.C. Rossi spoke to Card. Pacelli in 1931 to the effect of obtaining the church and rectory of St. Catherine della Rota; but this project was combined with that of the sale of the Casa Generalizia in Via Calandrelli to pay for the expenses of the new seminary of Bassano. The promoter of the idea of a parish in Rome was Fr. Francesco Tirondola, who made the proposal in 1941 of asking for the church of the Santi Patroni by

the Trastevere rail road station, then under construction; but Card. Rossi threw cold water on the idea and neither would the Card. Vicar entrust the church to religious. The Vicariate wanted instead to give them the parishes of the outskirts and to those who petitioned to have one it served them notice that they had to build the church at their own expenses in the location indicated by the Vicar himself. In 1945-1946, Card. Rossi asked the Card. Vicar Marchetti Selvaggiani for a parish on the outskirts for the exercise of the ministry by the Fathers of the Casa Generalizia. The Vicar gave an affirmative answer consenting to give a parish and pledging the construction of the house for the religious, while they, in turn, were to build the church at their own expenses.

At the extraordinary Council meeting held in Bassano in September 1947, the Provincial Superiors pledged their support to the project of Fr. Tironola of using the money that had been set aside for the purchase of Villa Premoli, adjacent to the Casa Generalizia for the acquisition of a piece of land in the outskirts, not too far from downtown where to build the church, first, and a new Casa Generalizia at a later date. Though not openly contrary, this time too Card. Rossi cautioned him against the difficulties of both the cost and the distance of the location; in fact, shortly before he died, he decided to go ahead with the carrying out of the project of the construction of a church and a parochial school. The Card. Vicar told them that he would grant authorization for the purchase of the land, but also that he could not supply any financial help.

Upon securing the approval of Card. A.G. Piazza, in August 1949, the General Council presented formal petition to the Card. Vicar that the parish of the Most Holy Redeemer, in Via Gran Paradiso, in Valmelaina on the north side of the city, be entrusted to Scalabrinians, with the pledge on their part to build as early as possible the church and a parish center, asking permission, at the same time, for the purchase of the land needed for it. A lot measuring 4933 m<sup>2</sup> was purchased acquired on the north-east side of the provisional chapel of the Holy Redeemer, built in 1933 by the Opera Pontificia for the Preservation of the Faith and until then served by diocesan priests.

The parish, made up at the time of a cluster of about 1,500 families from Rome's historic center, from Cassino, the Ciociaria, and even

from Algeria and Egypt, was taken July 14, 1950 by Fr. Leonardo Quaglia as pastor and Fr. Giacomo Battaglia, assistant, joined later by Fr. Giovanni Saraggi. The decree by which the parish was entrusted to the Scalabrinians carries the date of the July 22, 1950.

Fr. Quaglia, to whom most of the credit must be given for the construction in 1953 of the movie theater, was succeeded by Fr. Giacomo Battaglia on May 14, 1953. Fr. Quaglia died in 1956. In the same year, the young assistant Fr. Bruno Barbieri also died while attempting to retrieve a ball from the Aniene River near Vicovaro, where he was camping with the boys of the parish. In 1957, the Vicariate established the new parish of San Clemente covering the new sections of the parish. In 1958 the chapel of Fidene was also separated.

In the meantime, however, large residential complexes were progressively being built, so much so that the 3,800 families of 1962 grew to 4,500 in 1963. Not finding room in the church of the Holy Redeemer, quite a few people began attending other churches. In earlier years, besides the movie theatre, also the rectory and the hall that had been used as the church had been restored. The ball field was inaugurated by Card. Micara on January 27, 1952, upon initiative of the Roman Provincial Committee of the Italian Sport Center. Furthermore, five more places of worship were opened, two of them 7 km from the parish center, and other three 9 km.

Fr. Valentino Andriolo was appointed administrator on October 12, 1959, and Pastor in 1963. He launched a campaign in 1960 for the construction of a new church respondent to the needs of the people. Less than 200 families pledged monthly payments of 1,000 or 500 liras. As the new housing developments were heading in the direction of Via Salaria, it was decided to build the church in a more accessible location on the corner of Via Gran Paradiso and Via Monte Ruggero. Part of the land bought in 1949 was then exchanged on equal terms in 1964 with a piece of land located in the place chosen as the construction site. The decision to build, however, was made by the Provincial Administration only in June 1968: 3 years were needed to finalize the projects and 3 more to secure permission from Rome's City Hall and the pledge for the state's subsidy. The long bureaucratic procedures were concluded in early 1975, mostly by Fr. Giovanni Saraggi, pastor since October 1972. It was decided to build only the church at

first, due to the fast increasing costs and the decrease of the percentage of the government's contribution. On May 31, 1975, the cornerstone was finally blessed by Auxiliary Bish. Zanera and on March 6, 1977 Card. Vicar Ugo-Poletti inaugurated the church. Fr. Francesco Zanotto is the pastor since 1975. The present population amounts to between 30 and 35,000.

#### "CASA ALPINA SCALABRINI" AT VILLABASSA, BOLZANO

Following some experiments in renting buildings for the summer vacations especially of the religious students residing in Italy, in 1952 Fr. Tirondola was asked to come up with a final solution and settle the matter. In the spring of 1952, the Piandimaia Hotel in Villabassa, Bolzano, in Val Pusteria (at 1,234 m in altitude), became available. The Superior General Fr. Francesco Prevedello authorized the purchase on April 30, 1952; the deed of purchase was signed in August, but adaptation work had already started in early June and by the middle of July, the building, renamed "Casa Alpina Scalabrini" and with a capacity for 100 guests, housed the first group of religious for their summer vacations in the mountains. In the last years, the "Casa Alpina" gradually lost its character as seat of the summer vacations for the clerics, while other activities were intensified such as camp schools for youth, courses for families, vacations for the students of our minor seminaries.

#### GENOA: DIRECTION OF SHIP CHAPLAINS AND APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

We recall, first of all, that in 1920 the "Opera dei Missionari di Emigrazione of St. Anthony of Padua", founded by Msgr. Coccolo, had been placed by the Sacred Consistorial Congregation under the direct dependence of the Superior General of Scalabrinians until 1923, and that its director, Fr. Tito Crespi, was provost of St. Benedict in Genoa since 1912. (Vol. IV).

The direction of Msgr. Coccolo's Institute had been in Genoa until 1919, when it was moved to Rome together with Fr. Crespi. This explains why the Scalabrinian Fr. Vittorio Gregori was pastor from 1920 to April 1926 of St. Benedict, a very small parish practically embracing only Palazzo Doria with 80 parishioners. By concession of Prince



Doria Pamphily, the office of the Secretariat for Overseas Migrants of Msgr. Coccolo's Institute continued to have its seat at St. Benedict. Following WWI, however, its activity was reduced to housing sea chaplains or missionaries passing through the port of Genoa and to some practices for the assistance of emigrants, who by then were very few because of the blocking of emigration to the United States.

"*Italica Gens*" too was active in Genoa, and Fr. Gregori was not personally interested in activities of the Secretariat. For these reasons, in accord with Card. Minoretti, Archbishop of Genoa, Card. G. De Lai ordered Fr. Gregori to resign the parish of St. Benedict. In February 1926, the same Cardinal urged him: "The parish must be vacated for your successor, in order not to create interruptions or difficulties for the spiritual assistance to emigrants and for the other purposes of the house of St. Benedict." (Card. De Lai to Fr. V. Gregori, Rome, February 8, 1926-A.G.S., 536/9). Amongst the "other purposes" the Cardinal himself mentioned a "center for coordination and reference for the ship chaplains and a secretariat of assistance to migrants."

In 1941, informed of the death of the ship chaplain who was pastor of St. Benedict, Fr. Tironbola wrote to Card. R.C. Rossi asking him permission to sound out the possibility of entrusting the church back to the Scalabrinians. Card. Boetto, Archbishop of Genoa, could not respond to the request for reasons beyond his control. We know that another request to this respect was directed by Card. Rossi to Archbishop Siri of Genoa in November 1947. The Archbishop answered that he had the intention of making St. Benedict the parish of the harbor with priests engaged with port workers (ONARMO) and in the "Apostleship of the Sea". As to the Scalabrinians, whose presence he would "quite favorably" welcome in Genoa, he could perhaps study the feasibility of some other arrangement. The solution came in 1953, when Fr. Astengo, a Discalced Carmelite, pastor of the Church of St. Charles and director of Ship Chaplains asked Card. A.G. Piazza for a priest to be employed full time in such office, located by the same church of St. Charles on Via Balbi. In agreement with Card. Siri, on October 24, 1953, Card. Piazza appointed Fr. Anacleto Rocca as the National Director of Ship Chaplains. Fr. Rocca took possession of his office on the following November 10, taking up provisional residence with the Carmelites of the church of St. Charles. A few months later

he secured an independent location in a villa on 6, Piazza Negro, adjacent to the offices of the Apostleship of the Sea. The apartment was bought by the Sacred Consistorial Congregation in 1954 and furnished by the Scalabrinians. Card. Siri inaugurated it on March 24, 1954. The following summer Fr. Rocca was joined by another confrere. Fr. Rocca rented also a small apartment at the "Stazione Marittima dei Mille" from the managing authorities of the port. By the end of 1954, Fr. Rocca secured a ship chaplain for 32 ships against the 24 of earlier times. At the close of 1955 all Italian ships engaged in transportation of emigrants had their chaplain; as to foreign ships, by delegation from the Holy See the needed faculties were granted to passenger priests.

After the Hungarian revolution of 1956, a Hungarian chaplain could be secured for the refugees who sailed for America or Australia. It was by the insistence of Fr. Rocca that the Sacred Consistorial Congregation enacted in 1954 the "Norms and Faculties of Ship Chaplains", and that the "Sindacato Generale Armatori" ("General Union of Shipowners") raised the chaplains to the status of third Officer. An agreement was signed in 1959 with the "Compagnie Armatrici of the F.I.N.M.A.R.E. group that regularized the norms, the economic benefits, and the social securities of chaplains.

The directors of ship chaplains worked in collaboration with the Apostleship of the Sea; in fact, there was a time when Card. Siri entrusted for a while the religious assistance of the seat of Genoa to Fr. Rocca. The same Cardinal appointed in 1960 Fr. Rocca as Assistant to the Emigration Centre, where 11,852 migrants were assisted in 1961. In October 1963, when Fr. Rocca was elected a General Councilor and had to move to Rome, the direction of Sea Chaplains was entrusted to Msgr. Mario Bigarella.

At the same time, Card. Siri allowed the Scalabrinians to remain in Genoa with a house and a center of their own. An apartment was then purchased on 8, Via Don Vincenzo Minetti, in hope of securing a field of apostolate proper to the Congregation. In the same month of October, Fr. Pio Ceccato, who had been in Genoa since February as an assistant to Fr. Rocca, began officiating at the oratory of our Lady of the Rosary on the Salita San Francesco di Paola, which belonged to the parish of St. Theodore. In November he was named chaplain

of the "Centro Emigrazione" run by the government whose services were discontinued a few months later because of lack of migrants. By the end of the year he moved into an apartment on Via Minetti which he titled to "St. Raphael". In August 1964 Fr. Pio Ceccato was appointed rector of the Collegio San Carlo in Rome. His place was taken in September by Fr. Giovanni Sofia. On several occasions, vague probabilities were prospected for a resumption of activities respondent to the scope of the Congregation; but the fact is that Fr. Sofia had to be contented with a limited ministry at the oratory of the Holy Rosary, the teaching of religion in state schools, and a certain degree of collaboration with the Diocesan Committee for Migrants (for nomads).

In 1970, Card. Siri made the proposal of entrusting the administration and the direction of the Apostleship of the Sea to the Scalabrinian Community with quarters on 6, Piazza di Negro, which had been founded in 1954 with the title "Apostleship of the Sea - Stella Maria." Fr. Pio Ceccato returned to in Genoa, in March 1970 and began work as an assistant to Fr. Angelo Costa, while Fr. Sofia began restructuring the institution. In September of the same year Fr. Anacleto Rocca returned to Genoa and was named director of "Stella Maris." On October 1 Card. Siri stipulated a provisional contract with the Italian Province of the Scalabrinians. Fr. Rocca was given two more confreres.

In 1971, some 10,447 seamen were counted as guests of the center, 80% of them foreigners; 811 ships were visited, on which 45 Sunday masses were celebrated; 134 sick seamen were attended to in hospitals; 79 Masses were celebrated on board; and the seamen frequenting the "Stella Maris" increased to about 18,000. The "Casa San Raffaele" of Via Minetti was sold in 1972. The center began helping and giving shelter also to seamen in search of a job beyond the physical limits of the house. This type of assistance was intensified beginning with 1975 given the worsening of the crisis of the maritime sector.

#### "ISTITUTO SAN CARLO", OSIMO, ANCONA

In 1952, Fr. Carlo Rossini, a Scalabrinian with no vows, proposed to turn over all his royalties as a composer of Sacred Music, much ap-

preciated in the United States, to the founding of an orphanage in his hometown of Osimo, whose administration and direction were to be entrusted to the Congregation. The General Administration declared it would accept the proposition only upon completion of the institution on condition that it would not be financially burdensome and it were free to extend the scope of the institution in accord with that of the Congregation. An agreement was reached in 1955: the institute would host the children of emigrants, setting aside a few openings for orphans of Osimo, for a program of assistance, education, and professional training.

In May 1958, Fr. Rossini purchased 11 hectares of land southwest of Osimo, and in July work began on a project of architects Innocenzo and Agostino Sabbatini. On September 17, 1958, Card. Marcello Mimmi blessed the corner stone, on November 4, 1959, Bish. Domenico Brizi, of Osimo and Cingoli, blessed the first halls and said the first Mass in a provisional chapel. The director, Fr. Giovanni Sofia, and Fr. Silvio Stefanelli, who were guests in the bishop's house while supervising the work, moved into the "tower", the central building meant for administration and general services, which was handed over by the construction firm though not complete, on December 24, 1959.

The first student was admitted on January 5, 1960. The school year began on January 7, 1960, with 36 students, in the two "coordinated sections" of the State Professional School of Industry of Ancona. This way, with sources for mechanic workers and electrical technicians, the Center of Professional Training for industrial workers authorized and financed by the Ministry of Public Instruction, opened also to day-students began functioning. The following school year the boarding students grew from 8 to 31; the department for mechanic turners was added and, later on, also the section of Industry Training School in coordination with that of Castelfidardo, Ancona. By the beginning of the academic year 1962-1963 the "Istituto San Carlo" had already 223 students, 103 of them boarders. When Fr. Rossini's resources ran out in 1959, the General Administration came in to cover the costs on condition that the Institute should also include a minor seminary which had its start on October 4, 1960, as said before, to be transferred in October 1964 to the new "Pius XII" seminary of Loreto.

With the beginning of the school year 1964-1965, the Direction of the Istituto San Carlo was entrusted to Fr. Giovanni Saraggi, who carried out a vast propaganda campaign in the missions of Switzerland and Germany so that by the opening of the year 1966-1967 the boarding students of the Institute had grown to 205: 98% of them originated from Southern Italy, 65% of whom had their parents migrants in Switzerland or Germany.

To accommodate them all, in October 1961, work was started on a vast six story building with gymnasium and sport fields. The students continued to frequent their professional courses in the Institute, and while attending public schools for elementary classes, lower and upper high schools, college, teachers' and accounting schools. In 1969 the boarding students reached the 235 mark. In March 1965 the "Istituto San Carlo" was turned over from the General Administration to the responsibility of the Italian Province. From 1967 until 1975 it was directed by Fr. Francesco Zanotto; in 1975-1976 by Fr. Renzo Marcon; since 1977 by Fr. Bernardo Zonta. On August 6, 1978, Fr. Carlo Rossini died at the age of 85 in the Institute he had founded.

In 1976 number of the boarding students needed to be reduced to provide them with a more adequate education; part of the Institute was therefore rented to the city of Osimo for the professional or trade school, separating it all together from the boarding school. Work was started on the church in 1976. Archbishop Marco Maccari of Ancona, also administrator of the diocese of Osimo, asked right away that it be used also for pastoral purposes of the surrounding area in full expansion. When the church was completed, on December 7, 1976, the same Archbishop entrusted the Italian Province of the Scalabrinians with the Parish of "San Bartolomeo della Pietà" in Osimo, transforming this church into a rectory and moving the parish to the church of the Istituto San Carlo. Its first Scalabrinian pastor, Fr. Silvio Stefanelli, took possession of it on January 15, 1977.

#### THE PARISHES OF "SANTA MARIA REGINA" IN SIPONTO, AND OF "SANT'ANDREA APOSTOLO" IN MANFREDONIA, FOGGIA.

As pointed out in the preceding chapter, when the Provincial Administration of Italy was searching in 1966 for a place in Southern Italy

where to open a seminary, Archbishop Andrea Cesarano of Manfredonia offered an opportunity on condition that the Scalabrinians would accept two parishes: that of "Sant'Andrea Apostolo" in Manfredonia, and that of Santa Maria Regina in Siponto. Siponto is a community 4 km from Manfredonia and 25 km east of Foggia, inhabited in 1966 by about 30 families in town and by the so-called landowners in the surrounding countryside; who came in from afar to take over the farms entrusted to them by the Fascist government following its land reclamation works: the total number parishioners did not exceed 300. However, in July through September, and on weekends, the population would grow to a few thousands, partly coming in from Foggia, many of whom had their second home in Siponto, and partly from Manfredonia, to take advantage of the beach facilities of that shore in the center of which stands the church of Santa Maria Regina. It was built in 1960-1962 with funds provided by the "Cassa del Mezzogiorno" (a Government Development Agency for Southern Italy). Much credit for it is due to the efforts of Fr. Luigi Misana who served the church until his death on December 27, 1964. Provisionally succeeding one another, several priests administered the church. Only Fr. Guido Zanoli remained there for six months before being transferred to the parish of Sant'Andrea Apostolo. After him, the priests of the parish of Holy Cross in Manfredonia, especially Fr. Michael Zezza, took care of the church of Siponto. According to the agreement with the Archbishop, the Scalabrinians reached Manfredonia on July 5, 1966. Fr. Silvio Stefanelli was officially named first pastor of Santa Maria Regina and took possession of it on July 6, 1966. With him was also Fr. Luigi Liber, who returned to his office as rector of Piacenza in August, upon the arrival of Fr. Ottaviano Sartori, who took charge of the parish of Sant'Andrea. At Siponto Fr. Stefanelli found himself confronted with two problems: the religious neglect of the landowners and the proselytism of the Evangelists. To remedy these drawbacks he began a program of frequent contact with the families and a persistent religious instruction, opened a kindergarten and gave life to a small tailoring school. He was given another priest as an assistant, with the main task, however, of promoting vocations. A few years later, the region near Manfredonia began to be abandoned by the farmers, while Manfredonia was expanding in the direction

of Siponto. A subsidiary chapel dedicated to St. Peter, with an annex of hall and recreation center, was built in 1972 along the state road Foggia-Manfredonia to serve the 400 families of the new settlement. In January 1974, Fr. Stefanelli was sent to prepare the ground for the opening of the seminary of Carmiano, Lecce. He was succeeded for a year as acting pastor by Fr. Achille Taborelli; Fr. Silvano Guglielmi was pastor from 1975 to 1977; Fr. A. Taborelli in 1977-1978; Fr. Valentino Andriolo since 1978. With decree of Archbishop Cesarano dated Nov. 21, 1966, the "Pia Unione Scalabriniana 'Mater Migrantium' of the Perpetual Suffrage" was officially erected in the church of Santa Maria Regina of Siponto, with the purpose of uniting the friends and cooperators of the Scalabrinian Congregation by a spiritual bond of prayers and suffrages, giving them the opportunity to combine their own contributions of charity towards the enhancement of the works of the Scalabrinian apostolate. The former Superior General, Fr. Francesco Prevedello, was assistant to the parish of Santa Maria Regina since 1974 and died there on October 6, 1978 on his way to bring Holy Communion to the sick.

The parish of Sant'Andrea Apostolo by the sea, included the "Fishermen's Village", inhabited partly by fishermen, and partly by professionals and blue-collar workers. This parish too is quite small: it counts about 300 parishioners. The church was built in 1959-1960 by the west side of the pier. It was raised to a parish in 1963; it was cared for by a priest, the president of the "Sacred Heart Institute" of Manfredonia, founded by Archbishop Cesarano, with a high school and a junior college officially accredited by the state. The Archbishop asked the Scalabrinians that the pastor appointed to Sant'Andrea would assume also the direction of the "Sacred Heart Institute". To this purpose, Fr. Ottaviano Sartori was sent to accept both tasks. From the standpoint of the pastoral life, religious attendance was poor; only 25% or 30% frequented the Sunday mass, and they were mostly women. Quite large instead was the presence of children, for whom a kindergarten was opened. In 1968, Fr. Sartori withdrew from the "Sacred Heart Institute". Fr. Angelo Solini became pastor of Sant'Andrea, succeeded in 1976 by Fr. Lino Celeghin. In 1978, the parish was returned to the chancery of Manfredonia.



### THE "ZACCAGNINO FOUNDATION" OF SANNICANDRO, FOGGIA

Born of an inheritance left by Dr. Vincenzo Zaccagnino of Sannicandro Garganico for the assistance of poor children of that little town, the "Zaccagnino Foundation" had given life in 1945 to a small Institution for twenty boys under the direction of the Brothers of St. Gabriel. Following some twenty inefficient administrations, the President of the Foundation, all set in correcting the situation, asked in July 1970 the Scalabrinians, through the mediation of the Fathers of Siponto, to take over the direction of boys' sector of the Institute for which the construction was underway of a complex of five buildings with capacity for 300 students in two separate sectors for boys and girls. The girls were under the care of nuns. The Provincial Administration of Italy accepted the proposal on a provisional basis, pledging to provide as of October 1970 an educational director for the 50 students of the elementary school, while securing the possibility to bring in a group of children of migrants. A contract was signed between the President of the Foundation and the Provincial Superior Fr. Bruno Mioli. Chosen as academic director for the boys' sector, Fr. Luigi Liber arrived at Sannicandro on October 25, 1970 but the work had yet to be completed. In January 1971 the Administration of the Foundation resigned and the nuns withdrew from the Institute. The Commissioner in charge of the Foundation, showed good will and had full confidence in the Scalabrinians; he even had two Scalabrinian sisters called in to replace those who had left; but he lacked funds, and the work was stopped. The contract was renewed on February 9 to September 1972, but by the close of the same month the Foundation was returned to the ordinary administration of the Board of Directors, which stated it had no intention to open the Institute. And so, Fr. Liber and the Scalabrinian sisters left Sannicandro in April 1972.

### THE SCALABRINIAN MISSIONARY CENTER OF CINISELLO BALSAMO, MILAN

A "Propaganda Center" was constituted in 1965 at the Motherhouse of Piacenza, under the supervision of Fr. Luigi Liber, assisted by Fr. Luigi Tacconi director of AMSE (an association of lay people committed to the Scalabrinian Missionary Apostolate), and by Fr. Sis-



to Caccia, coordinator of the promoters of vocations. In the same year Rep. Franco Verga, president of the COI (Center of Orientation for Immigrants) of Milan, proposed to the Scalabrinians the taking over of a parish in the Baggio area, Southwest of Milan. In June 1965 the Curia declined the offer because the suffragan bishops of Lombardy had placed a group of diocesan priests at the disposal of the archdiocese. In 1967, a certain Luigi Manfrinati, admirer of the Scalabrinian Congregation, donated an apartment he owned on Via Rovereto, 5 so that the Scalabrinians might have center of action in Milan. But the donor's "Will" was declared void, and the apartment was returned to the heirs of Manfrinati.

In 1970, the "Propaganda Center" of Piacenza, headed by Fr. Sisto Caccia was transformed into the "Scalabrinian Missionary Centre" (CMS) combining a number of activities together: the teams of vocational orientation personnel and the Fathers engaged in the pastoral care of the young; laymen groups (AMSE, alumni, etc.); the press and propaganda; relations with the Scalabrinian Centers of Studies of Europe; research; formation of late vocations. The CMS aimed also at the presence of Scalabrinians amongst immigrants from the south in some of the poorest locations of the outskirts of Milan, and Fr. Bruno Murer began in 1971 to exercise the ministry, there, on Sundays, and later on other days of the week. The pastor of Cologno Monzese, a parish with 30,000 people, entrusted to the care of the Scalabrinians the "Quartiere Stella", inhabited by about 5,000 immigrants from the South. Fr. Murer rented a place for worship, catechetical classes, and various activities and was also able to carve out a small apartment for the night. Similar activities were extended to Cinisello Balsamo, where, however, there was no room to sleep at night. It was, therefore, an apostolic work without juridical structures of its own, but as an integral part of the pastoral care of the local parishes. In 1976, the Curia of Milan invited the Scalabrinian Congregation to establish a religious community in the Archdiocese to carry out a unified pastoral action on behalf of immigrants. The Provincial Administration of Italy made plans, therefore, to transfer the Scalabrinian Missionary Center to Milan to engage the Province in an apostolic work directly among immigrants, not only useful for immigrants and for the purpose of sensitizing the diocese to the migratory problem and

to give a migratory dimension to the Province itself. On January 10, 1977, the General Administration authorized the establishing of a religious house in Milan, in accord with the agreement stipulated with the Chancery. The new religious community, made up of Frs. Pietro Celotto, Superior, Bruno Murer, E. Casati; and G. Battistella, took residence on January 18, 1977, in a building provided for their use by the Curia of Milan, on via Fratelli Cervi, 26, within the confines of the parish of Cinisello Balsamo.

#### PARISH OF PORTO CORSINI, RAVENNA

In 1976 the Archbishop of Ravenna Ersilio Tonini, short of priests, offered to the Scalabrinians the Parish of Porto Corsini, made up of about 2 1,000 parishioners from all parts of Italy, and 400 more, living in the town of Marina Romea, occupied by thousands of summer tourists, particularly Germans. He proposed, at the same time, the pastoral care of the industrial port of Ravenna, the fourth in Italy, and of the workers of the industrial zone gravitating around it in the area of Porto Corsini. The parish, that had been left vacant, had a small church with rectory at Porto Corsini, and a chapel at Marina Romea. The residents as a whole, did not practice much their religion; the longshoremen, besides, had to be totally re-evangelized. The Scalabrinians accepted: a contract was drawn up between the Archbishop of Ravenna and the Italian Province. The Swiss Province contributed the first Pastor, Fr. Luigi Zonta, who took possession of the parish on April 3, 1977, assisted by Fr. Pio Ceccato, first, and then by Fr. Ugo Bizzotto.

#### THE PARISHES OF FAVELLONI AND CONIDONI, CATANZARO, CALABRIA

Already since 1971 the Scalabrinians had started some pastoral experiments in Calabria, on certain periods of the year, to allow the religious students and the late vocations a firsthand experience of the migratory phenomenon in the regions of departure and re entry of migrants. In 1977 Bish. Vincenzo De Chiara of Mileto, Nicotera, Tropea, in the province of Catanzaro, asked the Scalabrinians to assume the directions of two small parishes, Favelloni with about 400 people, and Conidoni, with another 150. A contract was signed on a trial ba-

sis on June 29, 1977, between the Bishop of Mileto, and the Provincial Superior Fr. Sisto Caccia, by which the Italian Province was granted freedom to establish a residence at Favelloni, dependent as a religious community from the seminary of Philosophy and Theology in Rome. Soon afterwards, Fr. Silvano Guglielmi took possession of the parish of Favelloni, and Fr. Luigi Fuschi that of Conidoni.

Along with the pastoral activities in the two parishes, the presence of the future missionaries in formation in one of the regions that mostly contribute to emigration helps to gain an understanding of the mentality of migrants, assists the diocese in the pastoral care of migrants and promotes vocations in the very midst of migrating people; these are the reasons why the clerics of the Rome's Scalabrinian Seminary began to go there during the summer months.

In 1978, Fr. Guglielmi was succeeded by Fr. Ettore Ansaldi, who was also appointed superior of the community.



PART IX

PROVINCE OF ST CHARLES BORROMEO

UNITED STATES - EASTERN CANADA -  
VENEZUELA - PORTO RICO



## CHAPTER I

### PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

An Overall View of the State of the Province Succession of Provincial Superiors from 1941 till 1978

Fr.	Nazareno Properzi	1935-1946
Fr.	Ugo Cavicchi	1946-1947
Fr.	Remigio Pigato	1947-1952
Fr.	Corrado Martellozzo	1952-1958
Fr.	Luigi Riello	1958-1964
Fr.	Cesare Donanzan	1964-1970
Fr.	Giuseppe Spigolon	1970-1976
Fr.	Silvano Tomasi	1976-

Order of Parishes, Missions, and Institutions, opened till 1978 or closed from 1941 to 1978

<b>United States:</b>	
St. Charles Novitiate, Staten Island, NY	1948
St. Charles Seminary, Staten Island, NY	1949
Parish of Holy Cross, Providence, RI	1949
ACIM Executive Secretariat, NYC	1953
Scalabrini Villa Home for the Aged, North Kingstown, RI	1957
Closing of Parish of St. Joachim, NYC	1958
Parish of Holy Rosary, Washington, DC	1960
Transfer of Novitiate to Cornwall, NY until 1968	1960
Founding of Center for Migration Studies, Staten Island, NY	1965
Beginning of Chaplaincies with Home Lines, NYC	1965
Villa Rosa Home for the Aged, Mitchellville, MD	1967
Seamen's Center, NYC	1970
Parish of St. Joseph Patron, Brooklyn, NY	1978

<b>Canada:</b>	
Parish of Our Lady of All Souls, Hamilton, Ont.	1953
Parish of St. Catherine of Siena, Mississauga, Ont.	1956
Parish of St. Paschal Baylon, Thornhill, Ont.	1957
Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii, Montreal, Quebec	1960
Mission of the Annunziata, Lachine, Quebec	1961
Parish of St. Elizabeth, Montreal, Quebec	1963
Major Seminary, Toronto, Ont.	1971
Mission Mother of Christians, La Salle, Quebec	1972
Parish of St. Anthony, Hamilton, Ont.	1975
Parish of St. Antonio, Toronto, Ont.	1977
Venezuela:	
Mission of Our Lady of Pompeii, Caracas	1958
Mission of San Carlos Borromeo, Maracay	1960
Parish of San Pedro Mission of Barquisimeto	1963
Parish of Santo Rosario and Mission of Puerto Cabello (left in 1977)	1974
Mission of Valencia	1975
Porto Rico:	
Casa Mar, San Juan	1974
Parish of N.S. De La Caridad del Cobre, Hato Rey	1975

#### FR. NAZARENO PROPERZI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1941-1946)

Provincial Superior since 1935, Fr. Nazareno Properzi had been confirmed in office in 1939. Because of the war it was not possible in 1942 to renew the Superiors, and so on May 10 of that year Card. R. C. Rossi confirmed in office “ad nutum Sanctae Sedis” all those whose term was to expire. Shortly before WWII, the Province had obtained the juridical recognition from the American Government: this prevented the seizure during the war of its properties as belonging to foreign enemies. Immediately after the war several bishops had some reservations concerning the Scalabrinian Congregation. They considered its scope obsolete as the immigration quota of Italians remained at a very low level while those who had immigrated before the war or had participated in it like any other American citizen were considered in all respects totally integrated in the United States.



In those days, however, the Scalabrinians were concerned above all with maintaining their positions threatened by the impossibility to supply them with the needed personnel during the war. Boundaries were finally opened in 1946 and some ten young missionaries entered the Province.

#### FR. UGO CAVICCHI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1946-1947)

On August 20, 1946, Fr. Ugo Cavicchi was named Provincial Superior and Frs. Nazareno Properzi and Guglielmo Pizzoglio were chosen as his Councilors. With letter of April 1, 1947, Fr. Cavicchi described the state of the Scalabrinian Missions in the United States:

“In North America we find ourselves, as it were, in the second phase of the assistance to migrants: namely at the time when immigration is closed and the new generations are rapidly integrating with the people of the nation that hosts them, Italians have ceased to immigrate since 1924 and in a short time those who speak Italian will be a small minority. Their religious assistance will possibly be provided by Italo-American priests and somehow by native priests of other nationalities.

Shall we continue to have Italian missionaries sent to us from Italy? It is quite evident that the answer was given by Your Eminence in 1933 when you authorized a Seminary in Melrose Park, and the Novitiate later on, and lately with granting permission to this Province to buy properties, as we are now doing. The answer then is that there are to be Italo-American Missionaries. Now then, we find ourselves before a new situation about which we ask for guidance and advice as to what steps to take. Should we train to become teachers? We are becoming Italo-Americans; we are religious and have the care of parishes. Besides having parishes, other religious orders are opening high schools and colleges that give them the opportunity for imparting the Catholic culture of the migrants' countries of origin and so be able to muster good numbers of vocations and to work for the Christianization of America. Besides, they are in the process of freeing themselves from the care of parishes and surrender them gradually, as is proper, to an increasing number of diocesan clergy. This step toward the teaching may seem premature or hasty, perhaps,

considering our small number! But it is right at this very moment that the Bishops request that schools be built, and are looking around for religious to staff them. If indeed we want to devote ourselves to teaching, we could open within a few years a high school in each area where we have three or four parish schools of our own, thus placing ourselves on the road to stability on the level with other religious of North America. To achieve this, we should hasten the formation of a teaching team and an even wider introduction of community life as is lived in the seminaries! This is in general lines the problem we intend to discuss in Bassano."

Cardinal Rossi had in fact called together a meeting of Major Superiors at Bassano for September 1947, and this was his answer of May 1, 1947.

"As to schools! All well: think about it, study the problem, and bring the results to Bassano. However, we cannot lose the parishes. We must form a good number of Italo-American missionaries, who may in due time distinguish themselves. For this reason, I deem it a very good idea that you, too, should have there a school for aspiring boys."

In 1946, Cardinal Rossi had given permission that half of the net income left in the Province during the war be earmarked for the purchase of a property on which to build a seminary that should also serve as a place for encounters of the missionaries, retreats, meetings, etc. But the funds set aside were limited and it was only possible to buy a piece of land in South Acton, MA, near Boston, where the Novitiate was first thought to be located, and a small building by the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii in New York, with the intention of making it the seat of the Provincial Administration.

Fr. Angelo Corso, who was "General Visitor" of the Scalabrinian missions in North America during May-August 1947, pointed out the lack of a meeting place, deemed necessary for insuring unity between older missionaries - most of them with no vows and heads of the most important parishes - and the young ones. These were indispensable both for the apostolate of the young because of their better knowledge of English, and for carrying out the project of a seminary!

At the extraordinary Council meeting, convoked at Bassano del Grappa on September 10-17, 1947, it was decided that:

- the Novitiate should be moved from Chicago to the piece of land in the Archdiocese of Boston;
- thought be given to purchase a separate house for the encounters of the Missionaries;
- several older pastors should be gradually changed;
- a number of students would be sent from Italy to the United States to study theology and to learn, at the same time, the language and the culture of the place, so as to become elements of fusion between Italian and Halo-American missionaries.

#### FR. REMIGIO PIGATO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1947-1952)

On that same occasion of the meeting in Bassano, Fr. Cavicchi was appointed Fourth General Councilor and Fr. Pigato was transferred from the provincial administration of St. John the Baptist to that of the Province of St. Charles Borromeo with the same Provincial Councilors, Frs. Nazareno Properzi and Guglielmo Pizzoglio. Fr. Pigato abandoned the idea of building the novitiate at South Acton, MA, and sought out a property with a house ready for use. The opportunity came in 1948 when he was able to buy the Flagg Place Estate in Staten Island, New York, to which the Novitiate was moved in August 1948.

In July 1949, Fr. Pigato was reconfirmed in the office of Provincial Superior with Frs. Ludovico Toma and Raffaele Larcher as his two new Councilors. In 1950, Card. A.G. Piazza sent Fr. Giovanni Sofia, the third General Councilor as Visitor from August to October of the financial matters of the Provinces of North America to check out the relations between the administrations of the parishes and those of the religious houses.

The following directives were restated, that:

- full compliance with the synods or practices of the diocese;
- authorization from the General Administration is needed for using money belonging to the religious house for the construction of indispensable institutions, especially parochial schools;
- in all cases, whatever belonged to the religious house and to the single religious had to be handed in to the Congregation.

In a 1951 report, Fr. Pigato pointed out that the Province had not developed parish schools: only 11, out of 20 parishes, had schools. The scarcity of schools ever more alienated the young from the parish. The 4,000 students in Scalabrinian parishes represented only one fifth of the students who could well have been taken care of adequate structures had been available.

From the same reports there appeared that the Province numbered 13 priests with no vows, and 50 religious priests and brothers. Of the 20 parishes, 6 were categorized as "large and prosperous" – O.L. of Pompeii and St. Giuseppe in New York; St. Michael in New Haven, CT; Holy Ghost in Providence, RI; St. Anthony in Everett, MA – 8 halfway, with about 2,000 families, and 6 in a precarious state – St. Joachim in New York; Sacred Heart in Boston, MA; St. Anthony in Fredonia, NY; Mt. Carmel in Bristol, RI; Holy Cross in Providence, RI. Everywhere the drop in birth rate resulted in a marked decrease in Baptisms, Confirmations, and First Communions. The Provincial Superior defended the need for reviving the Society of St. Raphael or, at least for a center for the care of the new Italian immigrants. This position received a partial answer with the participation, since 1953, in the direction of the American Committee on Italian Migration (ACIM).

In January 1951, Card. Spellman, Archbishop of New York and Military Vicar, asked the Scalabrinians, along with other religious orders, to supply some priest as military chaplains. Fr. Mario Tardivo was chosen for the task: he did active service in France, Germany, Vietnam, United States, Korea, Italy, until his retirement in 1975 with the rank of a Lieutenant Colonel. Later on two of his: Frs. Edward Moretti and Charles Laverde, also served as chaplains in the armed forces of the United States.

#### **FR. CORRADO MARTELLOZZO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1952-1958)**

Fr. Corrado Martellozzo was appointed Provincial Superior in August 1952, with Frs. Nazareno Properzi and Mario Albanesi as Councilors. In October 1952, in the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii, New York, the Crucifix was given to four missionaries assigned to open the Scalabrinian missions of Australia: two of them, Fr. Tarcisio

Prevedello and Bro. Nino Setti belonged to the Province of St. Charles Borromeo. In August 1953, the Province was authorized to open missions in Canada and so it took the parish of Our Lady of All Souls in Hamilton, Ontario. In March 1954, Fr. Martellozzo sent a circular letter to 15 bishops of Canada, offering them the services of the Scalabrinians on behalf of the new Italian immigrants, who had begun entering Canada in 1951 on an average of 20,000 a year. The bishops answered saying that they did not yet see the urgency of a special assistance and deferring their decision to a future date. In their opinion, there were enough Italian priests already, diocesan and religious, especially Capuchins and Franciscans from their Italian Provinces.

In 1955, Card. J.M. McGuigan showed his willingness to give the Scalabrinians an opportunity to have a church for Italians in Toronto on condition that they build the church at their own expense. In January he entrusted to them the parish of St. Catherine of Siena in Cooksville (present Mississauga). The difficulties Scalabrinians encountered in the construction of that church dissuaded them from accepting a parish in the city of Toronto. Later on, the Archbishop explained that the archdiocese did not intend to go through the trouble of organizing another new parish, but that he could very well support it financially like all the others. It was decided, therefore, in 1957 to accept the parish of St. Paschal Baylon in Thornhill (Willowdale) on the northern outskirts of Toronto. Between the end of 1953 and the beginning of 1954, the Superior General, Fr. Francesco Prevedello, visited the Province. He noticed the decline of many parishes due to the general phenomenon of the drastic reduction of Italian immigration into the United States in the last thirty years and to particular causes that affected adversely the parishes in downtown, such as: city planning, the presence of other ethnic groups, and a standard of living enticing Italians to move the outer sections of the city or to the suburbs. The continued presence of the Scalabrinians, however, was justified - the Superior General added - by the Latin character of the immigrants that could not be identified and blended in with the Anglo-Saxon mentality. In fact, many of the Italians who had moved to the outskirts continued to attend Italian churches, though quite distant from home. But the Missionaries did not show themselves equally available! They limited themselves, instead, generally to the parish

circles, neglecting to adopt activities aimed at migrants that lived far from the church. On the other hand, the Bishop still preferred their diocesan priests, and more so now that the Italians had learned to contribute to the support of the church. These were the causes that helped in the gradual turning away to an ever greater degree of the Scalabrinians from fidelity to their specific scope! One first solution was found in the opening of new missions in Canada. Negotiations with the Bishops of Canada were intensified in 1955-1956.

Fr. Corrado Martellozzo was confirmed in office on August 20, 1955. Fr. Ettore Ansaldi was his Councilor till 1956, followed by Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello; Fr. Ludovico Toma remained on as Second Councilor. In 1956, he gave start to another activity with the purchase of a piece of land in North Kingstown, RI, to set up an institution for Italian elderly. In the same year, work was begun on a new St. Charles Seminary of Staten Island, New York, in view of soon moving to it the theology students of Melrose Park, Illinois. At the same time a proposal was made at a meeting of the two Provincial Administrations of the United States to have all College and Philosophy students sent back to Sacred Heart Seminary of Melrose Park to get the degrees in education required for teaching in schools of higher learning from a College held by Religious. And indeed the idea was beginning to catch on, already discussed in the previous years, that the only activity now open to the Scalabrinians in the United States was the education of the children of Italians. There was thought, therefore, of opening "High Schools", thus going along also with the desire of the bishops. But these projects did not materialize, especially because it did not take long to discover that the parishes could be revived through the care to the new immigrants. Thanks especially to ACIM, 26,231 Italians arrived in the United States in 1954; 34,975 in 1955; and 36,386 in 1956.

The Theological Seminary was moved to Staten Island in 1958. A "mission band" was organized in July 1958, a group of "flying" missionaries engaged in preaching missions to the people, conducting novenas, etc. in Italian, in the various Italian parishes. Fr. Pietro Corbellini started it, but he had to work almost alone until 1955, when he was transferred to Chicago.

## FR. LUIGI RIELLO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1958-1964)

On August 19, 1958, Fr. Luigi Riello was appointed Provincial Superior, and Frs. Remigio Pigato and Mario Albanesi Councilors. All three were confirmed in office on August 31, 1961.

In spite of all efforts to save it, the church of St. Joachim in New York, the Mother Church of Scalabrinian missions in America, was demolished in 1959.

In 1960, the novitiate was transferred to Cornwall, New York, where it was to remain until 1968. In 1960 also the missions of Montreal in Canada and of Washington, DC were opened. In 1962, the Province numbered 24 parishes; one major seminary with 27 students of Theology and Philosophy; one Novitiate with 8 novices; 72 priests and 3 brothers; a home for the aged. In 1962 It was believed that out of the 44 million Catholics in the United States, 13 were of Italian extraction; 7.5 Irish; 7.5 German; 5.5 Polish; 3.5 French Canadian; 2 Austro-Hungarian. The national parish had been till then the main instrument to preserve the religious heritage of immigrants. Concurring factors were: their particular culture, though affected at times by superstitious practices; ignorance of the language and customs of America; the refusal to accept them on the part of the "natives" due to hostility, resentments, and suspicion. In the midst of these positive and negative elements, the missionaries were able actually to devote themselves to the apostolate for poor immigrants, most of them endowed with a simple but persevering faith, willingness to work, and faithful love for the family. Little by little they had adopted structures and pastoral methods to the new type of parishioners: the children and descendants of early immigrants.

This state of things constituted the bond between the members of the Scalabrinian Congregation themselves, between those born in Italy and those of Italian extraction born in America, the two groups united in working for the "Italo-Americans". Due, however, to the factors just mentioned, the moment had arrived for another turn of events. The many "Little Italy" had partly become American communities and partly dispersed because of urban renewal or of the arrival of Portuguese, Mexicans, etc. and Negroes who settled in the devalued houses earlier lived in by Italians who had moved out to



the suburbs. The Scalabrinians held on to their parishes either by force of inertia or through obedience to the bishops or as centers of apostolate for non-Italian immigrants, since also the 1963 General Chapter had by this time accepted the widening of the scope of the Congregation to migrants of all nationalities. At the same time they managed to maintain a certain moral cohesion of the Italians around their old churches, in spite of geographical distances of their places of residence.

Still, however, they were not enough for the problem of Italian immigrants: according to the 1960 census, there were in the United States 1,257,000 Italians born in Italy; in 1963, 385,145 carried the Italian passport. Unlike in Canada, where Italians were still grouped together in a few industrial districts, in the United States they were scattered all over. The missionaries began considering a pastoral organization geared around a city with the cooperation of the priests of the same area, though residents of the various parishes, in order to coordinate and enhance the religious, cultural, and civic life of the Italo-American community by securing the services and the involvement of Italo-American people and associations.

#### FR. CESARE DONANZAN, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1964-1970)

These ideas were endorsed by the new Provincial Superior Fr. Cesare Donanzan, named to the office on June 19, 1964, with Councilors Frs. Antonio Dal Balcon, Danilo Zanon, Alex Dalpiaz and Gerard Valentino, replaced in 1967 by Fr. Carmelo Negro.

“In the rapid passing of time, the great majority of the Fathers engaged in the ministry in the United States has nothing to do with Italian migrants, the migratory phenomenon, etc.: they are, therefore, far from, or outside of, the specific and fundamental apostolate of the Congregation. The assistance to migrants remains a scope written on paper but not lived in real life. This situation deprives the Fathers of the sense of belonging to a missionary and religious Congregation and of a family spirit that should be deeply felt. The parishes’ need for a minimum of personnel absorbs whatever of it is available, so much so that we could not enact any plan of apostolate for assisting the Italian emigrants of today. All this is due to lack of personnel and



to the difficulty of discovering a method of apostolate that may be effective and possible within the milieu taking shape in the American cities, where parishes and systems of pastoral care of souls are actually in existence. The lack of a properly Scalabrinian form of apostolate adapted to the conditions of today and applicable everywhere deprives the Congregation of its specific role, of its specific character, of its reason to be, of its appeal for the young missionaries of today and for the new recruits. All these questions are being debated by our Fathers, especially by the Italo-Americans, who are wondering about the reasons for belonging to the Congregation and what will its future be in the United States."

As to the historical scope of the Congregation of providing pastoral care for Italian migrants in North America the following initiatives of both Provinces were mentioned:

Pilgrimages to Rome and temporary stays in Italy, started in 1965 by the services of ACIM and Fr. Luigi Donanzan;

The Apostleship of the Sea and the Seamen Center of New York;

ACIM, an organization of national character inspired to the Scalabrinian charism, had worked in 1962-1965 to have the 1924 discriminatory measures removed and principles of greater justice and equity adopted; principles that were in fact enacted into a law in 1965;

The Center for Migration Studies of Staten Island, New York;

The Homes for the Aged in Washington and North Kingstown;

The activities of Fr. Pierini that had polarized the Italo-American community of Chicago around "Villa Scalabrini" Home for the Aged with a monthly periodical, a weekly radio program in Italian, and an Italian National Center for the enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the families;

The "Casa Italiana" of Los Angeles: a cultural, social, and recreational Center;

The Italian Catholic Federation of California and Illinois.

All these initiatives did not supply, however, a substantial solution, as a radical pastoral change would have done respondent to the new needs. The difficulty in renewal is explained in part by the fact that the Province was almost entirely made up of Italian missionaries who had to struggle hard to serve, and to adapt to, parishes that had grown into English-speaking communities, and would have there-

fore to start all over again. In their early years, the Seminary and the Novitiate of Staten Island appeared as the symbol of the vitality of the Province, but then they underwent various crises. Some special initiatives were given life by a few older parishes for the new arrivals, as for instance, the Center of Catholic Action in Boston, the destination of the Brazilian Fr. Santo Cigolini to Buffalo for the assistance of Portuguese-speaking immigrants, the Center for Porto Ricans in New Haven; but scarcity and inexperience of the personnel hindered a few projects, though so very promising, because of difficulties in coordinating the traditional activities with the new needs or their old formation with the new demands.

Such demands became even more pressing especially since when, in 1966, the scope of the Congregation was also officially extended to migrants of all nationalities. Though so slowly, the renewal of our apostolic positions began to take place. Including the initiatives mentioned before, we find that in the decade 1962-1972 twelve new fields of work were opened, 18 missionaries were taken out of parishes or old structures, 19 of them were assigned to new fields; the "Media" apostolate was intensified with seven radio programs and three monthly publications.

Attempts were also made to enhance the promotion of vocations with the opening of a minor seminary in the Province in view of sparing the youngest recruits from entering that of distant Chicago, a project that had been contemplated already during Fr. Pigato's tenure. A property was purchased at Byfield, some 50 km. North of Boston in June 1965. However, faced with the high cost of building a new seminary and in consideration of the modest number of candidates, preference was given to establishing in 1966 a Minor Seminary on Staten Island, New York. The property of was set aside in 1967 for various activities such as outings and picnics and nothing more. Another attempt in 1969 to open a minor seminary in Montréal, Canada fell through.

With regards to the new Italian immigrants, the initiative was taken in 1969 to provide the immigrants' names and addresses to the Scalabrinians in the dioceses where they were operating, so to induce both missionaries and Italo-American diocesan priests to visit them, to give them social and religious assistance and to reach them

by social media. The program "Welcome New Americans" began to materialize in New York, Philadelphia, Hartford, New Haven, Providence, Boston, Worcester, Washington, Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, Cleveland and Chicago.

In Staten Island, New York the A.S.P.I. (Associazione Studenti e Professionisti Italo-Americani) was started in 1958 and changed its name to "Centro Italiano di Staten Island" in 1969. In 1969-1970, 5 Scalabrinians were regularly engaged in the parishes of Sts. Brigid and Athanasius in Brooklyn, N.Y.

But the administration of the traditional parishes continued to absorb practically all the forces of the Province thus preventing it from effectively facing the so-called problem of the "minorities", that is, of blacks and Spanish-speaking immigrants. Quite different, instead was the situation in Canada, where the great number of new Italian immigrants was eliciting only the problem of the scarcity of the number of missionaries.

Fr. Cesare Donanzan was confirmed in office in July 1967, but with a new Council: Frs. Danilo Zanon, Giovanni Triacca, Giovanni Bocciarelli and Giuseppe Invernizzi. On November 28, 1967, Auxiliary Bishop T.J. Cooke, Vicar General of New York, inaugurated the Provincial Residence on 27 Carmine St., N.Y. next to the rectory of the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii. The property had been bought in 1940 but work on the construction of the new house was begun only in August 1966.

#### FR. GIUSEPPE SPIGOLON, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1970-1976)

On June 15, 1970, the administration of the Province was placed in the hands of Fr. Giuseppe Spigolon, assisted by Councilors for his first term by Frs. James Abbarno, Giuseppe Cogo, Giovanni Bocciarelli and Aldo Uderzo; and for his second term by Frs. Louis Pisano, Silvano Tomasi, Giuseppe Duchini, and Guido Caverzan, appointed on July 10, 1973.

The question of the pastoral renewal was immediately resumed. In 1971, the majority of the missionaries declared themselves in favor of retaining the parishes because the "ethnic problem" was still alive and people still felt the need for national parishes. In many parishes

the renewal was taking place just by itself because of the arrival of numerous immigrants of Spanish and Portuguese languages; in others the renewal would easily materialize by making them the basis for the assistance to Italians of recent immigration; lastly, the parishes were considered important for the finances. However, there was increasing awareness that something more needed to be done for the new arrivals and some positions, no longer serving migrants, had to be abandoned.

The general situation of immigration to the United States had changed remarkably because of the liberalization in 1965 of the laws especially through the efforts of A.C.I.M.

In 1971, this was the situation:

The most recent immigrants were coming in from undeveloped countries, especially the Caribbean countries: Haiti, Santo Domingo, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Trinidad - Tobago, Jamaica, St. Croix, St. Thomas, Barbados, etc. 70% of them were baptized Catholics, though with a religiosity bound to traditions of a more or less dubious orthodoxy.

In addition, immigrants came also from Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, Uruguay, and other Hispanic countries. New York had about 52 thousand Argentines, 50 thousand Ecuadorians, 25 thousand Peruvians, etc.

Still quite substantial was the immigration from Greece, Portugal, China, the Philippines, and Italy. In the years 1966-1971 158,000 Italians had landed on the shores of the United States.

The vast majority of them were poor immigrants, who remained in the lowest levels of society, deprived of the right to vote, without economic resources, with little education, and with no possibility of any access to social media, etc.

In 1965-1971, 1,180,000 immigrants entered Canada. In the years between 1969 and 1971, Italian immigration dwindled from 10 to 5000 units. Illegal immigrants, however, for increasing: already in 1971, there were believed to be two million Mexicans, Haitians, Dominicans, etc., all of them undocumented, and therefore exploited and emarginated.

At the same time, the North American Bishops seemed to adopt an even harder position against national parishes to the point of requesting their suppression

The General Administration invited the Scalabrinians of the Province of "St. Charles Borromeo" to study on a local level all the concrete options for offering our specific pastoral services for migrants of the various nationalities within the context of the dioceses in which they were working. But it was also necessary to sensitize the American bishops to the migratory problem. Fr. Cesare Donanzan sought to keep in touch with the Bishops' Conference. His initiative took shape with the "Center for Migration Studies" of Staten Island, N.Y., which grew quickly to be considered in practice the research center for the United States Bishops' Conference on the pastoral care of immigrants. The first collective letter of the American Episcopate on the care of migrants was prepared with the collaboration of the Center. Seven dioceses adopted the project for diocesan offices for immigrants suggested by the Scalabrinians. Equally effective was the action of A.C.I.M., as well as that of the missionaries of Montreal in Canada, to secure the passing of just migration laws.

In this renewal process the following must also be considered the opening of:

- the interprovincial Theological Seminary of Toronto in 1971;
- the Mission of Puerto Rico in 1974;
- the parish of St. Anthony in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1975.

During the decade 1966-1976, the apostolic positions of the Province increased from 35 to 42 with 12 new ones and relinquishing 5 older.

#### FR. SILVANO TOMASI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1976- )

Fr. Silvano Tomasi became Provincial Superior on April 24, 1976, with Frs. John Corrao, Guido Caverzan, Giuseppe Invernizzi and Aldo Uderzo as Councilors. The new Provincial Administration began functioning on June 9, On December 1, 1976. The Delegation Our Lady of Pompeii with the missions of Venezuela was attached to the Province of St. Charles Borromeo. In 1977, the parish of St. Anthony in Toronto was offered at long last to the Scalabrinians. It was made up mostly of Portuguese and Italian speaking immigrants. This happened after many previous requests and thanks to the assistance to

the Portuguese immigrants offered by the Brazilian priests and clerics since the opening of the seminary of Toronto.

The promotion of vocations was strongly enhanced by the revival of the minor Seminary of New York and by the development of a "Contact Program" through which a follow-up program of assistance is offered in their parishes to the young candidates to the Scalabrinian priesthood and mission. In 1977, the Novitiate was moved from Toronto to Chicago. The parish of Holy Cross in Providence, RI was returned in October 1977 to the diocese. In 1978 the Province accepted the parish of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church in Brooklyn, N.Y., made up mostly of Latin-Americans and Sicilians.

Though the mediation of Fr. Alex Dalpiaz, negotiations were begun between the Province and the Bishop of Cucuta, Colombia to assume the management of the "Centro de Migraciones", which provide assistance to Colombian migrants in Venezuela, forced to repatriate for lack of legal documents.

## CHAPTER II

### NOVITIATE AND SEMINARIES

#### THE NOVITIATE

The opening of Sacred Heart Seminary in 1935, and of the Novitiate in 1941, in Melrose Park, in the Province of St. John the Baptist, naturally stimulated also in the Province of St. Charles Borromeo the will for promoting vocations and formation activities, and more so because a portion of the seminarians of Melrose Park originated from the parishes of the East.

Immediately after WWII, there surfaced two currents. A group of missionaries proposed the transfer of the Novitiate from Chicago to NY, as though wishing to share with the other Province in the task of forming the new missionaries. Another group, with the support of the Provincial Superior, Fr. Nazareno Properzi, favored opening to a minor seminary in the Province of NY, especially in consideration of the difficulties of sending the young candidates to the seminary of Melrose Park, too far from their families. Card. R.C. Rossi favored the second proposal, but, as mentioned before, the extraordinary General Council meeting of September 1947 decreed to transfer the Novitiate from the Province of the West to that of the East, in the property purchased in 1946 in South Acton, MA.

At the same time, there was discussion on the possibility of sending some Italian clerics to make their theological studies in North America. These two deliberations were hesitantly accepted by Card. Rossi, who gave his approval only in February 1948. In the meantime some uncertainties had been resolved with regards to logistics: the buildings of Melrose Park were no longer large enough to house together both Novitiate and minor seminarians, and the resources for another construction were lacking. On August 7, 1948, Pius XII authorized the transfer of the Novitiate to Staten Island, NY. Shortly before, Card. Spellman, Archbishop of NY and his Vicar General Msgr. Gaffney, had granted permission to open a Scalabrinian house on Flagg Place in Staten Island, so named after the Architect who

had designed the first Manhattan skyscraper. After his death in 1947, the Scalabrinians had purchased the summer residence that Architect Flagg had built for himself in 1896-1899 on a 12 acre (5 hectares) property. The first 13 novices entered it on August 17, 1948 together with their Master Fr. Ettore Ansaldi and Bro. Stefano Borgo. The official inauguration was presided over by Msgr. Farrell, representing Card. Spellman. In August 1949, the students of Philosophy also were moved to Staten Island, taking residence in the old barn on the rear of the estate. The domestic services were entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters. Fr. Ansaldi remained in office as master of novices until 1956. He was succeeded by Fr. John Di Vito until 1958. In 1958 the Novitiate was moved into the second building, where the students of Philosophy had been placed, and Fr. Gino Dalpiaz was appointed Master. In 1959, through intervention of Msgr. Luigi Ligutti, Mr. Chauncy D. Stillman granted to the Scalabrinians the use of part of his property in Kenridge, Cornwall, NY, 80 miles north of New York, close to the Hudson River, on condition that it be used for religious, educational, or charitable purposes. On June 15, 1960, the Novitiate was transferred to the Kenridge estate.

The Novitiate was suspended for a year, in 1964-65. Fr. Scopa served as Fr. Master from 1965 to 1969, but in 1968 the Novitiate was again suspended for lack of candidates. The Cornwall residence was used as center for promotion of vocations, retreats, and conferences for the various groups of people, under the direction of Fr. Edward Marino. On November 30, 1973, the residence was returned to its owner since the conditions he had imposed could not be met and the upkeep was expensive. The Novitiate was resumed at Staten Island in September 1971. In September 1974 it was moved to Toronto, Ontario, at the Scalabrini House of Studies. It remained there until August 1977, when a decision was made for a temporary transfer to Sacred Heart Seminary in Stone Park (formerly Melrose Park). Fr. Anthony Capece was Master of Novices from 1971 to 1977, when he was succeeded by Fr. Agostino Lovatin.



## THE SEMINARY OF ST. CHARLES, STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.

As said before, the College was transferred in 1949 from Melrose Park, IL to Staten Island, NY. It included Junior and Senior students. Fr. Ansaldi was the first rector in 1949-1952. Courses began in September 1949 in the former barn remodeled for the purpose. The official inauguration was done by Auxiliary Bishop Donohue of New York.

In 1952 plans were drawn up for the construction of a new wing attached to the main building of the Flagg Villa s to provide a convenient location especially for the class rooms; but work could be started only in 1957, was completed in 1958 and the wing inaugurated by Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate in the United States.

In the meantime, a decision was made to transfer to Staten Island also the Theological community of Melrose Park. Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo served as rector in 1952-1958, followed by Fr. John Di Vito in 1958-1964, Fr. Alex Dalpiaz in 1964-1965, and Fr. Giuseppe Visentin in 1965-1969.

Until 1958, St. Charles Seminary was residence to the last three years of College; the four years of Theology were added in 1958. In 1965, College was moved back to Stone Park (Melrose Park), near Chicago. In September 1966, a minor seminary was also started in Staten Island, with 12 high school freshmen. In 1968, the students of Theology began attending classes at the St. Joseph Theological Seminary at Dunwoodie, of the Archdiocese of New York, while the minor seminarians frequented St. Peter's High School near St. Charles Seminary. In 1969 a few collegians returned to be a part of the seminary; they attended classes at the Cathedral College of Douglaston, N.Y. The Seminary, in 1969, and the Novitiate, beginning in 1971, was entrusted to Fr. Anthony Capece. In 1970, the community numbered 11 theologians, 4 collegians, and 13 high schoolers. In 1971, the high school students frequented the Cathedral Preparatory Seminary of the diocese of Brooklyn; those of Theology were transferred to the New Major Seminary of Toronto; on September 11, 1971, the Novitiate was resumed at Staten Island. And so there remained at St. Charles Seminary only 10 high school students and 6 novices; in

1972 they were respectively 8 and 4. The situation got worse in the successive years, while the Novitiate, still headed by Fr. Anthony Capece, was also brought to Toronto in 1974. St. Charles Seminary thus remained practically empty from 1975 till 1977. The promotion of vocations, however, was stepped up, first coordinated by Fr. Pietro Polo, and then by Frs. Charles Zanoni and Walter Tonelotto, under the guidance of Fr. Lidio Tomasi, rector since 1976.

### THE COLLEGE ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

The Provincial Assembly of 1978 approved a project for a small seminary for college students in a place other than St. Charles Seminary, close to St. John's University, directed by the Vincentian Fathers in Jamaica, NY. Here candidates would have the opportunity to obtain their academic degrees at a faculty devoted to Ecclesiastical studies. With Fr. Walter Tonelotto as rector, the first 5 students entered on August 23, 1978 a rented modest building on 242-11 88th Road, Bellerose, N.Y.

### INTERPROVINCIAL FORMATION COMMITTEE

For quite some time the need was felt for a closer coordination between the two North American Provinces in regard to matters concerning formation, due to the relatively small number of seminarians and scarcity of qualified personnel that did not allow contemplating two complete autonomous cycles. The best solution appeared to be the combining of the formation personnel of both Provinces into one organism responsible on equal terms for the direction of the seminaries. The matter was explicitly brought up in 1970. The majority of the religious favored the opinion that there should be only one Theology and Novitiate under the responsibility of both Provinces. A meeting was held in New York from December 30, 1970 to January 3, 1971, between two General Councilors and the two Provincial Superiors with the Rectors of the Seminaries of Staten Island and Melrose Park. It was then that the proposal was made for setting up the "Interprovincial Formation Board". The General Administration favored one Theology, leaving free the choice of its location.

At a second interprovincial meeting, held in Buffalo, N.Y. on June 9, 1971, the decision of only one residence for Theology students was confirmed and the choice fell on the Toronto School of Theology. It was decided that the formation program of both Theology and Novitiate and College should be entrusted to the responsibility of the interprovincial Board, while that of High School minor seminarians remained the concern of each Province.

On June 21, 1971, these deliberations were approved by the General Administration, which issued the "Norms for the Interprovincial Formation Board of North America, substantiated with the "Bylaws of the Interprovincial Committee for Formation in North America" of April 10, 1972. The Board was made up of the two Provincial Superiors in office, of two Provincial Councilors, one from each Province, and of the Rector of the Formation house where the Board holds its meetings three times a year. The Board has the task of studying and providing counsel in matters concerning formation; proposes to the proper Provincial Superior the nominees for posts of direction and formation, and coordinates the administration of the houses of formation.

Each Provincial Superior, however, retains all the faculties accorded him by the common and particular laws (Canon Law and Rules of Life) over the houses belonging to his Province. However, all cases that by law had to be decided before with the consent or the advice of the Provincial Council must now be submitted to the counsel or consent of the Interprovincial Board. This last derogation of the common law was authorized by the Sacred Congregation for Religious on April 21, 1972 "ad experimentum" until the final approval of the new Rules of Life.

#### THE SCALABRINI HOUSE OF STUDIES OF TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

The location chosen for the Theological courses was the city of Toronto, in the Canadian Province of Ontario, almost equally distant between New York and Chicago, and destination of recent strong influx of migrants coming in from many parts of the world. But the decisive reason for this choice was the opportunity of attending a well-rated school of Theology: the "Toronto School of Theology, begun in 1969

out of the confederation of 7 Theological faculties of Toronto, such as the St. Michael's College of the Basilian Fathers and the Diocesan Seminary of St. Augustine, which would be frequented by the Scalabrinian students. Some 300 meters from the University Campus, a complex of two buildings was taken in St. George Street on very favorable terms: it was named "The Scalabrini House of Studies". Fr. Angelo Calandra was its first rector. The first 12 clerics entered it on August 25, 1971: 7 Americans, 3 Italians, and 2 Brazilians. In September 1974, also the Novitiate was transferred to the "Scalabrini House of Studies", and the Novice Master Fr. Anthony Capece was appointed Rector as well. In 1975, there were 18 students. In addition, the "College Associate Program" was added in 1976, a group of College students without vows under the direction of Fr. Alvirio Mores.

With the 1977-1978 school year, the staff of the Seminary was changed with Fr. Giuseppe Invernizzi as Rector, Fr. Giuseppe Castelli as Vice-Rector, while Fr. Mores remained in charge of the "College Associate Program". Fr. Agostino Lovatin, the former Vice-Rector, was named Master of Novices in Stone Park, IL.

## CHAPTER III

### PARISHES IN THE CITIES AND THE STATE OF NEW YORK

#### THE CLOSING OF THE FIRST PARISH: ST. JOACHIM, NEW YORK

Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan, pastor from 1939 to 1945, was succeeded by Fr. Luigi Savio, but with the title of Administrator not of Pastor. In fact the very existence of the parish, whose membership had much decreased and had no school, began to be questioned. On March 29, 1950, Msgr. Gaffney, Vicar General of New York called together the Provincial Superior Fr. Remigio Pigato, Fr. Luigi Savio, Fr. Carlo Celotto, pastor of the Italian church of Our Lady of Pompei, and the pastor of the American church of St. James located nearby the parishes of St. Joseph and St. Joachim. The Vicar General made known to them the position of the Chancery Office: the parish of St. Joachim had to be closed down because it could hardly continue since it had no funds for building a school, and its population had to be considered American. Fr. Savio suggested a compromise by which it could be transformed into a "mission" of the parish of St. Joseph. The real problem was that the parish of St. James, like many other Irish parishes, had lost a large portion of its parishioners, who had moved to other neighborhoods of the metropolis and, therefore, was trying to replace them with Catholics of Italian extraction. These, on their part, and the Scalabrinians were attached to the church of St. Joachim because it was the first Scalabrinian parish of America, it had been visited by the Founder, and Mother Cabrini had started there her apostolate among Italian immigrants; on the other hand, new apartment buildings were under construction and the population increase would point to the need for a parochial school. Since it could not be built in the parish of St. Joachim, that of St. James or preferably that of St. Joseph had to be enlarged. A proposal was made, therefore, to remodel the rectory of St. Joachim to serve as residence for the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart who would thus leave free their apart-

ment to provide greater space for the school of St. Joseph: the priests would then fix their residence in the rectory of St. Joseph, though continuing to keep servicing the church of St. Joachim. The Scalabrinians offered another proposal: the purchase for the Sisters of a building near the school of St. Joseph. The chancery office confirmed its intention, but nothing was done about it.

In the meantime, in 1951 Fr. Carlo Celotto was named administrator of St. Joachim. He was in favor of the plan of the chancery office. Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello was pastor in 1955-1957. In 1957 the Archdiocesan Chancery Office clearly expressed its intention of going along with the city authorities, who had decided to reclaim the neighborhood with the construction of the residential complex known as Chatham Green Houses. The city plan anticipated the demolition of the church of St. Joachim. To no avail all attempts were made to save the historical landmark or to have it included by an architectural remodeling of the facade in one of the projected buildings. A vast press and radio propaganda did not succeed in preventing its demolition, which was done in 1959, following the sad rite of the closing of the parish on January 4, 1959. Fr. Guido Ferronato was the last pastor since the fall of 1957.

## THE PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH, NEW YORK

In the years 1940-1950, under Fr. Carlo Celotto as pastor, the parish had a limited activity, but it did succeed in reducing its debt. In 1950 it was entrusted to Fr. Guglielmo Pizzoglio who encountered the same conditions as those of St. Joachim: the neighborhood was being demolished and new apartment buildings were coming up. Many Italians were moving out, replaced by Porto Ricans, Japanese and Blacks. In 1952 the number of students in the parochial school had climbed up to 800: it had to be enlarged with the construction of a new convent for the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart, inaugurated by Card. Spellman on March 18, 1958. Fr. Pietro Vesta was named Pastor in October 1964. To him is due the restoration of the church. Fr. Joseph Moffo succeeded him in October 1973. On February 17, 1966, the assistant Fr. Carlo Ronci died at the age of 90.

The parish, which had 2,000 families in 1967, now counted less than 1,000: the majority was Italian, and the rest were Irish, Hispanic, Porto Rican, and Chinese. The school numbered 550 pupils, half of them Chinese. The church was debt-free.

### THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII, NEW YORK

The decade of Fr. Ugo Cavicchi's pastorate was marked not only by the complete restoration of the finances but also by an all-embracing spiritual revival. The number of students in the school reached such numbers as to make it necessary to enlarge it. His successor, Fr. Giuseppe Bernardi (1947-1951) adopted the same solution of the school of St. Joseph and made plans for a new convent for the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart: the project was brought to completion by the pastor Fr. Mario Albanesi (1952-1964), making thus room for 800 pupils.

Because of its beauty and of its recollected architecture, and due to its central location, the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii became little by little a center of prayer for many professionals, blue-collar workers, businessmen, etc... employed in or passing through the neighborhood. An effort was also made to render it a center of radiation of apostolic activity for the thousands of immigrants in New York who still spoke Italian. During Fr. Albanesi's tenure, there still lived in the parish some 2,500 families, almost all of them of Italian origin. His action was continued by Fr. Antonio Dal Balcon, pastor from October 1964 to the end of 1967: to him are due the restructuring of the baptistry, the altar of the Holy Infant of Prague, the new Sacristy, and the new parish offices. Fr. Guido Caverzan was pastor in 1967-1970. Those were the years of the students' contestation that found one of its most representative centers in the famed Greenwich Village, located in the territory of the parish, which suffered from it because of the moral decay and the permissive ways adopted by the original population of the Village.

The 75th anniversary of the parish was celebrated on May 7, 1967, in the presence of Auxiliary Bishop Joseph M. Pernicone, once a parishioner of Our Lady of Pompeii. Fr. James Abbarno served as pastor in 1970-1974, succeeded by Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo in the summer

of 1975, but soon after called to Rome as Secretary of the Pontifical Commission for the Care of Migrants and Tourists. He was followed in turn by Fr. Edward Marino. The new parish auditorium, named after Fr. Antonio Demo, was inaugurated on October 2, 1977. At the present time the population of the parish is reduced to about 500 families with about 250 pupils in the school. On the other hand, the action of the missionaries has been intensified on behalf of other various groups of Italians, especially of recent immigration in different zones of the metropolitan area of New York. People of Italian extraction who moved elsewhere are reached through the parish bulletin (10,000 readers) and a radio program (with an estimated audience of 50,000).

#### THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY, BUFFALO, NEW YORK

Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello was pastor here from 1940 till 1952. During the war the missionaries gave pastoral assistance to Italian prisoners in the concentration camps of Medina and Oakfield, in the diocese of Buffalo. In 1952, Fr. T. Prevedello and Brother Nino Setti volunteered to open the Scalabrinian missions of Australia. In the years 1952-1960, the parish was headed by Fr. Remigio Pigato. At that time it still numbered 1,700 families, with 6,000 parishioners. Fr. Dominic Valentino was named pastor in 1960, succeeded in 1965 by Fr. Mario Albanesi who took care of the construction of the new rectory. In 1965, there arrived also the Brazilian Fr. Santo Cigolini who gave particular attention to the many Porto Ricans settling in Buffalo.

Fr. Tarcisio Bagattin was pastor from January 1967 to the summer of 1975. He was faced with a big problem: almost all the houses of his parish were demolished to make room for the renovation of the region around City Hall. Only about a hundred families were left in the territory of the parish. The number of the students in the school had dwindled to the point that it had to close. By 1978 most of them had moved far from the area and about two 200 families were still enlisted in the parish.

Following a brief tenure by Fr. Raffaele Villella, Fr. Giuseppe Belan succeeded Fr. Tarcisio Bagattin as pastor on December 10, 1975. A large parish hall was built in the last years for the religious, social,



and recreational activities of the Italo-American community of the area of Buffalo numbering also about 15,000 Italians of recent immigration.

#### THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY, FREDONIA, NEW YORK

Fr. Pio Parolin, pastor from 1934 until 1952, extinguished the debt on April 24, 1943, in 1948-1949 rebuilt the facade of the church and completely renovated its interior. But right at the close of his pastorate, on February 24, 1952 the church was half destroyed by a fire. His successor Fr. Pietro Bortolazzo called the faithful together and with their generous cooperation it was quickly rebuilt: by with the Christmas Midnight Mass of the same year it resumed functioning. The Church was again consecrated on July 5, 1953, by Bishop A. Burke of Buffalo.

Fr. Vito Sebben became pastor soon afterwards (1953-1964) and built the parochial school. The parish numbered by then 500 families and 2,000 people. The following succeeded him as pastors Frs. Aldo Uderzo (1966-1967), James Abbarno (1967- 1970), and Thomas Carlesimo (1970-1975). On December 31, 1975, the Scalabrinians withdrew from the parish which numbered about 500 families, mostly of Italian extraction, but of the third and fourth generation, with total disappearance of the Italian language.

#### THE PARISH OF ST. PETER IN SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

During WWII, Fr. Angelo Strazzoni, pastor since 1925 was confronted with the problem of the construction of a new church, because of the railroad that had been built next to the old one, and the traffic of the trains excessively disturbed the sacred functions. In 1945 he launched a campaign to collect funds, but then he did not take much interest in carrying out the project.

His successor Fr. Luigi Riello (1951-1960) considered at first the possibility of rebuilding the old church, but it had been reduced by then to such a state of decay that the public authorities themselves had to declare it unsafe and so ordered it to be demolished. Another appeal for raising funds was carried on in 1953 and by the end of the year the construction of the new church was begun on the design of

Architect W. Nugent. Bishop Walter A. Foery of Syracuse inaugurated it on September 18, 1955.

Fr. Luigi Riello, named Provincial Superior, was succeeded in 1960 by Fr. Alessandro Rinaldo. The parish numbered 1,200 families, 95% of them of Italian extraction; half of the parishioners, however, were living outside the boundaries of the parish. Fr. Luigi Pisano was made pastor in 1970. Presently there are 600 families: 50% of Italian origin: 20% direct immigrants from Italy; 30% of other nationalities. Baptisms declined from 209 in 1950 to 50 in 1978.

Two projects were launched in 1977 by Fr. Louis Pisano: a residential home for the elderly, with 120 apartments, to be built with funds from the Federal Government, and a parochial center.

#### PARISH OF ST. MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL, UTICA, NEW YORK

Pastor in 1940-1952, during WWII Fr. Guglielmo Pizzoglio opened a kindergarten for children who were left alone in the day because their fathers were in the front lines and the women were working in arms' factories. Inaugurated on January 4, 1944, it remained in operation till 1970.

Fr. Giuseppe Berton became pastor in 1950. He built the new rectory, which was inaugurated on October 18, 1952, and brought important improvements to the school, the gymnasium, and the premises around the Church.

In October 1964, the direction of the parish was entrusted to Fr. Pietro Bortolazzo. During these years the plans of the city began to be carried out and many houses around the church were demolished. Many families, though so far from the church, remained loyal to the parish, and others moved into the new tenements. But even with all this, the number of families was cut in half and by 1978 they were about 1000.

In 1971, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the parish, the church was fully renovated and embellished with a new floor and a new main altar.

Fr. John Corrao was pastor since 1973. Besides a program of assistance to the aged, special care is devoted to the young with the

elementary school, the teaching of catechism to the students of public schools, the youth center, etc.

By his expressed desire, Fr. Guglielmo Pizzoglio, who died at Staten Island, N.Y. on June 19, 1973, was buried in Utica.

#### THE PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH, PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, IN BROOKLYN, N.Y.

In 1977, Bishop Francis Mugavero of Brooklyn asked the Scalabrinians to take charge of the national parish of St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church on 185 Suydam Street, combining with it the nearby territorial parish of St. Leonard in one of the most depressed areas of Brooklyn.

The diocese of Brooklyn, a borough of metropolitan New York, numbered then one million and 400 thousand Catholics, most of them of recent immigration, especially Italian and Spanish speaking. The parishes had a combined population of 8,000 Catholics, recently arrived from Italy (Calabria and Sicily), from Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, Colombia, etc.

A three year contract with the Diocese of Brooklyn was signed on January 17, 1978 and the parish was taken by Frs. Guido Caverzan as pastor, and Ettore Sartori and Ettore Rubin as assistants on February 1, 1978.

#### MISSION FOR HAITIANS IN NEW YORK

At the end of April 1978, the Scalabrinian Fr. Robert Royal, a native of Haiti, began assisting the Haitian community of Nyack in New York, with residence in the parish of St. Ann. The Haitian families of the zone numbered about 300. The liturgy is celebrated in French and Creole.



## CHAPTER IV

### PARISHES IN OTHER STATES

#### BOSTON, MA.: THE PARISH OF SACRED HEART

Fr. Arnaldo Vanoli headed the parish from 1935 to 1949 when he was entrusted with the chaplaincy of "Mother Cabrini" Memorial Hospital in Chicago, IL.

In 1948, the rectory destroyed in a fire, was rebuilt. Fr. Luigi Savio was appointed pastor in 1950. During his ten year tenure, particular attention was given to the parochial school that had been taken away in 1948 from the administration of the parish of St. Stephen; it was remodeled in 1951-1952; in 1958, one wing of the school was adapted to provide room for the meetings of catholic associations, especially for the "Centro di Azione Cattolica Italiana", that thanks particularly to Fr. Pietro Oddi (1956-1966), and then to Fr. Domenico Rodighiero, became the place of the religious, cultural, and recreational encounter of the new immigrants. It was here that the Italian language weekly *Incontro* was born and an office for information and social services was set up. Towards the end Fr. Savio's pastorate the exodus of Italians from the poor neighborhood of the North End gained momentum; but many of them remained loyal to their old church of Sacred Heart, so that its religious life is far superior to what one would expect from the small number of parishioners, about 200 families, still residing in the parish.

Fr. Giuseppe Invernizzi was pastor from 1960 to 1965 when Fr. Luigi Savio returned. Fr. Ilario Zanon became pastor in 1975.

#### EAST BOSTON, MA.: THE PARISH OF ST. LAZARUS

The last 20 years of the 50-year tenure of Fr. Ludovico Toma were marked by other enterprises. In 1951 he purchased a house on Ashley Street as a priests' residence; on May 31, 1953, Card. R. Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, inaugurated the new parish hall with capacity for 450 people, and presented Fr. Toma with the Pontifical Honor

medal "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice"; on May 29, 1959, the same Cardinal blessed the large Youth Center. Fr. Toma died on July 9, 1961, at the age of 79.

He was succeeded by Fr. Settimo Basso (1961-1970) who pursued the spiritual and material endeavor of his predecessor. On March 21, 1963 three new marble altars were consecrated. Fr. Guido Caverzan became pastor in 1970 and built the new rectory in 1976. Fr. Mario Albanesi succeeded him in 1978.

The parish, which in 1953 numbered 1,000 families, was down to 800 as of 1978, with 250 students in the parochial school.

### FRAMINGHAM, MA.: THE PARISH OF ST. TARCISIUS

In 1943, Fr. Pietro Maschi's health began to decline. He had begun there his ministry way back in 1907. Fr. Corrado Martellozzo was sent to help him, followed later by Fr. Giuseppe Berton, who became pastor after Fr. Maschi's death in June 3, 1948. Fr. Berton gave particular attention to the youth; his interest was continued by Fr. Silvio Sartori, pastor from 1950 to 1964. After doing restoration work on the church, Fr. Sartori began raising funds to build the parochial school. In 1954 he bought a property on Waverly Street. The school and the convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph were inaugurated in 1959.

Fr. Francesco Minchiatti, pastor from 1964 to 1975, solved the problem of the church that had been declared unsafe by city authorities. While funds were being raised, the school hall was used as church. The new church was dedicated on March 19, 1972, by Card. H.S. Medeiros, Archbishop of Boston. In 1975, Fr. Minchiatti was replaced for a few months by Fr. Giacomo Viero. Fr. Giuseppe Bizzotto became Pastor on November 25, 1975, followed by Fr. Alfred Almon-te in 1977.

In 1969, the parish numbered about 900 families, with almost 300 students in the school. It now has 1100 families and the school was closed in 1973. There has been an increase of Portuguese families, for whom Mass and catechism are conducted in Portuguese.

### SOMERVILLE, MA.: THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

After WWII, many Italian families moved away from the parish in whose territory some factories had been built. In 1953, there were 400 families with 2,300 parishioners. Even with the decrease in population, the need was felt for a parochial school: the pastor Fr. Nazareno Properzi (1915-1960) with much patience and sacrifice raised the funds needed, purchased the land and in 1957 began construction. The school was opened in 1958. Presently it has 250 students. The convent for the Franciscan Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur was built in 1960.

Fr. Properzi died December 21, 1960, Card. Cushing had named him Diocesan Consultor in 1944, and chaplain of the Association of Catholic Artists of Massachusetts in 1947. In 1947, he presented him with the Papal Medal "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice".

Fr. Giovanni Bocciarelli succeeded him in January 1961. In 1963 he built the new rectory. Fr. Francesco Fiorentin headed the parish from 1970 to 1977, succeeded then by Fr. Francesco Minchiatti. In 1978 the parish numbered 600 families and was declining: many houses were being demolished without replacements and young families preferred to settle in the suburbs.

### EVERETT, MA., THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

Fr. Giovanni Peona (1933-1944) continued to raise funds for the construction of a new parish church in spite of the difficulties of the war during which he strove hard to keep the peace between Italians and Americans. He died on February 19, 1944. He was succeeded by Fr. Natale Oddenino, who devoted himself particularly to assisting war veterans. He died on October 4, 1946.

Fr. Corrado Martellozzo was then appointed pastor. He reorganized the parish societies, especially for the youth, for whom he purchased in 1947 a building belonging to the Knights of Columbus. In the same year he bought a property on Oakes Street, where in April 1950 the church was built, which was inaugurated on September 9, 1951. The number of Italians exceeded then 10,000 and a parochial school became a necessity. Fr. Corrado Martellozzo was named Provincial Superior and the school was built his successor, Fr. Pietro Bor-

tolazzo (1952-1964), who began construction in 1957 and completed it in September 1958. In 1962 the rectory also was built. Fr. Guglielmo Pizzoglio was pastor from 1964 to 1968. His main accomplishment was the construction in 1967 of the convent for the Franciscan Sisters of Allegheny teaching in the parochial school. Since 1968 the parish was directed by Fr. Joseph Scopa, who was succeeded by Fr. Michael Tarro. As of 1978 the parish numbers about 4, 000 parishioners and the school has an attendance of 250 students.

### PROVIDENCE, R.I., THE PARISH OF HOLY GHOST

Fr. Flaminio Parenti, pastor since 1922, in the years after the WWII continued to improve the institutions of the parish. The convent of the Sisters was remodeled in 1952-1954; the school was enlarged in 1954, and again in 1968, thus increasing the classrooms to 16. Another building was purchased and made ready as Youth Center on Swiss Street in 1959-1960; another wing, the "Ivy Hall", was added on 1962. The church parking lot was widened, and in 1962 the church itself was cleaned up and redecorated. On October 9, 1964, Fr. Parenti was named pastor "emeritus", following a 42-year tenure. He was decorated with the Papal Medal Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice and the Italian Republic made him a Knight bestowing on him also the "Stella della Solidarieta" (Solidarity Star). To him is due, with the help of Fr. Bracchi, the initiative for the Bishop Scalabrini Home for the Aged of North Kingstown, R.I.

His successor, Fr. Giuseppe Invernizzi (1964-1973) found himself soon confronted with the problems deriving from the city's urban renewal program, which anticipated the demolition of the school to build a super highway. With help from the state he bought another property and in 1968 he started construction on the new school. The parish membership, however, began to change: Italians were moving out to other localities and were being replaced by people of other ethnic extractions, most of them poor: charitable activities on their behalf were then intensified.

In 1940, the parish numbered about 20,000 members, but in 1967 it only counted 5,835, and in 1978 it was down to 4,000. The students of the parochial school, who had been over 800 at one time, were now



down to less than 300. It was under the direction of the Reformed Sisters of Mercy. Fr. Giovanni Bocciarelli became pastor in 1973. His assistant, Fr. Decimo Crevani, distinguished himself with a vast and fruitful action on behalf of Italians of recent immigration in the Providence area.

#### PROVIDENCE, R.I.: THE PARISH OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

Fr. Pietro Gorret, pastor from 1922 to 1949, remodeled the rectory in the years 1940-1941, enlarged the kindergarten and rebuilt the convent of the Pallottine Sisters. Up in years by then, Fr. Gorret took possession in January 1949 of Holy Cross Mission as its first pastor. It was the mission he himself had started as a subsidiary church to St. Bartholomew, and it eventually became a separate parish.

At that same time, Fr. Attilio Bordignon was named Pastor of St. Bartholomew. He made good of the improved financial conditions of his parishioners in order to fulfill Fr. Gorret's dream: the construction of a parish school proportionate to the needs of the large congregation. Work on the school began in 1951 and it was inaugurated on August 23, 1953 by Bishop Russell J. Mc Vinney of Providence. Shortly afterwards an old public school was bought and made into the Youth Centre. Still another building was purchased and remodeled into a Convent for the Pallottine Sisters.

Meanwhile the people of the parish kept growing and the old church was becoming too small. No sooner was the debt paid off than the new pastor Fr. Mario Boeri (1957-1970) launched a campaign for the construction of a new church. In 1966 he bought a piece of land on Laurel Hill Ave.; in August 1967 work was started. On April 13, 1969, Bishop Mc Vinney of Providence inaugurated both the new church and the new rectory. Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo was pastor from September 1970 to January 1975, followed by Fr. Carmelo Negro. As of 1978, the people of the parish were still numerous (3,000 families) and virtually steady. Besides the intense pastoral care, the concern of the last years has been to pay off of the heavy debts incurred in the new constructions.

## PROVIDENCE, R I., THE PARISH OF HOLY CROSS

During the first 25 years of its existence, the parish of St. Bartholomew took care also of Italians who in ever increasing numbers were moving into the North East section of its territory, quite a distance from the Church. In 1926 the pastor Fr. Pietro Gorret opened for them the mission of "Holy Cross" on Hartford Avenue. Bishop Hickey blessed the first chapel on December 11, 1927. At the time the families numbered about 100; by 1948 they had risen to 800. The Bishop allowed a priest to reside there. Actually, Fr. Gorret moved there in January 1949, and on February 1, 1949, was appointed pastor of the new parish. In 1950 he bought the rectory. On July 15 of that year he was forced to retire to Italy because of ill health.

He was followed by Fr. Ulderico Piccolo, who in 1955 built a larger and better church on the spot of the old one. Fr. Remo Rizzato became pastor in 1958, succeeded in 1959 by Fr. Guido Ferronato, who extinguished the church debt. Then, in October 1965, came Fr. Carmelo Negro; in January 1975 Fr. Henry Gentile, and on November 25, 1975 Fr. Enrico Benin. In 1977, the Scalabrinians decided to withdraw from the parish as they did not find their presence necessary any more as missionaries for migrants. The parish was returned to the Chancery of Providence on October 2, 1977.

## THORNTON, R.I., THE PARISH OF ST. ROCCO

The 10-year pastorate of Fr. Raffaele Larcher (1939-1949) was marked by the religious revival of the parish. In 1942 he called in the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart for the kindergarten and the youth apostolate. At the same time he made plans for the construction of the new church that was to replace the old wooden structure. His successor, Fr. Angelo Susin (1949-1957) amplified the plans and began the work in October 1949. On June 17, 1951, Bishop Russell J. McVinney blessed the new church with a sitting capacity for 750, and the auditorium under it with the same capacity. The rectory had been rebuilt in 1950. The parish had then 1,200 families.

A monument to St. Francis of Assisi was erected by the church in 1952 and a new kindergarten was constructed in 1953 in the place of the old church. Fr. Giacomo Viero was made pastor in 1957. The

school, built in 1961, is his main achievement. In 1967- 1977, the parish was headed by Fr. Mario Albanesi, who confronted and brilliantly solved the problem of the parish debt. In 1970, he enlarged the convent of the Sisters. Presently under the direction of Fr. Joseph Scopa, the parish numbers about 8,500 parishioners and the school has over 400 pupils.

#### **BRISTOL, R.I., THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL**

Pastor from 1938 to 1958, Fr. Giuseppe Sorzana redecorated the church in 1941. In 1944 he provided another convent for the Sisters on 169 State St., and in 1945 he opened a kindergarten. He began also to raise funds for the parish school.

Classes were provisionally held in the parish hall in 1950 while construction was in progress on the new building inaugurated by Bishop R.J. McVinney of Providence on September 15, 1952. In 1956 the same bishop dedicated the new convent of the Sisters on State and High Sts. Fr. Sorzana died on February 18, 1958. The parish was served for one year by Fr. Tardivo who then returned to being a military chaplain. Fr. Mario Bordignon was pastor from 1959 to 1964, succeeded by Fr. Raffaele Larcher from 1964 to 1973.

Both strengthened the religious organizations and made improvements in the church and the rectory. Fr. Guido Ferronato followed them from 1973 to 1975 and then Fr. Michael Sommesi. The families of Italian extraction were then 900. There has been a marked increase of Portuguese speaking immigrants. The parish school had about 160 students. It had also a kindergarten.

#### **EAST PROVIDENCE, R.I.: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF LORETO**

Fr. Antonio Bainotti headed the parish from September 1939 to January 1948. In 1946 he remodelled into a convent the old building of the "Faith, Country, and Labor" society and called in the Venerini Sisters, with whose help he began makeshift classes in the Youth Center. In January 1948, Fr. Ulderico Piccolo was named pastor. He succeeded in obtaining back the parish hall of which the Chancery of Providence had gained title of ownership. In May 1951 the parish was entrusted to Fr. Vittorio Salmaso who brought to completion the

effort begun by the predecessor to build the parochial school. Work began in November 1952 and Bishop McVinney dedicated it on November 15, 1954. In October 1964 Fr. Salmaso was placed in charge of the "Scalabrini Home" for the aged in North Kingstown. For one year the parish was administered by Fr. Carmelo Negro, who was followed by Fr. Ilario Zanon in October 1965. He paid off the debt of the school and right away turned his attention to a new school, because the old wooden structure had been declared unsafe by the city authorities. In December 1966 the groundbreaking took place, and on March 24, 1968, Bishop McVinney blessed the new church in which a replica of the statue of Our Lady of Loreto was enthroned, a gift from the Prelate of the city of Loreto, Bishop Aurelio Sabattani. Fr. Zanon built also the new rectory inaugurated on March 25, 1973. Fr. Giuseppe Berton became pastor in 1975 and Fr. Francesco Minchiatti in 1977. Always rather small, the parish numbered as of 1978 about 2,500 parishioners: one third of Italian extraction; one third of Portuguese origin from the Capoverde and the Azores Islands; the rest Irish and Libanese. The Parish school has been closed because of financial difficulties.

#### NEW HAVEN, CT.: THE PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL

After the long pastorate of Fr. Leonard Quaglia (1916-1949), Fr. Raffaele Larcher was made pastor in May 1949. He took the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of the church to do some restructuring in 1950. In November 1951, he was elected General Councilor of the Scalabrinian Congregation and his plan continued under Fr. Hugh Cavicchi. He completed the restructuring and remodelling of the church, the sacristy, and the rectory. Fr. Cavicchi also was called to Europe in 1954 to initiate the Scalabrinian missions of England. He was succeeded by Fr. Francesco Minchiatti whose main concern was the religious life of the parish. A new rectory and a new sacristy were inaugurated on September 26, 1954. The new convent of the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart was completed in 1958. The kindergarten and the school with about 300 students, have always have in the care of these Sisters. Completely renovated, the parish hall was dedicated in 1963.

Fr. Guido Caverzan was pastor from 1964 to 1967. In 1966 he went ahead with the remodeling of the church. In the same year, though not ceasing as a national parish, St. Michael became also a territorial one to which was attached part of the parish of St. Patrick that had been suppressed in the meantime. Following the renovation plans of the city, the demographic situation of the parish underwent rapid changes. While ten years before the parish numbered 2,500 families, in 1967 it had only 400 of them within its territory; another 300 belonged to it as a national parish, though having moved elsewhere. Fr. Silvio Sartori died in St. Michael, New Haven, on September 16, 1966. Fr. Giuseppe Bizzotto became pastor in January 1967, followed by Fr. Thomas Carlesimo on December 31, 1975.

#### NEW HAVEN, CT.: THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

In the years between 1936 and 1950, Fr. Silvio Sartori, pastor since 1925, was able to extinguish the debt contracted for the parish school. In addition he also purchased some property around the church for a parking lot.

Fr. Guido Ferronato was named pastor in December 1950. He carried out important works for remodeling the church, built the sacristy and bought a property for the Sisters' convent. Fr. Tarcisio Prevedello became pastor in 1957. He built a new school and the convent. His intense activity was interrupted by a heart attack in August 1964. He spent a few months of therapy in Arco (Trento, Italy). In March 1965 he returned to work in America, but he had another heart attack in Cornwall, N.Y. where he died on June 15, 1965.

His successor Fr. Attilio Bordignon (1964-1973) had to be a witness to the depopulation of the parish: about 400 families were forced to move because of the construction of a super highway. Blacks and Porto Ricans replaced them. In 1967- 1968 the infamous race riots made the situation even worse. The parochial school was sold. Fr. Vincent Lo Savio became pastor in 1973. The condition of the parish, with some 1,300 people, improved especially through the care given to recent immigrants. In 1978 Fr. Vincent Lo Savio became seriously ill and was replaced by Fr. Mario Bordignon.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

The Italian community of Washington began to develop in the beginning of the 20th century. In 1910 the federal capital was home to about 3,000 Italians. In 1913, Card. J. Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore urged the pastor of St. Paul, Msgr. Mackin, to look for an Italian priest to care of his fellow countrymen. Msgr. Mackin got in touch with a young priest who had just finished a period of studies at the Apostolic Mission of the Catholic University of Washington. He was Fr. Nicola De Carlo, born in Avigliano, Potenza. He had been ordained a priest in Naples, Italy in 1902. After ministering for 6 years in Naples, he had been sent to assist Italians at an Augustinian parish of Philadelphia. Fr. De Carlo was the spiritual leader of the Italian community of Washington from 1913 to 1961, the year he died.

In earlier periods the Italians were concentrated in the district to the West of the Capitol. Fr. De Carlo bought there an old house at 83 H Street, N.W., and a chapel was opened dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. The first Mass was said on December 14, 1913.

With the help of a committee, a larger building was found Third and I Streets, N.W., and the new chapel was blessed on May 31, 1914 by Msgr. Cerretti, the Apostolic Delegate. As the community's Catholic associations were increasing in the following years, on September 7, 1919, the cornerstone of a real church was laid by Cardinal Gibbons at the crossroads of Third and F Streets NW. The church was inaugurated on April 29, 1923 by the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi.

During World War II, the neighborhood around the Church of the Holy Rosary was totally overhauled by the city planning. Few Italian families remained in the vicinity of the church, but those that moved out did not forget the traditions stressed by Fr. De Carlo and entertained a certain degree of loyalty to the Italian church. However, the situation of the church became critical for the fact that it was increasingly surrounded by African-Americans. Fr. De Carlo invested whatever he could for the purchase of a 120 acre piece of land on which to build a rest home for the Italian elderly, which he named Villa Rosa in memory of his mother.

Eighty years old by now, in 1957 Fr. De Carlo offered Villa Rosa to the Scalabrinians and showed willingness to surrender to them also the parish of the Holy Rosary. The Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Amleto Giovanni Cicognani had suggested the plan. The first Archbishop of Washington, Patrick O'Boyle, welcomed in part the proposal. Fr. De Carlo gave up the parish and wrote up a donation deed turning over to the Scalabrinians the property of Villa Rosa in 1958. But the Archbishop ordered him to deed ownership of it to the Archdiocese, and only when his order was carried out did the Archbishop entrust on April 7, 1960, the Italian national parish of Holy Rosary to the Scalabrinians for ten years. In 1970 the contract was renewed for another ten years.

Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo, pastor, and Fr. Giuseppe Spigolon, assistant, arrived in Washington, D.C. by the end of July 1960. Their first action was directed at attracting back to the Church of the Holy Rosary those Italians who had deserted it. The societies were revitalized. The church was redecorated, and the basement was made the "Youth Center". An annual Italian Festival was organized as a means to bind together thousands of Italians, so much so that it succeeded in modifying the city renovation plan which contemplated the demolition of the church. Little by little, it has become also, in a certain way, the official church of the Italian Embassy.

In July 1963, Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo was elected Superior General of the Scalabrinian Congregation. Fr. Spigolon succeeded him as pastor. Besides the care of the parish and the hard task of contact with the families distant from the church through the periodical *Voce Italiana* and a radio program, Fr. Spigolon and his assistants had to spend much of their time and commitment in the preparation of the Villa Rosa Nursing Home in Mitchellville, MD, some 10 miles from the parish. The new rectory was built in 1967-1968. In June 1969 Fr. Spigolon was named Provincial Superior and the parish was entrusted to Fr. Mario Bordignon until June 1972. Fr. Cesare Donanzan was the pastor from of June 25, 1972. Almost all the Italians belonging to the national parish live no less than a half hour drive from the church. Sunday Mass is attended by about 400 parishioners. The church still remains a center of attraction, however, for the Italian community of about 6,000 Italians with Italian passports and some other 25,000 of

Italian extraction. A “Casa Italiana”, the cultural and social parish center, was under construction for the Italian community.



## CHAPTER V

### PARISHES AND MISSIONS OF QUEBEC AND ONTARIO, CANADA

#### HAMILTON, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF ALL SOULS

The Italian colony of Hamilton was founded in the last 20 years of the 19th century by Giuseppe Rosart, by the Sansone brothers, by the Alfieri, Zeffra, Camilli Families and a few others who called in later on their relatives and others from their towns, mostly Sicilian. In the beginning of 20th century the Italians numbered more than 1000. Upon repeated requests from the Bishop of Hamilton C.J. Dowling, the Scalabrinians sent Fr. Giovanni Bonomi to the assistance of that community.

He arrived in Hamilton on March 5, 1908 and took residence in the rectory of the Cathedral. The first religious services for Italians were celebrated in a small chapel dependent from the Cathedral. Having broken the ice of indifference and conquered the difficulties deriving from the economic depression and consequent unemployment Fr. Bonomi succeeded, with the help of his fellow countrymen in founding the parish of St. Anthony. The church was blessed on Easter Sunday 1912. The rapid growth of population from 1912 to 1923 created the need for building another church on Barton Street on the west side of the city. It was dedicated to Our Lady of the Souls in Purgatory (Our Lady of All Souls).

The corner stone was laid on November 2, 1922. Its inauguration was done by Bishop O'Brien of Peterborough on October 21, 1923. A very modest house near the church was bought for the priests in 1925. Old and sick by then, Fr. Bonomi, who was no longer a member of the Scalabrinian Congregation, retired in Italy, where he died in San Remo on November 16, 1958. Before retiring he had insistent-ly solicited the Scalabrinians to continue his work. In fact, Fr. Remo Rizzato succeeded him in 1953, with Fr. Louis Pisano as his assistant. The parish picked up a new life with the reorganization of the Cath-

olic societies. The church was redecorated and the rectory enlarged. In June 1958, Fr. Ulderico Piccolo was named pastor. In 1960, Bishop J.P. Ryan of Hamilton inaugurated the kindergarten, entrusted to the Baptistine Sisters first, and later to the Felician Sisters.

Fr. Aldo Uderzo was pastor from 1967 to 1977, followed by Fr. Francesco Fiorentin. In collaboration with Italian and Canadian authorities the Italian Centre was founded for cultural, educational, and social activities. The new rectory was inaugurated in October 1975. As of 1978 the parish counted about 1,800 families; their number is declining, however, as they tend to move out to the residential districts in the outskirts of the city. The same process is taking place in the parish of St. Anthony.

#### HAMILTON, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

As seen before, the first small church of St. Anthony on Clinton Street was built by Fr. Bonomi and inaugurated on April 7, 1912. It became the national parish of the Italians. This was transferred to the new church of All Souls, but Fr. Bonomi kept serving also the church of St. Anthony until 1933 when it was declared a mission or a subsidiary chapel of the parish of St. Ann.

Msgr. Englert was the pastor of St. Ann, but Bishop McNally gave him Fr. Mascari, an Italo-Canadian priest, as his assistant for the Italians. In 1946, St. Anthony became a parish again and Fr. Mascari was named pastor. He took residence by the church only in 1951 when the rectory was completed. Due to the substantial increase of the Italian population in the late 1950s the building of a larger church became necessary. Bishop Ryan laid the cornerstone on October 4, 1953, and blessed the new church on October 3, 1954. The old church was made the parish hall. The families of the parish were then about 700.

In 1975, Bishop Paul F. Reding wanted a better organization of the pastoral care of the 30,000 Italians of Hamilton by entrusting both national parishes to the Scalabrinians. He asked therefore that two of them should come in to replace the Pastor Fr. Sardo, an Italo-Canadian priest born, like Father Mascari, in the parish of St. Anthony.

Fr. Tarcisio Bagattin took over the parish on August 29, 1975 with Fr. Camillo Lando as his assistant. In 1978 the parish was made up

of about 1,400 registered families and of another 500 occasional ones. 95% of them are of Italian extraction, but 70% of the young are Canadian born. Fr. Giuseppe Bizzotto became pastor in 1977.

#### MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

Mississauga is a conglomerate of various communities, Cooksville being one of them, which recently united to form one city. It is located nine miles southwest of Toronto and about 30 miles north of Hamilton. In January 1956, when Card. James C. McGuigan, Archbishop of Toronto, proposed to the Scalabrinians the founding of a parish, Cooksville was far out in the countryside, numbered 200 Italian families and it had already a Catholic school named after St. Catherine of Siena, opened in 1955 and directed by the Felician Sisters since 1956. Fr. Danilo Zanon was sent there on February 16, 1956. During the early months he said Mass in the school hall, but by April 1, 1957, Auxiliary Bishop F.A. Marrocco of Toronto, blessed the land donated by the archdiocese. Work started in June and on Christmas day of the same year the Midnight Mass could be celebrated in the basement of the new church. The upper church was begun in September 1960.

Card. McGuigan inaugurated the new church and rectory on October 22, 1961. On October 27, 1964, Fr. Danilo Zanon left his post into the hands of Fr. Giuseppe Berton.

Already in 1967 the parish numbered 1,000 families even though its boundaries had been reduced by the creation of new parishes. The parish grew with the development of the city. The initial Italian community became a minority with 25% of the population. Little by little it was joined by Canadians, Filipinos, Indians, Pakistanis, English, Irish, and many other immigrants from Europe and Central America. In 1978 it counted about 2,000 families. The parish is both territorial and national for the Italians of the southeastern area of metropolitan Toronto. Fr. Peter Bortolazzo was made pastor in October 1973 and Fr. Giuseppe Spigolon in 1976.

#### THORNHILL, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. PASCHAL BAYLON

The Archbishop of Toronto, through Msgr. Pisani of the Italian Gens of Florence, and of his own secretary Fr. John T. Kidd, had

asked in 1908 the Superior General, Fr. Domenico Vicentini, for a Scalabrinian missionary "for the Italian community which will have soon a church and a private school."

The Italians of Toronto had already been visited several times by the Scalabrinian Fr. Teofilo Glesaz and by Fr. Doglio, who was then substituting at Buffalo for Fr. Casassa, resting in Italy because of ill health. Fr. Vicentini answered on September 13, 1908, saying that Fr. Doglio, not being a member of the Congregation, was free. Also Fr. Bonomi from Hamilton was urging Fr. Vicentini to accept the important mission of Toronto; but the Provincial Superior, Fr. Antonio Demo opposed it because the situation did not appear too clear. In fact, Fr. Vicentini came to know that Fr. Doglio had been named delegate for the pastoral care of Italians, but without giving up the parish of St. Anthony in Buffalo.

In June 1957, Frs. Mario Albanesi and Cesare Donanzan with the approval of the Provincial Superior, Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, undertook an exploration mission in Canada to study the problems of the pastoral care of Italian immigrants and to seek the opinion of the Canadian bishops on the matter. At Ottawa, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Panico, welcomed them very warmly and pointed out, among other things, especially the situation of Toronto where Italians were settling in greatest numbers, and he himself took pains to make an appointment with Auxiliary Bishop F. A. Marrocco, whom Card. McGuigan had named as delegate for migration. The Apostolic Delegate highlighted the continuous influx of Italians also to other cities of Ontario. A residence in Toronto could become the operational center for other neighboring dioceses and cities. Bishop Marrocco, who had a high esteem of Scalabrinians because of the work done by Frs. Danilo Zanon and Gregory Zaroni, said he was aware of the problem of the pastoral care for Italians who had by then reached a remarkable number: three churches had been opened for them in the previous ten years; the people of several Canadian parishes were made up of a large percentage of immigrants and this was an ongoing and growing phenomenon. He proposed, therefore, that five Scalabrinians be sent to Toronto and assigned as assistants to as many Canadian parishes to take care of both Italians and Canadians. Within short years the Scalabrinians would become pastors and the par-

ishes could then be entrusted to the Congregation. He did not deem it opportune to entrust right away the parishes to the Scalabrinians not to provoke any possible reaction on the part of the local clergy and of the other Canadian minorities who had contributed to the creation and support of the parish institutions.

Had the Congregation sufficient funds at its disposal it could also be authorized to build new churches for Italians; but the difficulties encountered right then for the construction of the Church of St. Catherine in Mississauga gave evident proof that financial conditions did not leave room for illusions. To the first proposal, the Scalabrinians objected that the religious life in community was a necessary requirement to them. For this reason, in accord with the Archbishop, Auxiliary Bishop Marrocco proposed to dismember from his own parish of St. Edward the northern section where about 250 Italian and 150 Canadian families lived, and to make it a new parish that would be entrusted to the Scalabrinians with the possibility of preaching missions also to the other Italians of the archdiocese.

In September the Cardinal himself solicited a positive answer. He was offered Fr. Vincent Lo Savio, and on October 4, 1957, he named him pastor of the new parish of St. Paschal Baylon. There was neither church nor school nor rectory. For the first three weeks Fr. Lo Savio was a guest of Bishop Marrocco until he rented a house on Meadowview Road and a hall on the second floor of the North York Veteran's Hall, at 6321 Yonge Street, where the Mass was celebrated on October 23 for the first time. His assistant Fr. Raffaele Vilella arrived on November 3, 1957. The two fathers took the first census of the parish which showed about 500 families, 150 of them Italians recently emigrated especially from the region of Frosinone and Cassino. On March 25, 1959, Card. McGuigan purchased a piece of land on Steeles Ave. West with a small house where the fathers moved in, immediately launching a campaign to raise the funds needed for the construction of the church. In spite of their modest financial resources, the people responded generously pledging \$70,000. In May 1959 there was the ground-breaking and by December the church was ready!

Card. McGuigan blessed it on December 20, 1959, with the attendance of the Superior General Fr. Raffaele Larcher. On August 21,

1960, the solemn feast of the Assumption was celebrated for the first time as an occasion for rallying the Italians according to their traditions. In fact, it became right away the traditional feast of the parish that was to be celebrated every year on the Sunday following August 15.

The parish hall was built near the church together with the auditorium, the gymnasium, and a library. The parish has also the Catholic school. In 1965, Auxiliary Bishop P.F. Pocok agreed to the proposal of a third Scalabrinian who would take of other Italians without religious assistance to be reached through periodical missions and of those who were in two Compensation Hospitals victims of work related accidents. Such task was entrusted to Fr. Ignazio Battaglia in May 1965. Thought was given also to the establishing in Toronto an Italian Catholic Federation group, but the activity of the second assistant was reduced little by little to the chaplaincy of the Workmen's Compensation Board, where between 300 and 400 workers, in great part immigrants, victims of accidents were being cared for.

The parish became both territorial and national for the Italians of the districts of Willodale, Richmond-Hill, and Markham. The Catholics residing within the confines of the Parish numbered about 15,000, 55% of them of Italian extraction or of recent immigration. In October 1966, Fr. Lo Savio was succeeded by Fr. Raffaele Villella as administrator, and then, in 1967, as pastor. Fr. Giuseppe Invernizzi was named pastor in October 1973; Fr. James Chiaro in September 1975; Fr. Francesco Geremia in 1978.

## THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE MISSIONS OF MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The first appeal addressed to the Scalabrinians on behalf of the Italian immigrants to Canada goes back to 1895: The Franciscan Fr. Agostino thus wrote to Bishop Scalabrini from Montreal:

"I would like to let Your Excellency know that Canada, but especially the city of Montreal, is in direct need of Italian diocesan priests. The Italian immigrants reach the number of three thousand in Montreal in the months between fall and spring. In the summer they work in the fields. Only about one thousand remain in the city. The local church authorities has never wanted to give a church, an independent building, where the Italians might easily get together to fulfill in com-

plete freedom their religious duties. And because of their insufficient knowledge of the languages (English and French) they are exposed to losing their faith to the Protestants who do anything to attract Italians to their side.

The Archbishop of Montreal only allows that the Italians hear Mass on Sunday in a chapel with room for 400 at the institute for the blind, directed by the Sisters of Charity. We have no freedom to conduct the services according to the devotions of Italian Catholics. During the five months of winter, we do not find the means to help and bring sustenance to the poor who are quite numerous! They find this help easily instead with the Protestants!

Italians, one might say, are hated by Canadian Catholics, for no reason, except that the Italians, though poor, work hard and give no scandal; they are attached to the religion of Jesus Christ, pay their taxes to City Hall, their tithes to the Church, as Canadians do; the only thing they do not have, because of lack of money, is the Italian school, which the Italians who attend Protestant services instead have.

Even the Jews have their school, but the poor Italian Catholics cannot obtain anything because the clergy and Church authorities do not want to help the community or to assume any responsibility. The Society of the Sulpician Fathers of Montreal who have in their possession in this country the value of more than a hundred million Italian liras in real estate and revenues, always refuses to help the Italians even though they are the majority in their parishes, and they have always refused to lend their churches and chapels for the sacred services of the Italian communities since the time when the Very Rev. Fr. Luigi of Parma, the Superior General of the Franciscans, made me come here three years ago from Egypt to evangelize the Italians of Montreal.

The behavior of the Sulpician Fathers represents a very serious injustice because with so much to spend in the construction of colleges in Rome and in the United States they are so hard and uncharitable towards our poor Italians who also have a soul to save like the Canadians.

Allow me to point out to Your Most Reverend Excellency how urgent it is to let the Holy Father Pope Leo XIII know the most sad condition of the Italians of Montreal, and how easily they may lose their faith in this country on seeing that Catholics hate them and do not want to help them to find work, nor to make the practice of religion easy for these wretched ones by building, for instance, a poor church



of bricks or wood, with two diocesan priests there to assist them in their spiritual and temporal needs. It is a great pity that our poor Italians be left alone in a foreign country without comfort and help!

The Archbishop is very much against having Italian diocesan priests in Montreal. He does not have serious reasons, however, why he should refuse them. I will tell you the hidden reasons that must be brought to the attention of Your Excellency and of the Holy Father. The Archbishop and the Sulpicians do not want to spend a penny for Italians. His Excellency is afraid of the riches of the Sulpicians and is of the opinion that, even if he should ask for religious priests as spiritual leaders of the Italian community, they would never be able to create a parish independent from the Sulpicians, who must be in a position to give orders to all the religious clergy of the city being they the only ones officially recognized in control of the situation since 1840 by the English government in accordance with the privileges accorded them by the Kings of France. In this is to be sought the reasons for the problem and the weakness of the Archbishop. It is a great injustice! Italians are quite numerous and certainly have the same right to have a parish church as the Irish, etc.

There is in Montreal an Italian priest by the name of Fr. Leonardo Mazziotta, from the diocese of Benevento. He assists me in the sacred ministry for the needs of the Italian colony, and we get along fine. The Archbishop is satisfied with his work but he does not give him any help, so that the poor priest does not have enough to live honorably as a priest with only the offerings of the Masses, amounting to 25 cents each, to pay for his sustenance and rent. The Archbishop, on the other hand, well knows that I cannot do it alone for the colony. And so we must have recourse to benefactors. And this must be accounted as another injustice to the priestly dignity. This is also a clear proof that the Archbishop of Montreal always calls in from Rome only religious priests in order not spend any money. One must know that, in order to do some good in a foreign country, diocesan priests are necessary for the Italian colonies because they are the only ones who can get involved in their many questions and family problems. In Canada, a missionary for Italians has necessarily to be the writer for their families, the judge, the trustee of the money of the poor, the minister of Christ, and a newspaperman with the duty to defend his fellow countrymen from injustices and slander. A religious, a regular priest, will never be able to accomplish anything on this line because he will



always find himself in difficulty with his rule or his superiors to the detriment of the Italian colony.

I ask Your Excellency to bring to the attention of the Holy Father all these considerations and difficulties of mine that he may soon remedy the evils of the Italian community of Montreal.”

Friar Agostino, O.S.F. Dorchester Street 1222  
Montreal – Canada, 2.4.1895<sup>1</sup>

We are not in possession of Bishop Scalabrini’s response to this letter but of a response to a letter from the Minister General of the Franciscans, of which we do not know the date:

“I am pleased to inform you that I could send, under certain conditions, two priests to Canada. And these are the conditions:

- 1) that they be given a church, though so humble, in which they may freely exercise the sacred ministry;
- 2) that someone may think about providing the money for their trip because, to tell you the truth, we find ourselves very short of funds. Should these conditions be met, I would send these two priests within next year.”<sup>2</sup>

The deal ended then and there.

## MONTREAL, QUEBEC: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

In 1957, there were four Italian churches in Montreal, two of them entrusted to the Missionaries of the Consolata by the Archbishop, Card. P.E. Léger. The 4 parishes were not enough for great number of Italians, but the local bishops were rather reluctant in granting parishes: the Italians showed preference, especially concerning the education of their children, for the Anglo-American rather than the French culture. The presence of a Scalabrinian would have been welcomed to coordinate the already existing but disorganized social institutions, and also to create new ones where there were none. But there was no mystery as to the desire that the missionary should be of the French culture. In 1958, Fr. Giovanni Triacca, Provincial Superior of the Scalabrinians in France, met in Paris with Msgr. Marlouin, Vicar General of Montreal and National Delegate for Migration in Canada, who was also of the opinion that it was not proper to

<sup>1</sup> (A.G.S. 565)

<sup>2</sup> (Minute with no date of Bishop Scalabrini) (A.G.S. 565)

send there “Americanized” priests, though deeming it necessary, at the same time, to have some Scalabrinians in the Archdiocese which counted 100,000 Italians. The existing Italian national parishes were carrying on a strictly parochial work but they did not reach out to the diaspora. The Archbishop wanted to create another Italian national parish in the district of “La Chine”, where many Italians resided, but he preferred European priests. In February 1960, the Superior General Fr. Raffaele Larcher paid a visit to Card. Léger, who asked for a Scalabrinian who knew how to speak French. In fact, the name of Fr. Triacca came up who was immediately placed at his disposal and arrived in Montreal on April 7. Two days later the Cardinal assigned him to the Canadian parish of Saint-Rémi, on the North side of Montreal as “vicaire” with the task of the pastoral care also of the Italians of that district. On June 8, the pastor of Saint-Rémi, Abbé Terrien, rented out to Fr. Triacca a bungalow near the church at 10192 Boulevard St-Vital, and let him free of his duties as “Vicaire” so that he might devote himself totally to the Italians for whom the Masses were said on Sunday in the schools of Saint-Rémi and of the Holy Canadian Martyrs, and at Sainte-Gertrude. New offices and a meeting room were set up in the bungalow, and two rooms were adopted for the priests. In July 1960, in fact, Fr. Bruno Zonta also arrived. For the occasion the Cardinal acknowledged “de facto” the *Missione Cattolica Italiana* of “Our Lady of Pompeii”. The Fathers of the Italian parish of the Consolata surrendered a section of their territory to the mission so that the number of the families of the new Mission climbed to 1,500 in a territory 15 km. long and 6 km. wide.

The development of activities demanded a more central location. The Provincial Administration declared its willingness to finance it on condition it be the property of the Scalabrinian Congregation and officially recognized as such. In May 1961, the parish obtained the recognition as a corporation from the government of Quebec. It was possible to buy a piece of land at the corner of Rue Sauvé and J.J. Gagnier, where the parish center was raised, inaugurated by Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Sebastian Baggio on December 3, 1961.

Since April the Fathers had transferred their residence to 3492 43rd Street of Ville Saint-Michel. The Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii was canonically erected on October 12, 1961 with about 2,500 fam-

ilies. Fr. Giovanni Triacca was named its pastor on the 26th of the same month. A chapel was opened in the new center and the residence of the priests was transferred to 2875 Rue Sauvé Est. Another property was purchased in October 1961 on which the church was to be built. In 1962, on the occasion of the worldwide rally of migrants convoked in Rome to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Apostolic Constitution *Exul Familia* the parish organized a pilgrimage to Rome and purchased a replica of the Image of Our Lady of Pompeii, blessed on August 6 by Pope John XXIII, and then flown to Montreal on August 14.

In September of the same year the St. Edward School was opened, which was to become the Our Lady of Pompeii School. According to the directives of Card. Léger and of the Commission of the Catholic schools of Montreal, all efforts were made for the school to be bilingual (French and English); but the Anglophones won out and the school was transferred to the English office of the Commission. The John Baptist Scalabrini daycare center was opened on August 4, 1963 on Rue J.J. Gagnier Street, and entrusted to the care of the Sisters of the Most Holy Crucifix of Leghorn, Italy. In 1963, the school of St. Dorothy, which was also an English language school, was opened in the district of Saint-Michel. The spiritual care of it was put in the hands of the Fathers because in this school, as in that of Our Lady of Pompeii, 90% of the students were Italian. A new addition to the two schools was opened in 1966: all together there were 80 classes with 3,500 students. Meanwhile, in the years 1964-1965, Architect F.A. Dawson got a project ready for the parish church. Auxiliary Bishop Cimichella of Montreal broke the ground on November 21, 1965; on October 8, 1966, Card. Léger laid the cornerstone and on November 12, 1967, as he was about to leave for the missions of Africa, the same Cardinal solemnly inaugurated it. In 1970 the "Holy Family" Center with a subsidiary chapel, residence for two priests, a kindergarten, and a convent for the sisters, was established for the Italians in the municipal district of Saint-Léonard 4 or 6 km from our Lady of Pompeii church.

In 1978 the parish of Our Lady of Pompeii extended throughout three municipalities assisting also the Italians of various Canadian parishes: about 10,000 families in all. Baptisms exceeded annually

700, 1000 Confirmations, 350 Weddings, but only 100 funerals. About a dozen or more Masses were said on Sundays; the missionaries had charge of the pastoral care of 16 English language Catholic schools, and Italian is taught to about 550 students. To the catechetical preparation for the reception of the sacraments, must be added the publication in 15,000 copies of the bimonthly *Insieme*, two radio programs, and all the social services needed for a community of recent immigration that often finds only in the priest and the national parish the help to face its social, political, and bureaucratic problems.

The cultural context was bilingual. The first generation still spoke Italian. Nine out of ten of their children were attending English schools; French, however, still remained the official language. 80% of immigrants were from Southern Italy, 15% from the center, and 5% from the Veneto. Fr. Triacca headed the parish until September 23, 1973, when his successor, Fr. Giuseppe Duchini, became pastor.

#### MONTREAL, QUEBEC: THE PARISH OF ST. ELIZABETH

In 1960, Bishop G. M. Coderre of Saint-Jean de Quebec asked for a Scalabrinian missionary to take care of the Italians of his diocese. Fr. Benvenuto Fugazzi was chosen for the task. He arrived in Saint-Jean in January 1961 and was given residence in the parish of Saint-Lucien. But he found very few Italians: there were hardly 200 families in the whole diocese. And so, in accord with the Chanceries of Saint-Jean and Montreal he moved to the parish of Saint-Joseph in Montreal. In June of the same year the Archbishop Card. Léger declared his willingness to entrust the parish to the Scalabrinians; but then he chose the parish of Sainte-Elizabeth du Portugal, of French language, with 220 Italian families. The parish had been founded in 1894. The first Italians had arrived there in 1910. The Archbishop had also the intention of making it an Italian Catholic Mission with the quasi-parochial rights over about 1,000 families residing in other ten parishes of the Northside districts of the city.

In January 1963, Card. Léger named Fr. Fugazzi pastor of St. Elizabeth and missionary at the same time of the Italians of the region. He was given Fr. Tarcisio Bagattin as his assistant, who devoted himself especially to the new and promising mission of Lachine and

gave life to a weekly radio program in Italian. A few months later Fr. Giovanni Farina arrived as the second assistant. The parish hall of Saint-Elizabeth was restored and the Mission of LaSalle founded in 1965. In 1967, the number of Italian families was reduced to 460, first because of a fire which in 1963 destroyed an urban project causing 275 Italian families to move out, and then, since 1965, because of the construction of new roads. Another super highway reduced further, later on, the parish, so that the Scalabrinians returned it to the Diocese on March 31, 1972, to devote themselves to the new parish center "Mary, Mother of Christians" of La Salle.

#### LACHINE, MONTREAL, QUEBEC: THE MISSION OF THE ANNUNZIATA

Upon advice of Monsignor Cimichella, then pastor of Mount Carmel Church, and made Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal in 1964, Fr. Fuggazzi gave start in 1961 to the Mission of the Holy House of Loreto in Lachine. At first, both he and Fr. Tarcisio Bagattin, who began working there in 1963, said Mass for the Italians in the sacristy of the Canadian parish of the Holy Angels. In August 1963, with the arrival of the statue of Our Lady of Loreto, the Italians turned an old firehouse into a chapel. In the same building a day care center was opened in 1964 and the Sisters of the Immaculate Virgin of Genoa were given charge of it. In November 1964, Fr. Bagattin was replaced by Fr. Giuseppe De Rossi. The juridical status of the mission, however, was not clear. On August 17, 1965, Card. Léger canonically erected the Catholic Mission of the "Annunziata" for the 800 Italian speaking families living in the municipality of Lachine, Ville Lasalle, and Ville Saint-Pierre, in the southern section of the Isle of Montreal, with residence in the rectory of Saint-Nazaire, at 111 Rue Balanzer of Ville Lasalle. The Italians of Lachine were not happy about the transfer of Fr. De Rossi to Lasalle, where in 1966, the Italian families were 700 already, but then resigned themselves to it on condition that religious services should continue also in the chapel of Lachine.

In 1967, the Chancery of the Archdiocese extended the territory of the parish of St. John Bosco held by the Consolata missionaries including also the Mission of Lasalle so that the Scalabrinians were

left only with jurisdiction over the territory of Lachine with another 200 families in Dorval and Pointe-Claire.

Fr. De Rossi enlarged and embellished the chapel which was inaugurated on December 10, 1968 by Auxiliary Bishop Cimichella; he remodeled the kindergarten and the rectory. Fr. Giuseppe Duchini was appointed director of the mission in September 1972, followed by Fr. Giovanni Triacca in September 1973 and by Fr. Giovanni Farina in September 1975.

As of 1978 the mission numbered 350 families.

### LASALLE, QUEBEC: THE MISSION MOTHER OF CHRISTIANS

The Mother of Christians Mission traces its origins, as seen above, back to the presence of Fr. Giuseppe De Rossi in Lasalle in 1965-1967. He had also tried to build there a church but was prevented by the Chancery of Montreal that was opposed to the creation of new national parishes for immigrants. Auxiliary Bishop Belanger thought of solving the question of assistance to Italians by placing it in the hands of the seven Italian institutions already in existence: each one of them would have charge of a district of the Island of Montreal so as to cover the whole territory of the Diocese. This way, the Italian parish of St. John Bosco was extended in 1967 to the municipalities of Verdun and Lasalle, and Fr. De Rossi, withdrew, as we said, to Lachine.

Between the end of 1971 and the beginning of 1972 the Consolata Fathers, in charge of the parish of St. John Bosco, made it known that, due to the lack of personnel, they could no longer serve the Mother of Christians Mission with a population of about 1,000 families. Msgr. John McConnell, director of the Diocesan Office for the new Canadian Citizens, offered the Mission to the Scalabrinians who took possession of it on March 12, 1972.

Dismembered practically from the parish of St. John Bosco, the Mission enjoyed all the rights of a parish and in 1978 was in fact about to be officially declared one. It is located in a fast developing district, so much so that while 750 families were registered there in 1972, by 1976 they had already climbed to 1340. The mission had been entrusted to Fr. Giuseppe De Rossi from its early beginnings. In 1976, a new rectory was added to the chapel constructed in 1971.

## TORONTO, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

In 1970, Archbishop Philip F. Pocock of Toronto had presented to the Scalabrinian the possibility to have the parish of St. Charles Borromeo in the city, where Italians immigrants were quite numerous. The census of 1971 showed the presence in Toronto of 250,000 Italians speaking immigrants, 132,000 Portuguese and 20,000 Hispanics. There were also 330,000 Dutch, 250,000 Hungarians, 190,000 Poles, 155,000 Chinese, 146,000 Greeks, and 70,000 Ukrainians. There were at that time in Toronto 64 Italian priests, 38 of them religious (8 Scalabrinians and 26 diocesan; 8 Portuguese, one Hispanic. The Fathers and students of the Scalabrinian seminary of Toronto were helping pastorally in the Scalabrinian parishes assisting both the Italian and the Portuguese of other parishes.

In January 1977, the Provincial Superior Fr. Silvano Tomasi had a meeting with Auxiliary Bishop A. M. Ambrozic of Toronto, to bring to a practical conclusion the negotiations begun some months earlier by the Scalabrinians in view of securing a pastoral center in the city of Toronto for Portuguese speaking immigrants. The Archdiocese offered them a parish in downtown with a population of about 12,000 people, mostly Portuguese-speaking of recent immigration. And so a contract was signed on May 6, 1977, between the Archdiocese of Toronto and the Scalabrinians by which they were given charge of the parish of St. Anthony in the area delimited by Bloor and Dufferin Streets. 25 years earlier it was a typical Irish parish, but now the Irish makeup hardly 20% of the people; the rest is made up mostly of Italian and Portuguese speaking immigrants. On June 2, 1977, Fr. Sante Cigolini took possession of the parish as pastor and Fr. Luis Baldissarelli as assistant.

## MISSION OF HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA (1958)

Upon the advice of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Panico, the Provincial Superior, Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, went to Halifax in November 1957 to discuss with Archbishop G. Berry the opportunity of opening a mission for the Italians of this port city. The Archbishop accepted the idea of a mission that should take care of welcoming immigrants to the port of Halifax and of the pastoral assistance to

Italians living in the city. The Missionary was to reside in a rest-home for the elderly (Vincentian Home, 371 Brunswick Street) and provide it with daily Mass.

Fr. Alessandro Rinaldo arrived there on January 24, 1958. He found only 225 Italians in Halifax, for whom he could celebrate only one mass a month in the crypt of the Cathedral. The work at the port was practically insignificant because only about fifteen ships entered it each year. For these reasons Fr. Rinaldo was called back to the United States in May 1958.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE MISSIONS OF VENEZUELA AND PUERTO RICO

#### EMIGRATION TO VENEZUELA

Dictator Cipriano Castro (1890-1910) encouraged immigration of white Europeans: Germans, Italians (from Piedmont, Liguria and the island of Elba) established rural communities or worked in the construction of railroads. The discovery of oil deposits which began to be exploited in 1917, attracted specialized personnel and workers from the United States, England and the Netherlands. Building and industry developed rapidly after WWII. During the dictatorship of Marcos Perez Jimenez (1946-1958) 125,000 Italians entered Venezuela. In 1958, the fall of his dictatorship provoked a sharp stop to immigration and much repatriation. In 1960 immigration was definitely closed. Presently it is permitted only for unification of families, technicians and workers with an employment contract.

In the same period of time there began the illegal immigration of Colombians, who soon amounted to more or less 500,000 to 1 million individuals. To these must be added another 200,000 Latin-American immigrants from Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, etc. By the 1970s, 200,000 of them had an Italian passport (212,696 in 1973, according to official statistics of Italy). Typically the Italian immigrant acquired a good position at the cost of hard work and sacrifices and considered himself superior to the natives. Financial means and autonomous social institutions, generally speaking, foster an attitude of seclusion from the Venezuelan world, the love for quite a living, and the preservation of the lower and upper middle class traditional values.

#### THE SCALABRINIANS IN VENEZUELA

We recall a first short Scalabrinian presence there in 1894-1896. Bishop Scalabrini sent to Venezuela Fr. Giacomo Annovazzi formerly a missionary in Chicago. He arrived in Barquisimeto on January 1, 1894. On January 5 he presented himself to Msgr. Juan Pablo Wohn-

siedler, the Capitular Vicar of the vacant diocese, who declared himself willing to admit also other missionaries into his vast diocese with scarcity of priest; but he never made a direct request as Bishop Scalabrini would have desired. Fr. Annovazzi spent two months as a guest of the pastor of Quibor (Lara) to get acquainted with the situation. On March 1 he went to Carora (Lara). In those places the Italians were few, but consideration could be given to Mérida (Merida) and Caracas. In June Msgr. Wohnsiedler named him pastor of Yaritagua (Yaracuy); but in October the Archbishop of Caracas called him to his diocese and appointed pastor of Ocumare de la Costa, Cata and Cuyagua. Then he placed him at the head of the missionary expedition to the Cuyuni, organized by the archdiocese and financed by the Federal Government. Fr. Annovazzi exercised his ministry for almost three years amongst the Indians in settlements along the Cuyuni River; but his health gave way and Bishop Scalabrini transferred him to Argentina in 1896.

The Scalabrinians returned to Venezuela only in 1958, right at the time when the great inflow of migrants of the period after the war had ceased. The Italians had already at their disposal, besides a few religious, about fifty Italian priests, almost all of them alumni of the Pontifical College for Emigration of Rome. In early 1956, the Scalabrinian Fr. Giovanni Sofia, Rector of the College, was charged with conducting an evaluation visit, from which he returned with the conviction that it would have been opportune to open the gates of Venezuela to the Scalabrinians. Some Bishops had made an offer by word of mouth for such possibility, but then they did not send any formal request. But the Sacred Consistorial Congregation and the Apostolic Nuncio insisted with the General Administration of the Scalabrinians. On February 5, 1958, Card. Marcello Mimmi, Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, wrote the following to the Superior General Fr. Raffaele Larcher:

“The missionary for Italian emigrants of Caracas, Fr. Mario Vercesi, has suddenly returned to Italy for reasons of health and His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio has provisionally called in a certain Fr. Lambruschini so that they might not be deprived of the assistance of a fellow Italian priest especially at this time of the year. A new missionary must therefore be urgently provided for Caracas and to this end

this Sacred Congregation turns spontaneously to the well deserving Pious Society of St. Charles. As Your Paternity well knows, it is question of a particularly delicate situation, for which an experienced and prudent individual is needed. This Sacred Congregation has the intention of turning that Mission into the center for organizing a web of missionary stations in places of greatest influx of Italian migrants. “

Fr. Larcher turned to the missionaries of *Río Grande do Sul* (Brazil). Fr. Giovanni Simonetto was chosen for the post and charged with taking the first steps towards the opening of a *Missio Cum Cura Animarum* in Caracas while opening new frontiers especially for Brazilian confreres.

Fr. Simonetto left the parish of Guaporé in August 1958 and arrived in Caracas on October 2. In 1960 he succeeded in opening a chapel for Italians. The Our Lady of Pompeii Mission was then thus erected officially in 1961. The Mission of San Carlos Borromeo of Maracay was opened in 1960, and erected into a “*Missio Cum Cura Animarum*” in 1961. The national and territorial parish of San Pedro in Barquisimeto was given to the Scalabrinians in 1963. The parish of Our Lady of the Rosary at Puerto Cabello was accepted in 1974 and the Mission of Valencia for Italian and Portuguese speaking was opened in 1975.

Up to 1978, the work of the Fathers, 10 of them by then, was devoted almost solely to the Italian communities, but it was extended to migrants in general especially the neediest, the Colombians in particular. The Scalabrinian missions of Venezuela were made partially autonomous and grouped together under the title of “*Delegazione Generalizia Madonna di Pompei*” on December 26, 1963. Fr. Giovanni Simonetto served as Delegate Superior until 1969 followed by Fr. Giacomo Battaglia in 1970-1973 and by Fr. Ettore Rubin in 1973-1976. On December 1, 1976 the Delegation was joined to the Province of St. Charles Borromeo with headquarters in New York.

## CARACAS: THE MISSION OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

No sooner did Fr. Simonetto arrive in Caracas than he presented himself to Archbishop Rafael Arias Blanco who promised him to make public soon the decree of erection of the Italian Mission cum

cura animarum, but for the time being he granted only the faculties to say Mass, hear confessions, and preach. The Italian Consul provided him with a modest apartment in the building of the Patronato Italo-Venezuelano, hosting 18 poor Italian convalescents. At first Fr. Simonetto said Mass in the parish church of Chacao in Caracas. Forty days later he succeeded in obtaining permission from the same pastor to celebrate Mass for the Italians in his church on Sunday night. His predecessor used to say it in the cathedral but only a few Italians resided in the downtown area.

Italian authorities and associations began to move so that it became possible for Fr. Simonetto to rent an apartment on January 31, 1959, near the church of Chacao. Fr. Antonio Marcon, also from Río Grande do Sul, joined him here in April 1959. The two missionaries employed all possible means to secure the creation of a mission "cum cura animarum": but the condition posed by the Archbishop was that they had to have a church or a chapel, since there was no parish available. On the other hand there were no funds for the purchase of a piece of land.

Finally, on July 1, 1960, they could rent the quinta of the Patronato Italo Venezuelano with a house that served as residence of the Fathers, a meeting hall, and a small chapel. In August, Frs. Simonetto and Marcon moved in from their apartment on Calle Cecilio Acosta of Chacao to the Missione Cattolica Italiana Madonna del Rosario di Pompei, at 9 Avenida Cartagena in the district of La Campina, and so began the restoration work. The mission was inaugurated on October 2, 1960, in the presence of the Capitular Vicar, the Italian Consul, and of numerous delegates of the 70.000 Italians living in Caracas. Activities began with the celebration of four Sunday Masses in the mission's chapel which could seat about 150 people. Unfortunately, they had no permission yet to perform Baptisms and Marriages. The new Archbishop, Card. José Humberto Quintero, authorized the creation of the Mission cum cura animarum.

Meanwhile, a weekly radio program was started, together with the assistance to the sick, the visitation of families and prison inmates, and the teaching of religion in 8 Italian schools. In November 1960, Fr. Marcon went to open the mission of Maracay Fr. Lorenzo Rizzolo had arrived to take his place.

A school for 70 pupils was opened in 1960 in two small halls of the house of La Campina under the direction of Fr. Ettore Rubin. In 1963 the school was transferred into a rented building in Los Jabillos, and the number of students climbed to 200.

In 1964, a property with land and a house was purchased in the "Urbanización Avila-Alta Florida" and the school was moved there, frequented by 350 students. In 1967, the seat of the mission was also transferred there. In June of the same year work were started on the construction of the church in which was to be enthroned the image of Our Lady of Pompeii, blessed and sent in 1958 by Pius XII to the Italians of Venezuela. On March 2, 1969, the new church was inaugurated by Auxiliary Bishop Luis E. Henríquez Jiménez of Caracas.

The following confreres were in charge of the mission: in June 1970 Fr. Giacomo Battaglia, in August 1973 Fr. Antonio Marcon, in September 1975 Fr. Zelindo Ballen. As of 1978 Fr. Pio Battaglia was the pastor. By then the statistics of the Mission showed an annual average of between 650 and 550 baptisms, and of 160 and 190 weddings. The school of Our Lady of Pompeii is frequented by almost 1,000 students from kindergarten and high school sophomore. In addition, professional courses are offered in the evening. Catechism classes are taught in other 13 schools in preparation for first communion. Besides the assistance to about 90,000 Italians residing in the capital, the missionaries provide a Sunday mass in three localities far away from the mission. Among the assistance activities, one must point out the participation in the Comitato Consolare di Assistenza, whose second vice-president is by right a Scalabrinian. On this committee depends also the Rest Home "Villa Pompeii", which is also directed by a Scalabrinian and founded in 1974. As of 1978 the Villa houses only 30 people, but a project is under way for the construction of our home for 150 elderly migrants on the land of the Hogar Italia in the district of El Paraíso. A property of 1,400 square meters with a house was donated in 1961 to the Mission, which was made into a seaside home for poor children, at Boca de Aroa. The house was sold in 1971.

In 1977 CEPAM (Centro para Migrantes) was founded with to offer to the local church documentation, social assistance, and pastoral sensitization concerning the problems of the neediest immigrants, especially of illegal and clandestine immigrants. The director was Fr.

Matteo Didonè. The Center published the monthly magazine *Incontri* in Italian, which was founded in 1971 by Fr. Sante Cervellin with 6,000 subscribers.

### MARACAY, ARAGUA: THE MISSION OF SAN CARLOS BORROMEIO

In April 1959, Fr. Simonetto preached in the cathedral of Maracay the Easter mission for the 8,000 Italians living in the city. Since then he continued every month to say mass for them in the cathedral. The Italians, headed by the Consul, declared themselves right away willing to help the missionary to establish a mission and to provide him with a residence. Bishop José Lebrun offered the *Capilla del Carmen* as the seat of the mission. In April 1960, Fr. R. Larcher, Superior General, promised the bishop to send him a missionary as soon as it would be possible to send another one to Caracas. Fr. Lorenzo Rizzolo arrived in Caracas in September, and on November 27, 1960, Fr. Antonio Marcon was sent to Maracay. He took residence at the "Hotel Las Americas", a guest of the family of Giacomo Amelotti. For a month he served as assistant of the parish of the Cathedral, and then he obtained from the bishop an apartment nearby on the *Avenida Bolivar*.

From there he began to say the Sunday Mass for the Italians in the chapel of the Augustinian Sisters, about a hundred meters from the Cathedral. On May 1, 1961, the bishop officially erected the *San Carlos Borromeo Italian Catholic Missio Cum Cura Animarum*, assigning to it for Baptisms a small 5 x 6 m chapel on *Calle Santos Michelena*, 150 meters from the Cathedral, and granting the use of the Cathedral for the celebration of Sunday Masses and Weddings.

A 1600 m<sup>2</sup> piece of land was purchased in October 1961 in the district of *Urbanización San Isidro*. On May 7, 1962, the bishop approved the project for the construction of the church, school, and rectory. A house was rented in August 1963 at 18 *Calle Lopez Avelado Norte, Calicanto*, where the *Italo-Venezuelan Juan XXIII School* and the seat of the Mission were temporarily set up. Construction of the building on the land bought on *1a Avenida* of the *Urbanización San Isidro* began on April 25, 1964. On October 1964 the school was set up, along with the temporary chapel and the residence for the missionaries Fr.

Marcon and Fr. Sberna. In the definitive chapel a replica of the image of Our Lady of Pompeii, blessed by Pope Paul VI on April 28, 1971, was enthroned for the veneration by the faithful. In addition to Besides Fr. Marcon, Frs. Giacomo Battaglia (1969-1970), Sante Cervellin (1970-1975), and Angelo Risoli, succeeded one another in the direction of the Mission. The 1978 statistics of the mission showed an annual average of 120 to 160 baptisms, and 50 to 90 weddings. The school was attended by about 500 students and it was the only one to provide courses in both Italian and Spanish. It is limited however to the elementary grades for lack of room for the higher grades. The Italians residing at Maracay were then about 8,000, and 15,000 in the whole state of Aragua. Besides the five Sunday Masses at the Mission, other masses were celebrated each month in places distant from the city.

#### BARQUISIMETO, LARA: PASTORS AND MISSION OF SAN PEDRO

On June 3, 1958, Bishop Crispulo Benítez Fontárvel of Barquisimeto assigned the Vincentian Fr. Emidio Prata as chaplain of the Italians of his Diocese. On October 20, 1958, he erected the Italian Mission "Cum Cura Animarum", with quarters in the church of San Pedro recently constructed by the Italian community of that city. The territorial parish of San Pedro had actually his official start in November 1958, with a temporary location in the chapel of the Boarding School of the Sisters, and Fr. Emidio Prata was named pastor on November 16, 1958. On September 15 he was succeeded by Fr. Leonello Guidotti, also a Vincentian, who urged on by the people began thinking about the construction of a new church. The land was purchased in July 1960, and in October work began on the new church for Italians, which was opened for worship on December 18, 1960, though still incomplete. Fr. Guidotti was able to move into the new rectory in October 1961. But already in 1961, the good missionary made known to Fr. Simonetto that he was feeling tired and ready to surrender everything into the hands of the Scalabrinians. In fact, in May 1962 he went back to his religious community and the Bishop solicited the Scalabrinians to accept the parish. On January 18, 1963, the parish was officially erected and separated from that of Christ the King.



On the same day the Scalabrinians were declared the beneficiaries of the parish properties with the obligation of paying off the debt within ten years; but the Scalabrinian Congregation bought all the properties on August 28, 1964. The church was then at the same time a territorial parish numbering 4,500 people and a national parish for the 6, 000 Italians living in the region. In September 1965, Fr. Rizzolo was joined by Fr. Angelo Risoli, and both gave immediate start to an Italo-Venezuelan school with 80 students in the first year and double that number the following. In 1978 it had 700 students.

Fr. Giacomo Battaglia was appointed pastor in October 1965. He soon made plans for a new school, built afterwards by his successor Fr. Antonio Marcon (1970-1973). Fr. Giacomo Battaglia returned as pastor in August 1973. Baptisms went down from 304 in 1971, to 145 in 1976, and weddings up from 30 to 50. In 1978 the territorial parish numbered about 5,000 people. Since it is also a territorial parish, the Italians are inclined not to consider it their church. A process of integration, however, has begun to take place

The parish was remarkably differentiated also in its social make-up. One part was made of professionals, small industrialists, and teachers who live in residential villas; the rest of unskilled workers and internal immigrants living in "ranches", shacks or the like.

#### **PUERTO CABELLO, CARABOBO: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY AND THE ITALIAN MISSION**

The thought of a Mission in Puerto Cabello goes back as early as 1962, when the property of Boca de Aroa was turned into a seaside home. In 1970 the Italian community together with the Portuguese community of Valencia began urgent requests that a Mission be founded for them in the most important industrial city of Venezuela. In September 1972 the General Administration authorized the taking over of a territorial parish at Puerto Cabello, with the adjoined Missio Cum Cura Animarum for the Italians and Portuguese of the Diocese of Valencia as a first step in view of establishing afterwards the Mission in the city of Valencia itself.

On March 28, 1974, Bishop Luis Henríquez Jiménez of Valencia and the Superior of the Scalabrinian Delegation of Venezuela, Fr. Et-



tore Rubin, signed a convention by which the territorial parish of Our Lady of the Rosary of Puerto Cabello was entrusted for five years to the Scalabrinians with the attached mission for Italian and Portuguese-speaking immigrants of the surrounding district and with the task of extending this mission to the whole Diocese of Valencia, while granting authorization to open in the future a missionary residence in Valencia itself for this same scope. At the close of April 1974, Fr. Lorenzo Rizzolo took over the parish and the mission. In September 1975 he was replaced by Fr. Antonio Marcon. In the region of Puerto Cabello there lived about 2,500 Italians. In 1975, the parish registered 51 Baptisms, 7 of them Italians; and 36 in 1976, 9 of them Italians.

The territorial parish numbers 100 families and it stands only 200 meters away from another one. Because of the environment close to the port frequented by people of dubious character, the parish does not offer much possibility for creating a missionary base as hoped for in view of assisting the Italian seamen and technicians who had arrived there to build tankers. In 1977, it was decided therefore to return the parish to the diocesan authorities and to concentrate efforts and personnel in the city of Valencia, from where it is easy to periodically visit the immigrants of Puerto Cabello.

#### VALENCIA, CARABOBO: THE MISSION FOR MIGRANTS

On December 6, 1974, Bishop Henríquez Jiménez of Valencia explicitly renewed the authorization to set up a location for the Italian and Portuguese Catholic Mission in the city of Valencia. A house had been purchased in August 1974 and Fr. Sante Cervellin was sent to direct it in the beginning of 1975. There were about 8,000 Italians living in the city; other places where also visited such as Turen, Calabozo, Barinas, etc.

Fr. Moacir Balen offered pastoral care especially of the Portuguese. A property was recently bought on the outskirts of the city with the intention of eventually moving there the seat of the Mission and providing it with a church. In the meantime, they make use of the very centrally located church of "La Purissima".

## MISSIONS OF PUERTO RICO

the thought of opening a Scalabrinian Mission in Puerto Rico goes back to 1972, when various shipping companies moved their offices from New York to Florida and part of the seamen movement shifted to San Juan of Puerto Rico. Negotiations with the diocese of Miami failed. A possibility was seen instead for starting activities in the port of San Juan in Puerto Rico where about 2,000 seamen passed through every day. In May 1974, Card. Archbishop Aponte Martínez of San Juan proposed to the Superior Provincial Fr. Giuseppe Spigolon the assistance to the seamen, the chaplaincy of the international airport, and a parish in the city. In addition to achieving the immediate scope of its work, there was also the added advantage of gaining direct knowledge of one of the Spanish-speaking nations most involved in the emigration towards the United States, while, at the same time, working for the promotion of Puerto Rican vocations. In August 1974, Frs. Isaia Birollo and Matteo Didonè began working in a diocesan parish. In November Fr. Birollo started saying Mass every day at the airport, while Fr. Didonè devoted himself to the reorganization of the Casa Mar, the center for assistance to seamen created by the Archdiocese in 1974. The center was reopened on March 30, 1975. As a 1978 the port has a weekly movement of 10-15 ships with more than 5,000 seamen, two-thirds of them Italian. Between April 1975 and April 1976, 4,375 seamen of 17 nationalities were guests of the Casa Mar, and the Missionaries visited 350 ships. The parish of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre, erected on April 26, 1969 in the district of Hato Rey, was given to the Scalabrinians on January 26, 1975. It embraces 3,500 families; one fifth of them of the upper middle classes, a great number of them Cuban refugees; the other four fifths are made up of low income families, with a high percentage of immigrants from the interior or repatriates from the United States and with quite a good number of legal or clandestine immigrants from the Dominican Republic and other countries of Latin America.

The parish had no church and services were held in the chapel of the Blessed Trinity near which the Missionary lived, and in other chapels or centers of base communities. The newly built parish church and rectory were inaugurated on May 28, 1978. The religious

and moral level was very low. The Fathers had to begin with and extensive work of evangelization and the preparation of lay leaders for this task.



## CHAPTER VII

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

#### THE A.C.I.M. (AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON ITALIAN MIGRATION)

The A.C.I.M. began in 1952 as a Catholic Organization with the scope of conducting a campaign for the abrogation of the discriminatory Walter-McCarran Act which fixed the quota of immigrants into the United States on the basis of national origin, and of reaching a just policy for the admission of migrants. The idea and the birth of this organization are due especially to Mons. Luigi Ligutti, a member of the National Catholic Welfare Council (NCWC), director of the Catholic Rural Conference (CRC) and the Holy See Observer at the FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization), and of the Scalabrinian Fr. Luigi Donnanzan, pastor of St. Michael church in Chicago. They created in 1951 a small organization with the title of Italo-American Committee for Migration in the U.S.A. with offices in St. Michael rectory.

On October 19, 1951, Card. Samuel Stritch Archbishop of Chicago suggested that this committee be aggregated to the NCWC (National Catholic Welfare Council) established by initiative of the American Bishops for the settlement of European refugees and immigrants. The suggestion was accepted on October 24, 1951 by the NCRC (National Catholic Resettlement Council) and by its Director Mons. Edward Swanstrom. The organization took then the title of American Committee on Italian Migration (ACIM) and it set up its central offices in New York in February 1952. By insistence of Cardinals Stritch and Spellman and of Monsignors Ligutti and Swanstrom, Judge Juvenal Marchisio, who had served as executive director of the American Relief for Italy, accepted to be its president. He succeeded in organizing 127 chapters (local committees) in the main cities of America. In places where there were Scalabrinians, he invited them to be spiritual assistants of the chapters and obtained that Fr. Cesare Donnanzan be made executive secretary of the ACIM in September 1953. By virtue of the Walter-McCarran Act of 1924, that allotted 84% of the quotas of immigration to the countries of Northern and Western Europe, the

one set aside for Italians had in fact gone down further from 5,802 to 5,666.

Constituted at the time when the McCarran Act was being called into question by the Congress, the ACIM insisted with President Eisenhower and the members of Congress influencing at the same time public opinion, and it contributed to the securing of a law of assistance for refugees, the Refugee Relief Act of August 7, 1953, that consented entry to the U.S.A. of 214,000 people, 60,000 of them Italian. The ACIM expedited the procedures of the bureaucratic practices for the visas of entrants welcomed the new arrivals at the ports of landing, and with the help of NCRC it assisted them in their search for jobs and homes, succeeding in the carrying out of its task on time before the date of expiration of the law in December 1956.

There still remained the problem of reuniting the new immigrants to their families. First of all the ACIM obtained the Kennedy-Walter Law of 1957, that allowed 25,000 extra quota Italians to reach their relatives in America; and then the law signed by President Eisenhower in September 1959, which made it possible to admit another 30,000 entry applications of Italians registered before December 31, 1953; and two more laws respectively of September 1961 and October 1962. This way ACIM succeeded in securing extra-quota entry into America for about 140,000 Italians. Another 250,000 immigrants of other nationalities were also the beneficiaries of the same laws. In 1963 ACIM obtained from President Kennedy the promise of his support to the project for the redistribution of the quotas left unused by the northern European countries. President Johnson continued to support Kennedy's proposals and on October 3, 1965, at the foot of the Statue of Liberty, he signed the new immigration law that did away with the quota system by nationality and enacted new criteria by which the annual quota of Italians climbed to 20,000.

Once it obtained the first aim of its existence, the very existence of ACIM was being questioned. The Board of Directors, of which Fr. Giuseppe Cogo was called to be a member, decided to continue its activities to follow up in the application of the new law and to ease up the integration of the recent immigrants. On August 22, 1966, Fr. Cogo replaced in the office of executive secretary Fr. Cesare Donanzan, who had been appointed provincial superior in 1964. In 1967,

Judge Juvenal Marchisio was replaced by Bishop Edward Swanstrom as president.

In 1968 ACIM collected \$120,000 for the Belice earthquake victims in Sicily. Concerning the American legislation on Emigration, the ACIM continued to see to it that the new law might not be modified in an unfavorable direction but, rather, that it might be improved. In the late 1970s the program of assistance, presently absorbing the greatest part of the daily work of the office, has been enhanced by the addition of 5 secretaries committed to the expediting of procedures involving situations of migrants. A radio program was initiated in 1967 with three weekly broadcasts; a television broadcast each week in 1973; and a rubric, titled ACIM answers, in the daily *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* (1972) and in the monthly *La Nuova Via* with 4,000 subscribers. By means of its office and of these activities, ACIM lends the missionary the possibility of vast contacts, even personal ones, with Italian migrants.

Right from its beginning this was a juridical body officially recognized by the State and a Catholic organization dependent on NCRC, directed by a committee of professionals, businessmen and church officials. The actual direction, however, is in the hands of the Scalabrinian missionary who is its national executive secretary. By 1978 the active chapters were only about twenty; but even the other 40 continued the sensitization activity. Its central offices, formerly at 5 East 35th Street, were moved, in 1976, to 33 Fifth Avenue. New York.

#### CHAPLAINCIES ON BOARD CRUISE SHIPS AND SEAMAN CENTER

On December 14, 1964, Captain Mario F. Vespa, Vice-President of the shipping company Home Lines, Inc. for the United States and Canada and a member of ACIM, at a meeting with the Provincial Superior Fr. Cesare Donanzan, asked the Scalabrinians to assume the chaplaincies of the ships *Homeric* and *Oceanic* which sailed between New York and the ports of the Caribbean Sea and West Indies. Each ship had a crew of 500 Italian seamen and numbered a good proportion of Catholic passengers. Furthermore, Captain Vespa proposed for a later date the founding in New York of a welcoming center for seamen, who were staying in the city between trips. About 140 ships

with Italian crews called each week at the port of New York, and there was no Catholic assistance and recreation center, while five Protestant ones were in operation.

The two previous chaplains had been supplied by the National Office of Sea Chaplaincies of Genoa, Italy, dependent on the Central Office for Italian Emigration (UCEI) of the Italian Bishops Conference. Captain Vespa turned to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation to obtain two Scalabrinians for his company, inasmuch as it was not under the Italian Line for which the UCEI was providing the chaplains. The question was one of jurisdiction, therefore, of the *Apostolatus Maris*, a body of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. Card. Confalonieri recommended the matter to the Apostolic Delegate in the U.S.A., who appointed Fr. Thomas Carlesimo chaplain of the *Homeric* on May 6, 1965. He took to sea on the *Homeric* the first time on May 8. But on February 25, 1967 he assumed the chaplaincy of the *Oceanic*, while Fr. Giuseppe Bellan took over that of the *Homeric*. On December 2, 1967, Fr. Mario Bordignon replaced Fr. Carlesimo on the *Oceanic*. In 1970, after a period of a few months, when Fr. Anacleto Rocca was its chaplain, the chaplaincy of the *Oceanic* was turned over to Fr. Mario Boeri. Fr. Francesco Minchiatti succeeded Fr. Giuseppe Bellan for a year in 1975 while the *Homeric* was being replaced with the *Doric*. He was followed by Fr. Giacomo Viero in 1976, and by Fr. Raffaele Villella in April 1977.

The work of the chaplain is devoted to two classes of people; the passengers who embark on a trip of vacation and relaxation and continue on board the habitual practice of religion, and indeed take advantage of these days of rest to intensify it; the work with the crew, subjected to all the material and moral difficulties of life on board. And so, besides the pastoral care of the passengers, the missionary visits the seamen at their posts of work, gives them lessons of religion and languages, and organizes social and recreational activities for them.

With the chaplaincies, the idea was born, as we said before, of a center of religious and social assistance for the seamen passing through New York. On July 10, 1965, Captain Vespa and Fr. Cesare Donanzan spoke of the project to Card. Spellman, Archbishop of New York, who approved the idea supported also by Mons. F. Frayne, executive



secretary of the permanent office of the "Apostolatus Maris" of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. Negotiations took a long time either for the difficulties of finding a building fitting the purpose close by the port, or for financial difficulties, and also for the weak support of the Chancery of New York in favor of an "Italian Center". It would have preferred, in fact, a large international center. During the canonical visitation of 1967, a meeting was held in New York, which was attended by Auxiliary Bishop Pernicone, Fr. Cesare Donanzan, Captain Vespa and various representatives of shipping companies and of seamen unions. Unanimously all present acknowledged the need for a center for Italian seamen and pilots passing through New York City, to be placed under the direction of the Scalabrinians assisted by a board of directors. Fr. Carlesimo was asked to do research on the various centers already in existence and come up with the draft of a project, which was actually presented on January 10, 1968. In the following March, a building was found at 352 West 44th Street. The new Archbishop Terence Cooke authorized the purchase of it. On May 16, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation granted permission for establishing there a Scalabrinian residence. The building was bought on July 24. When the restructuring of the building was completed, the year 1969 was devoted to the work of adaptation of it into "The Italian Seamen's Club of New York", with a small chapel, a restaurant and a bar, telephone and postal service, recreation hall, and offices of religious and social assistance. On February 3, 1970 the Seamen Center was blessed by Card. T. Cooke, chairman of the Board of Governors of the Italian Seamen's Club, in the presence of the Superior General Fr. Renato Bolzoni and of various church and civil personalities, who had contributed to the establishing of the new mission. Fr. Mario Bordignon served as its first director until September 10, 1970, succeeded by Fr. Cesare Donanzan. Fr. Bordignon returned on June 25, 1972.

The reports of the first 18 months of activity show, among other things, an attendance of 30,000 seamen, 6,300 telephone calls overseas, the visitation by the missionaries of 402 ships with Italian crew, and of 130 seamen lying sick in the hospitals of New York. In 1975 23,000 seamen were registered, 106 ships were visited as well as 26 shipmen sick in hospitals. By then the result of the decrease of port

traffic was being felt, especially of passengers' ships. The Inces Line discontinued its service and the Italian Line reduced it to one ship.

#### THE HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY IN NORTH KINGSTOWN, R.I. AND OF MITCHELLVILLE, M.D.

Scalabrini Villa, North Kingstown, RI. The idea of a rest home for Italian old people was first launched by a group of Italian-American laymen of Providence, Rhode Island, especially of the parish of Holy Ghost, supported by Frs. Flaminio Parenti and Pietro Bracchi (victim of a plane accident in Paris on November 24, 1956), who during 1954 had worked to secure permission from the Bishop for raising funds. A committee was set up in 1955 for this purpose headed by Senator John Pastore and guided by its treasurer Fr. Flaminio Parenti, Pastor of Holy Ghost and by its executive secretary Oreste Di Saia. A property of about 90 acres was bought in March 1956 together with several buildings left unoccupied by the Crawford Allen Memorial Hospital on Narragansett Bay in North Kingstown, R.I. The main building was restructured into a 70 bed rest home. The director's house was also renovated along with the convent of the Sisters of the Most Holy Crucifix of Leghorn. Fifty acres were rented out to the Quidnessett Country Club.

On October 6, 1957, Bishop McVinney of Providence inaugurated the Scalabrini Villa for the Aged, in the presence of the Superior General Fr. Raffaele Larcher, of the Governor of the State, of many authorities, and of several thousand people.

The first Director was Fr. Attilio Bordignon, succeeded in October 1964, by Fr. Vittorio Salmaso. A radical rearrangement of the building was undertaken in 1972. The new inauguration was done on November 4, 1972, by Bishop L. E. Gelineau of Providence. In 1977, Fr. Attilio Bordignon succeeded for a time Fr. Salmaso, until Fr. Antonio Capece was appointed director in the same year.

Villa Rosa Nursing Home, Mitchellville, MD. Another home for the elderly was opened by the Province in 1967: Villa Rosa Nursing Home in Mitchellville, Maryland, near the city of Washington, DC. We spoke already of its beginning in the history of the parish of Holy Rosary in Washington DC. Fr. Nicola De Carlo, founder and first pas-

tor of this church, had purchased a 120 acre property with intention to build a home for the elderly, especially for those of Italian origin on Lottsford Vista Road, in the city of Mitchellville, MD, about 15 km from the city. He wanted it named Villa Rosa as a memorial to his mother. In 1960, Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle approved the handing of the Parish of Holy Rosary into the hands of the Scalabrinians on condition that the project of Villa Rosa be made a project of the parish itself, and therefore of the diocese. By suggestion of the Apostolic Delegation, Fr. De Carlo made out in February 1960 a deed of donation by which he surrendered the property of Villa Rosa to the Archbishop with the condition of building there a hospital for the elderly. To warrant the carrying out of this clause, the Apostolic Delegation declared the property "a charitable institution", dependent on a Board of Directors made up of the Apostolic Delegate, the Archbishop of Washington, the pastor of Holy Rosary, Fr. De Carlo, and a parishioner of Holy Rosary, as Fr. De Carlo's trustee.

The Scalabrinians devoted their time at first to the development of the parish of Holy Rosary, considered a dead parish by the Archbishop. After the death of Fr. De Carlo on March 11, 1961, the Charitable Institution became in fact a Diocesan one. The Archbishop the construction work started on the rest home and solicited the Scalabrinians to raise the funds and to take over direction and administration of the institution. They accepted on condition that they be given also the ownership title, pledging themselves to replace the money the archbishop had invested.

During the course of the difficult negotiations in defining the terms of the contract, Fr. Dominic Valentino was named administrator of Villa Rosa in November 1965 to give the archbishop time to decide. Construction had been conducted in a somewhat approximate way and the project had to be entirely reviewed. The Scalabrinian Sisters agreed to assume the care of the elderly and arrived there on September 1966.

On December 17, 1966, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop E. Vagnozzi, blessed the first section in the presence of the Archbishop and his three auxiliaries and of the representatives of the Italian embassy. The new Director, Fr. Antonio Dal Balcon arrived on January 23, 1967, but the institution could be opened only for the first 14 guests

on April 16, 1967. The bill of sale by the Chancery of Washington was signed on March 25, 1968 by Card. O'Boyle and the Superior Provincial Fr. Cesare Donanzan.

In 1969, the patients were 42, and upon completion of the first section, it had the capacity of 59 beds. In 1974 authorization was given to complete the project for 100-bed capacity. Work on the new wing, however, was not resumed until May 15, 1977, and the inauguration took place on August 20, 1978.

### CENTER FOR MIGRATION STUDIES

The beginnings of the Center for Migration Studies (CMS) are closely tied with the history of St. Charles Seminary in Staten Island, NY. Some seminarians published in 1954 the first issue of the review "Emigration Digest", by duplication, reporting news on the legislative problems concerning emigrants and refugees. The second number appeared in 1955, still by initiative of the clerics under the guidance of Fr. Lawrence Sabatini. The third issue of 1956 was directed by Fr. Thomas Forte. The fourth one was printed and published in 1957, under the direction of Frs. Giulivo Tessarolo and Lawrence Sabatini, with the cooperation of Frs. Thomas Forte, Vincent Pulicano and Vincent Basile.

With the intent of getting the seminarians interested in the problems of migration, in 1963 Fr. Vincenzo Paolucci put in the mind a group of clerics the idea of reviving the periodical. The International Migrant Digest began publications in spring 1964, directed by Fr. Vincent Monaco and prepared by the Clerics James Serritella and Louis Zampieron, with the help of Clerics Silvano Tomasi, Lidio Bertelli, and others. It was essentially a digest of articles taken from other reviews, information on legislation, statistics, reviews of books and publications concerning emigration. This semi-annual magazine continued until the Spring of 1966.

In the meanwhile, in the fall of 1965, Fr. Silvano Tomasi became director of the review. In the fall of 1966, he changed its format, by publishing original articles and others by specialists in the field of migration so as to present a scientific contribution, and have it welcomed into the academic world. Its title also was changed, and the

first issue of *The International Migration Review* was published on December 6, 1966. In the same year ACIM decided to support the review with an annual contribution and Fr. Silvano Tomasi was given the assistance of Fr. Lidio Bertelli. In order to give the review an "academic look", it appeared as a publication of the Center for Migration Studies, which, however, was still in a formation stage and was finding difficulties with its set up, in the sense that its editors considered it as only one, though the main one, of the various activities of the Center, together with the participation in academic congresses, and in specialized migration committees, while the Board of Directors, whose main members were Bishop Swanstrom, Fr. Cesare Donanzan, and Judge Juvenal Marchisio, believed itself to be the exclusive managing director. From the canonical viewpoint, the Center became an autonomous religious community only in February 1970, when Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo was named its director. In the meantime, with the help of Lidio Tomasi, assigned to the Center in 1968, the review, a quarterly by now, reached in 1969 its highly scientific character, when it began to receive articles from the greatest experts of the world in the field of migration.

The number of copies increased to 2,000 also because of an agreement with the Immigration Department of the United States Bishops Conference, which pledged to pay for the subscription of all the bishops of America

The action of the CMS was aiming at sensitizing public opinion to the understanding of the fact and the consequences of immigration, at suggesting pastoral orientations to the North American Church, and that to offer seminarians and scholars the means for evaluating the migratory and inter-ethnic phenomenon, such as a specialized library, archives, microfilms, and specialized publications.

Since 1973 it is also publishing also *Migration Today*, a bimonthly review concerning the pastoral care of migrants. It organizes conventions, seminars, conferences in various American and European cities. It takes care also of the coordination of the inter-diocesan pastoral care of the new Italian immigrants of metropolitan New York, especially of the borough of Queens. Upon the naming in 1976 of Fr. Silvano Tomasi as provincial superior, Fr. Lidio Tomasi became the executive director of CMS, assisted by Fr. Andrew Brizzolara. Its

most recent initiative as a 1978 was the Annual Legal Conference, aimed at drawing attention to the legal problems of migrants and to secure laws better respondent to their needs.

#### CHAPLAINCY OF CABRINI HEALTH CARE CENTER IN NEW YORK CITY

Following proper negotiations between the Sister Administrator and the Diocesan authorities, on September 1, 1972 the Scalabrinian Fr. Vincent Pulicano became chaplain of the Cabrini Health Care Center in New York, the former Columbus Hospital of New York, which the Scalabrinians had founded 81 years earlier and which had been bought in 1892 by St. Frances Cabrini. At the time the greater majority of its doctors and a good number of the patients spoke Italian. Only a few years later, however, the patients were already representing about 70 different nationalities.

Fr. Pulicano became the head chaplain of the Intensive Care section's, with three other catholic chaplains and a permanent Deacon, one Protestant chaplain, a Rabbi, besides a group of men and women religious cooperators.

PART X

PROVINCE OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST  
U.S.A. – WESTERN CANADA





## CHAPTER I

### PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

#### OVERALL VIEW OF THE PROVINCE

##### Succession of Provincial Superiors from 1941 till 1978

Fr.	Beniamino Franch	1927-1946
Fr.	Remigio Pigato	1946-1947
Fr.	Giuseppe Bolzan	1947-1952
Fr.	Armando Pierini	1952-1958
Fr.	Fiorino Girometta	1958-1964
Fr.	Salvatore De Vita	1964-1970
Fr.	Pietro Sordi	1970-1974
Fr.	Umberto Rizzi	1974-1978
Fr.	Lawrence Sabatini	January-July 1978
Fr.	Angelo Calandra	1978- September

List of Parishes, Missions, and Institutions opened or discontinued in the years between 1941 and 1978

#### **United States**

1941 - Parish of Immaculate Conception, Eveleth, Minn.

1942 - Parish of St. Frances X. Cabrini, Chicago - Relinquished in 1968

1942 - Parish of St. John Baptist, Kansas City, Mo.

1943 - Parish of St. Charles Borromeo, Melrose Park, Illinois

1943 - Mission of St. Lucy, Chicago, Illinois

1945 - Beginnings of Novitiate in Melrose Park, Illinois

1948 - Transfer of Novitiate to Staten Island, New York

1949 - Transfer of College and Philosophy to Staten Island, NY

1951 - Villa Scalabrini in Northlake, Illinois

1958 - Chaplaincy of Italian Catholic Federation

1961 - Parish of St. Pietro, Los Angeles, California

- 1961 - Parish of Holy Cross, San José, California
- 1963 - Closing down of Guardian Angel Parish, Chicago
- 1966 - Provincial House at Oak Park, Illinois
- 1967 - Closing down of Pompeii Parish in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- 1968 - Parish of St. John at King City, California
- 1970 - Italian Cultural Centre at Stone Park, Illinois
- 1971 - Apostolate of the Sea, San Pedro, California
- 1971 - The Weekly Newspaper "L'Italo Americana", Los Angeles, CA
- 1972 - Latin Center in Stone Park, Illinois
- 1973 - Catechetical Center at Palm Springs, CA, closed in 1974.
- 1977 - Return of Novitiate to Stone Park, Illinois
- 1977 - Begins Construction on Old People's Home for Italians of Los Angeles, CA.

### **Canada**

- 1956 - Parish of Holy Spirit, New Westminster, B.C.
- 1957 - Parish of St. Maria Goretti, Edmonton, Alberta
- 1958 - Parish of St. Patrick, Atikokan, Ontario - left in 1976
- 1959 - Parish of St. Peter, Sarnia, Ontario
- 1959 - Parish of St. Augustine, Baird, Ontario
- 1960 - Chaplaincy of St. Anthony, Thunder Bay, Ontario - Taken in 1969.
- 1960 - Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows, Vancouver, B.C.
- 1960 - Portuguese Mission, Vancouver, B.C.: made a parish in 1972.
- 1960 - Parish of St. Angela Merici, Windsor, Ontario
- 1964 - Parish of St. Francis of Assisi, Revelstoke, B.C.
- 1971 - Parish of St. Stephen, North Vancouver, B.C.
- 1973 - Parish of St. Helen, Burnaby, B.C.
- 1975 - "Co-Pastor" at St. Mary, London, Ontario till 1977
- 1975 - "Co-Pastor" at St. Patrick, assumed in 1978

### **FR. BENIAMINO FRANCH, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1927-1946)**

Fr. Beniamino Franch directed the Province of St. John the Baptist for 18 years: he had been reappointed in 1939 and in 1942, awaiting the end of WWII. In 1941, Fr. Franch and other missionaries re-

newed their requests to have in the Province a Novitiate of its own: but Card. Rossi was not of this opinion for various reasons: first of all the cost for the support of a Novitiate would be much cheaper in Italy: a person fit to be master of novices could not be found; but most of all, a certain distrust was held concerning the formation imparted in America and he also feared the danger of a division within the Congregation.

Fr. Tirondola pointed out the presence of an "autonomous" current: they had a seminary, and now they wanted also the Novitiate, and then, due to travelling difficulties, they would have continued on with Philosophy and Theology. That current favored a plan for an autonomous administration: in the mind of Fr. Tirondola, once sufficient personnel was insured, they would not feel themselves bound to provide for the support of the seminaries of Italy. But the main reason of Fr. Tirondola's attitude remained his conviction that the security of the supply of personnel and the unity in the spirit and finality of the Congregation depended on the seminaries of Italy. Card. Rossi was better in favor, and was only recommending a delay in the final decision. In the meantime, the seminarians were allowed to continue with their "philosophy".

Fr. Franch insisted that there was no intention of depriving the Italian seminaries of the usual financial support; that, of the difficulties opposed to the opening of the novitiate, to him the only one with some degree of credibility was the greater cost; that he was in agreement with the study of Theology in Italy; and he concluded:

"Our conviction is that our parishes do not have to serve only the Italians who immigrate from Italy but also the generations born here. And this will be possible only if we have priests fit for the purpose. This is also the idea of the Bishops who find fault with us only in the fact that we did not think of a seminary earlier." <sup>1</sup>

The first Scalabrinian Sisters arrived in Melrose Park on April 10, 1941, thus giving start in the Sacred Heart Seminary to their presence and Province in the United States. Another parish, St. John Baptist,

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<sup>1</sup> (Letter of Fr. B. Franch to Card. R. C. Rossi, Melrose Park, November 14, 1941)

was accepted in Kansas City in 1942, and the parish of St. Frances Cabrini was inaugurated in Chicago.

A mission, which was to become the parish of St. Charles Borromeo, was opened in 1943 in the vicinity of Sacred Heart Seminary, and another one, St. Lucy, in a section of the parish of Santa Maria Inconronata in Chicago.

Frs. Anthony Felicicchia and Vincent Lo Savio, the first fruits of Sacred Heart Seminary, were ordained priests on March 19, 1945, and together with nine students, were also the first members of the Novitiate erected in Melrose Park with decree of July 7, 1945. They made their vows on September 9, 1946.

#### **FR. REMIGIO PIGATO: PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1946-1947)**

On August 2, 1947, the Provincial Administration was changed with Fr. Remigio Pigato as Provincial Superior, and Frs. Beniamino Franch and Ettore Ansaldi, as Councilors. At the extraordinary meeting of the Major Superiors held in Bassano del Grappa (September 10-17, 1947) Fr. Pigato and Fr. Angelo Corso, who had visited the Province a few months earlier, underscored the solid unity of the province, as it was made up of a majority of young missionaries, and they made known the desire of the Archbishop of Chicago that the Scalabrinians should establish a retirement home for Italian elderly and a high school. At the same meeting a decision was made to move the Novitiate to the Eastern Province: it was done in 1948. It was also decided to transfer Fr. Pigato to the Administration of the Province of St. Charles Borromeo, to replace Fr. Cavicchi who had been named General Councilor.

#### **FR. GIUSEPPE BOLZAN, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1947-1952)**

Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan was named Provincial Superior in September 1947, but arrived in the Province from Italy only in November. Frs. Beniamino Franch and Ettore Ansaldi remained on as Councilors, but the latter was replaced in 1948 by Fr. Armando Pierini. In November 1949, Fr. Bolzan was confirmed for another term with Frs. A. Pierini and Luigi Donanzan as Councilors.

In 1948, with notable sacrifices, the Province committed itself to raise funds for Villa Scalabrini in Northlake, IL, for Italian elderly, which was opened in 1951. In 1949, the college and philosophy students were also transferred to Staten Island.

In 1952, the Province contributed to the founding of the Scalabrinian missions in Australia by sending there of Frs. Dante Orsi and Ignatius Militello. In the same year the Province numbered 54 priests, 11 students of theology, 2 missionary brothers, 45 high school students. It had 10 parishes in Illinois, 2 in Missouri, 2 in Wisconsin, 1 in Minnesota, and 1 in Ohio.

Besides the Sacred Heart Seminary of Melrose Park, the Province had a Home for the Aged, the charge of the Immigration Committee founded in 1951 by Fr. Luigi Donanzan for war orphans and refugees, the direction of the Italian National Centre of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, founded by Fr. Pierini, a weekly radio program founded by the same priest, and the chaplaincy of Mother Cabrini Hospital, Chicago.

#### FR. ARMANDO PIERINI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1952-1958)

In August 1952, Fr. Armando Pierini was named Provincial Superior with Frs. Emilio Donanzan and John Di Vito, councilors. In 1956, Fr. John Di Vito was replaced by Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan. In 1953, a decision was made to enlarge Sacred Heart Seminary in Melrose Park, Illinois, asking at the same time and obtaining that the Theology courses be retained in that seminary. The plan of enlargement, however, was postponed because of financial limitations.

The veteran missionary of the Province, Fr. Beniamino Franch, Provincial Superior from 1927 till 1946 and then Provincial Bursar till death, passed away on May 26, 1954.

In January 1956, Frs. Pierini and Luigi Donanzan visited the Dioceses of British Columbia and Alberta to gather information on the needs of the new Italian immigrants. The number of emigrants had not reached as yet that of Ontario and Quebec. Between 1945 and 1955, 7,224 Italians had entered British Columbia and 3,353 Alberta, but their inflow was to increase rapidly, so much so that, by 1957, there they will be 35,000 in British Columbia and 12,000 in Alberta.

At this point it is opportune to recall what Card. Ledochowski, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith had written to Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini in 1900:

“From the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Vancouver in Canada a petition has been sent to this Sacred Congregation for an Italian priest to be assigned to the spiritual care of Italians residing there. Considering the poverty of those dioceses he should be satisfied with what is strictly necessary for his living.”<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Scalabrini answered:

“This very day I wrote to Fr. Giacomo Gambera, Superior of the Italian Missions of North America ordering him to get right away in touch with the captain Rev. Apostolic Administrator of Vancouver and to do all in his power that the holy desire shown by him to the Sacred Congregation be granted.”<sup>3</sup>

But this project took its time to materialize. Archbishop W.M. Duke of Vancouver, B.C. responded in 1954 to a circular letter of Fr. Corrado Martellozzo, Superior of the Province of New York that he was willing to give a parish from which the Scalabrinians would be able to take care of the Italians of the city. On January 14, 1954, he received Frs. Pierini and Lorenzo Dal Bon, to whom he offered the parish of the Holy Spirit in New Westminster.

On January 17, Archbishop McDonald of Edmonton, Alberta, granted an audience to Frs. Pierini and Luigi Donanzan, together with the Bishop of Calgary. The following day he told them he would let them know his decisions.

Actually, in that same year the parish of the Holy Spirit of New Westminster was taken by the Scalabrinians, and that of St. Maria Goretti of Edmonton began in 1957.

What had been till then only a wishful thinking began to take shape in 1958 when the Scalabrinian set foot in California. They had not arrived yet, in spite of the large number of Italian immigrants. The project began to materialize with the acceptance of some kind of flying chaplaincy with the Italian Catholic Federation by Fr. Antonio Dal Balcon.

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<sup>2</sup> (Ledochowski to Scalabrini, Rome, March 9, 1900, AGS.565)

<sup>3</sup> (Scalabrini to Ledochowski, Piacenza, March 13, 1900. (AGS.565))

In 1958, the presence of a Scalabrinian began in Sarnia, in Ontario, Canada, along with the Parish of St. Patrick, in the same province.

In March 1958, a decision was taken to transfer to the Eastern Province also the Theology courses, to unite College and Theology in the same seminary.

In 1954, the bishop of the new diocese of Joliet, Illinois, had spoken to the Scalabrinians about the possibility of setting up a parish at Park Forest on a small piece of property the Province had purchased twenty years earlier, around which a community had sprung up. In 1956 the Bishop asked to buy the land, but in 1957 he renewed the proposal of a parish to the Scalabrinians. Fr. Valerio Baggio was assigned to it in January 1959. He made immediate plans for the new parish to be named after the Immaculate Conception. In April 1959, a hall was ready that was to serve as a provisional chapel; but in the following June it was decided not to accept the parish under pressure from the Diocesan clergy and because of the oppressive conditions imposed by the Diocese.

#### FR. FIORINO GIROMETTA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1958-1964)

Fr. Fiorino Girometta was named Provincial Superior on August 19, 1958, with Frs. Salvatore De Vita and Giuseppe Bolzan, Councilors. The latter was replaced in the second term by Fr. Alessio Peloso. In 1959 another missionary was given to the Italian Catholic Federation in California and two more parishes were taken in Ontario: St. Peter in Sarnia, and St. Augustine in Baird.

The Provincial Administration was concerned over the decline of the parishes of Chicago where the efforts of the Scalabrinians had been concentrated almost exclusively for so many years.

Similar situations were in progress also at Milwaukee, Kansas City, and Cincinnati; hence the expansion toward Canada and into California, with the hope of finding a stable situation. Such hope was realized in 1961 with the acceptance of the Parishes of St. Peter in Los Angeles and of Holy Cross in San José.

In 1960, the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows in Vancouver was accepted, with the attached mission for Portuguese immigrants, and along with the parish of St. Angela Merici in Windsor, Ontario. In

1964, it was the turn of the Parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Revelstoke, B.C.

In 1961, the Diocese of Chicago sent out a questionnaire to the pastors aimed at gathering statistics on Spanish-speaking immigrants. The Scalabrinian Parishes of St. Callistus, Madonna Addolorata, Our Lady of Pompeii, and St. Frances X. Cabrini already numbered many hundreds of Mexican and Puerto Rican families. Two missionaries were asked to learn Spanish. Help was summoned also from Brazil, from where Frs. Delizio Artico and Aquilino Magagnin arrived respectively in 1960 and 1961.

On February 19, 1962, Archbishop William D. O'Brien, auxiliary bishop of Chicago and Founder of the "Church Extension Society" passed away. He was a benefactor and a spiritual confrere of the Scalabrinians. He was especially instrumental in founding the Sacred Heart Seminary of Melrose Park and of the "Scalabrini-O'Brien" Seminary in Cermenate, Como, Italy.

In early 1959, Fr. Girometta launched a vocation recruiting program which increased the number of seminarians from 12 to about 70 in 1963. As a consequence, new wings were added to Sacred Heart Seminary, inaugurated on November 4, 1963. The Parish of Guardian Angel in Chicago was suppressed in the summer of the same year.

#### **FR. SALVATORE DE VITA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1964-1970)**

In June 1964 the Provincial Administration was placed in the hands of Fr. Salvatore De Vita with Councilors Frs. Adamo Torresan, Emilio Donanzan, Giuseppe Scopa, and Giuseppe Visentin. The latter two, called to formation tasks in the Eastern Province, were replaced in 1965 by Frs. Dino Dai Zovi and Armando Framarin. In 1969, Fr. Angelo Carbone took the place of Fr. Donanzan, elected General Bursar.

A house was bought in 1965 at 546 North East Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois, to become the residence of the Provincial Administration on April 1, 1966. The Province had then 73 priests, 6 brothers, 12 religious students, with 18 national parishes, 6 territorial parishes, 2 chaplaincies, one mission for Portuguese in Vancouver, B.C., one priest with the Italian Catholic Federation, and Sacred Heart Seminary.



While in Canada work was done for Italians of recent immigration and for Portuguese in Vancouver and Edmonton; in the United States, besides the traditional care of Italians of the first and second generation, the apostolate for Mexicans and Porto Ricans kept intensifying in the parishes of Chicago and Masses had already begun to be said for them in Spanish.

For Italians of recent immigration or who still spoke Italian a network of religious and cultural initiatives sprung up in conjunction with Scalabrini Villa of Northlake, Illinois: a monthly publication, the *Fra Noi* with 40,000 copies and a weekly radio program; an Italian Centre was also established in Los Angeles, and another one in 1970, at Sacred Heart Seminary in Chicago.

Because of urban renewal, the Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was closed down in 1967. In 1968, in Chicago the Scalabrinians relinquished the parish of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, where there were hardly any Italians left. In the same year, the parish of St. John was accepted in King City, California. In 1969 the parish of St. Anthony in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, was entrusted to the Scalabrinians.

In the same years, the situation of Sacred Heart Seminary had grown critical both because of the staff and of the number of seminarians reduced to ten in High School and to less than twenty in College. But the crisis reflected also the uncertainty or ambiguity, more or less latent in the whole history of the seminary, concerning the future assignment of Italo-American seminarians, in addition to the general vocation crisis.

By the close of Fr. De Vita's tenure, following the closing down of the parish of Guardian Angel and the relinquishing of that of St. Frances X. Cabrini, the General Administration reconsidered the juridical status of the Scalabrinian parishes of Chicago. We deem it proper for history's sake, to report the document presented to Card. Cody, Archbishop of Chicago in 1969:

"Concerning the parishes entrusted to the Scalabrinian Congregation in the Archdiocese of Chicago, U.S.A.

Premise:

According to the Constitution "Romanos Pontifices" of Leo XIII and the Council of Baltimore, (cfr. Wernz-Vidal, *Jus Canonikum III*, p. 446-447) con-

cession was made, where particular needs would warrant it, to entrust diocesan parishes to Religious Congregations, determining by means of contracts the nature and the extension of the bonds to establish between the dioceses involved and the religious themselves. Also the concession in trust to the Scalabrinian Religious Congregation of the parishes it presently administers in the Archdiocese of Chicago is to be viewed within the frame of this authorization. Such arrangement goes beyond the norms of the Code of Canon Law by which a parish benefice, in order to be titled to religious priests, must be “religious” (c. 1411); such as is made possible only when it has been joined *pleno jure* to a religious house by the Holy See (c. 1471). This in turn carries with itself the right that the religious house itself be the titled subject of ownership of the parish properties while the actual pastor (c. 471) administers them in its name.

#### The Documents

As to the bonds resulting from the assignment of parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago for the Scalabrinian Congregation and eventually for the Archdiocese itself, they are clearly outlined in the document.

From these documents we know that in force of the convention agreed upon in 1922 by Fr. Strazzoni, Provincial Superior at that time, and by Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, the Italian national parishes entrusted by the Archdiocese to the Scalabrinian Congregation had to be considered given ‘*in solidum et per modum unius*’. This form is confirmed in a note of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation of April 24, 1933, by a letter by the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Amleto Cicognani to the same Sacred Congregation, dated December 5, 1933, and by a handwritten statement of Fr. Strazzoni himself of January 15, 1933.

The content of the above formula is illustrated by a document which does not leave room for doubts. On January 16, 1933, Msgr. J. Casey, Vice Chancellor of the Curia of Chicago, writes an official letter on behalf of Card. Mundelein to the Provincial Superior Fr. Beniamino Franch by which the Chancery Office intends to answer a letter of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation of December 20, 1932 (Prot. N. 575/32). In this letter it is explicitly stated that the parishes in question were entrusted to the Scalabrinian Congregation ‘*per modum unius*’ and ‘*in solidum*’ as to their administration. Such was the ‘specified original condition,’ knowingly imposed by the Curia and accepted by the Congregation.

Now, by force of this condition, it is explicitly said that all these parishes must help each other in such a way that, should one be in financial straits, the others, as ‘combined parishes’ must come to its rescue under the direction of the Provincial.” The Congregation shall witness to its loyalty and

gravity and will know how to honor its pledge. The Curia on its part considers it so binding that Cardinal Mundelein is willing to bring the matter up to the Holy Father. The Scalabrinians must realize that should even only one of them be allowed to perish, all the others as well shall be taken away."

Such is in short the content of this document. It finds, in fact, many instances confirming it. A first one is supplied by a note of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, signed by Card. Rossi, dated on March 9, 1933. On September 20, of the same year, the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, following a consultation with Card. Mundelein, informs the Sacred Consistorial Congregation with Prot. 5862-I: "As to the parishes entrusted to the Scalabrinians, however, the same Curia considers them parishes of the diocesan clergy, though entrusted "in solidum" to the Scalabrinian Pious Society as to their financial administration. On January 2, 1934 the Sacred Consistorial Congregation serves notice once again that a few months earlier (by the end of August) the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop A. Cicognani, had again spoken to Card. Mundelein about the Scalabrinian parishes of Chicago, and again he had stated that the Curia of Chicago considers the parishes entrusted to the Scalabrinians, as parishes of the diocesan clergy, but given to them "in solidum", with regards to their financial support!

#### The proof of facts

The content of the convention was not only stated, but constantly practiced as well. As regards your Provincial Administration, a document written by Fr. B. Franch on November 24, 1932, to Card. Rossi, Secretary of the S.C. Congregation, informs him of having given his consent, albeit under pressure from the Curia, to tax the other parishes of Chicago in order to go to the help of the Church of St. Anthony. The same thing took place later on, as is confirmed by another letter sent to the Sacred C. Congregation on October 21, 1936.

In regard to the Archdiocesan Chancery Office, we gather, for instance, how in 1959, Msgr. McManus, on behalf of Card. Meyer, informs the Provincial Fr. Fiorino Girometta, that the Scalabrinian Congregation would do a great favor if it surrendered without compensation the Church of Santa Maria Incoronata to the Chinese Catholic Mission. And a written statement of this gratuitous renunciation is requested.

#### Observation

From the documents here referred to, one fact seems to result quite clearly; if the parishes are given in solidum for finances and administration, it means that they are constituted in unity, by which both debts and credits are the concern of all of them "in solidum". Besides, if, as has been stated by the Archdiocesan Chancery Office, the renouncing of one parish implies

the renouncing of all and the financial difficulties of one parish implies the commitment of all others to come to its help, one must admit that the solidarity so stated materializes in a true corporate relationship by which, if the goods of one of them should be altered or transformed, for instance, by forced alienation, it must be in the interest or to the loss of all others as well.

But here is more! Since this unity and solidarity of the parishes is bound up with the Congregation, as the sole subject to which the parishes are entrusted, one must attribute to the Superiors of the Congregation an administrative role over the parishes themselves, something the document of the Archdiocesan Chancery mentioned above explicitly affirms when it says that “the combined parishes must come to the rescue...under the direction of the Provincial.”

This position engenders to a certain extent a similarity between the status of the parishes in question and that of religious parishes attached to a Religious community of which the community itself is the sole and ultimate responsible entity. We say to ‘a certain extent’ because it regards only the administrative aspect. This evidently explains why in the various documents in our possession, such as the above quoted letter of the Vice-Chancellor Mons Casey, the letter of September 20, 1933, from the Apostolic Delegation, the note of January 2, 1934, from the Sacred C. Congregation, etc. the position of said parishes is always described with the twin formula: a) the parishes are and remain diocesan, but b) their administration is entrusted to the Scalabrinian in solidum. On the other hand it is evident that the desired solidarity could not be thought possible without a Superior Provincial with the proper power to follow the various administrations and to provide for their mutual equilibrium. Actually, the intention of the Archdiocesan Curia to entrust these parishes in the sense above stated appears also from another element: the recognition of the right of the Congregation to receive from them a part of the financial benefits, analogous at least with the parishes united “ad temporalia tantum” to a religious house as indicated in C. 1425.

The above-mentioned document of the Vice-Chancellor of Chicago states that: the Archdiocese of Chicago has no difficulty, if the financial condition of the parishes is good, that help be given to the seminaries of the Congregation from ‘surplus funds!’ This statement evidently does not refer to the ordinary salaries of the missionaries, but to the funds of the churches themselves, as is shown by the reference made by Msgr. Casey to C. 1525, §2. There is, in fact, no obligation on the part of a priest to inform the Chancery Office on how he spends his personal money.

**Conclusion:**

These are the facts resulting from the documents consulted. It is clear from all this, therefore, that the agreement holds still valid; the Chancery of the Archdiocese has insisted on its observance; it has bound the presence of the Congregation in Chicago to the observance of this agreement; it has required its fulfillment on more than one occasion; and the Congregation has kept faithful to it with no little sacrifice. Matters remaining as they are, it appears clear that unless a new bilateral agreement is made, the above agreement is still binding.

**FR. PIETRO SORDI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1970-1974)**

In June 1970, Fr. Pietro Sordi was named Provincial Superior with Frs. Angelo Calandra, Pietro Rigo, Angelo Carbone, and Silvano Bosi, Councilors. Fr. Sordi was confirmed in 1973 and given Frs. Umberto Rizzi, Angelo Carbone, Lawrence Cozzi, and Rino Spada as Councilors. His tenure was characterized by the efforts to transform the existing parishes into missionary centers especially for recent Spanish and Portuguese speaking immigrants. The objective was reached in various parishes with the commitment of missionaries who learn Spanish and of others coming from Brazil.

In Los Angeles the Casa Italiana" became the cultural and social center of the Italians and the seat of many associations; in 1971; the weekly *Italo Americano* was purchased, which became a true instrument of apostolate, and at the same time an effective means leading to the founding of a Home for the Aged.

In Stone Park, formerly Melrose Park, Illinois, the Centro Latino was added to the Italian Center in 1972, as the headquarters for the missionary activities for Spanish speaking immigrants of Metropolitan Chicago. In Canada the Portuguese mission of Vancouver was strengthened; the parish of St. Stephen of North Vancouver was accepted in 1971, along with that of St. Helen in Burnaby, also in metropolitan Vancouver.

The presence of the Province in the Apostleship of the Sea began in 1971 with the destination of a missionary to the port of San Pedro in California. In 1973, life was given to a Catechetical Center, directed by two missionary brothers, in Palm Springs, California. This latter experiment, however, was short lived because of internal difficulties.

All these activities helped revive the Province struggling with its old parishes, decreasing population, the increasing burden of the support of the schools, due to the drastic reduction of the Sisters and to the consequent increase of lay teachers and of tuitions, which was in turn the cause of further decrease of students, and the aging of the personnel. Contrary to the preceding decades, in 1972 the majority of the missionaries was working outside of the Chicago area. The majority of them was still employed in the parishes, but their apostolate was taking new forms not only in response to the needs of the newcomers but also in relation to the new concept of ethnicity, which was taking hold in the cultural and social context of the U.S.A. The missionaries became aware that cultural values fade away at a slowpace and that evangelization, or, rather, pre-evangelization of the cities' ethnic groups was the true challenge to the Scalabrinian charism: old immigrants had to be sensitized to welcoming the new ones who had to be assisted along the process of integration without loosing their spiritual and cultural heritage.

By the 1970s such evolution was happening and was being carried out not without difficulties, slowdowns, and frustrations because of shortage of qualified personnel; but things were moving in the direction of forming the missionary community of a parish into a group of priests charged with different tasks both in the parish itself and in the various ethnic communities of immigrants. In addition, inter-parochial activities were intensified to reach out to migrants living far from the parishes. The attempt at organizing a structural form of religious assistance to the 60,000 Italians of recent immigration into the area of Chicago did not meet the favor of the Chancery Office. Only in 1978, some fruit due to mostly local initiatives are noticeable.

#### FR. UMBERTO RIZZI, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1975-1978)

In October 1974, Fr. Pietro Sordi was elected General Councilor and Bursar.: Fr. Umberto Rizzi was called in January 1975 to succeed him in the administration of the Province, with Councilors Frs. Angelo Calandra, Fiorino Girometta, Albert Corradin, and Angelo Moscato.

Upon request from the bishop of London, Ontario a Scalabrinian priest became co pastor of the parish of St. Patrick in Windsor, Ontario, with the task of assistance to Italians; and another one became the co-pastor of the church of St. Mary in London, Ontario, with analogous duties. In 1978, the parish of St. Patrick in Windsor was turned over entirely to the Scalabrinians; their presence ceased, instead, in the parish of St. Mary in London in June 1977. In 1976, the Scalabrinians withdrew also from the parish of St. Patrick in Atikokan, Ontario, for lack of immigrants.

In 1975-1977, Fr. Paul Ascioffa worked in Washington, D.C. at the "National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs" as an assistant to Msgr. Geno Barone, its Director, and was entrusted at the same time, with the task of programming the national social ethnic communication media of the CCENA ( Catholic Conference on Ethnic and Neighborhood Affairs) founded by the same monsignor in 1970 to sensitize the American public opinion to the preservation and promotion of the ethnic values of the various communities of foreign extraction living in the cities of the United States. Fr. Ascioffa had been previously the president of the Ethnic Council of Chicago and of the State of Illinois.

In 1975, the Canadian Parish of St. Stephen in North Vancouver, B.C. was definitely accepted with the addition of another missionary to care for the Italians of the area.

Construction began in the year 1977 on "Villa Scalabrini" for the Italian elderly in Los Angeles.

In early 1978, a new Provincial Administration was appointed with Fr. Lawrence Sabatini, Provincial Superior, and Frs. Angelo Calandra, Luigi Gandolfi, Fiorino Firometta, and Vincent Cutrara, Councilors.

On July 15, 1978, Fr. Sabatini was elected titular Bishop of Nasai and Auxiliary of Vancouver, B.C. He was succeeded on September 16, 1979 in the Office of Provincial Superior by Fr. Angelo Calandra, with Frs. Fiorino Girometta, Luigi Gandolfi, Vincent Cutrara, and Giuseppe Vicentini, as Councilors.





## CHAPTER II

### SACRED HEART SEMINARY - STONE PARK, ILLINOIS

As mentioned before, in 1940 the General Administration had denied permission to open in Melrose Park or in any other place of the United States the novitiate for those who had reached the point for making it. Card. Rossi had spoken of a rather long time before all needed conditions were present. Still, the Superior Provincial Fr. B. Franch, pointing out in 1941 that the students ready for the novitiate were eight already and that it was not possible to send them to Italy, solicited the Superior of the Eastern Province, Fr. Nazareno Properzi to insist with the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop A.G. Cicognani to offer his plea with Card. Rossi. The Apostolic Delegate proposed a provisional Novitiate. Cardinal Rossi responded inviting to adopt a "prudential plan", which meant that the students would complete philosophy of waiting the end of the war; then they would make their novitiate and theological studies in Italy. In 1942, the same Card. Rossi allowed the students of philosophy and theology to wear the clerical habit; and so the investiture rite was celebrated for Anthony Felicicchia, Vincent Lo Savio, and Giuseppe Scopa on September 8, 1942.

The Scalabrinian Sisters had arrived from Brazil on July 10, 1942. They were lodged in a convent within the premises of the seminary, adjoined to the rectory. A house was also bought across from the property of the seminary.

In September 1942, the academic year began with 29 seminarians: 2 in theology, 1 in philosophy, 2 in fifth year, 7 seniors, 5 juniors, and 12 freshmen. In September 1943 there were 39 seminarians: 3 of them in philosophy, and 3 in theology. On February 19, 1944, Card. Rossi obtained from Pius XII that the students of theology be permitted to be ordained, postponing the novitiate to when it would be possible: the first tonsure would make them members of the Congregation. The first two priests, Frs. Anthony Felicicchia and Vincent Lo Savio were ordained on March 19, 1945.

A few days earlier, on February 24, 1945, Card. Rossi had announced that permission would soon be granted to open the novitiate. The Scalabrini Auditorium had been adopted as seat of the Novitiate already in 1944.

The erection of the interprovincial novitiate was approved by Pius XII on June 23, 1945 and decreed by Card. Rossi on July 2 of same year, in which date Fr. Ettore Ansaldi was also named Master of Novices. On September 8, 1945, the novitiate was opened with the investiture of 11 novices in the presence of Card. Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, his auxiliary Bishop William O'Brien, and a great part of the missionaries of the Province. Of the first 11 novices, two were already priests, and another seven reached the priesthood: Joseph Scopa, Ignatius Militello, Thomas Carlesimo, Carmelo Negro, Angelo Calandra, Gino Dalpiaz and John Daneri. The first profession was made on September 9, 1946 in the hands of Auxiliary Bishop William O'Brien.

In the academic year 1946-1947, in the seminary there were 2 Novices, 1 student of theology, 7 in philosophy, and 39 in high school.

At the extraordinary meeting of September 1947 in Bassano del Grappa, Italy, a decision had been made that the Novitiate be transferred to the Eastern Province. In November Card. Rossi, stating his inability to grasp the reasons, suspended all decision until further instructions. But it was the very personnel directly responsible for the Novitiate and of the seminary who put pressure for the transfer, in order not to be forced to enlarge the seminary while the Province was engaged in the campaign for the construction of Villa Scalabrini for the elderly, and to give the novices a more secluded and recollected house. Card. Rossi gave the authorization in February 1948, and the Novitiate was transferred to Staten Island, New York on August 16, 1948.

In the meantime, in September 1947, Fr. Mario Albanesi was appointed rector of Sacred Heart Seminary. In 1948 the Rector asked whether he could admit to the Seminary also non-Italian candidates or even non-descendants of Italians "in order to insure the good will of the parishes and to be so able to enlarge the scope of the Congregation." The answer came from the new Constitutions, approved on August 15, 1948, which permitted admission, "in exceptional cases

to be acknowledged by the Superior General, of young men of other nationalities and languages, who grew up in the midst of Italians.”

Fr. Dante Orsi was made rector in 1949. At the end of his 3-year term in 1952 he was assigned to open the Scalabrinian missions of Australia, and his place was taken by Fr. Emilio Donanzan. The seminary numbered then 18 students of theology, and 31 minor seminarians. In 1949 it had 5 students of theology, 13 in philosophy, and 39 in high school.

Fr. Mario Spada became rector in 1956. In 1958, theology was moved to Staten Island, New York, and now only the 27 students of high school remained at Sacred Heart Seminary.

At the close of 1961, a project was presented for the construction of the new building facing West Division Street. It was to include the chapel, the administration offices, the residence for the formation personnel, the dormitories, and internal swimming pool, and showers. The first building of 1937, was set aside for library and classrooms; the auditorium built in 1944, was to be restored and to continue its purpose, while putting some rooms and basement for use in recreational activities.

The whole complex would reach the capacity for 140 students. The General Administration approved the project in January 1962 and work began the following July. Fr. Giuseppe Visentin became rector in the same year. In September the academic year began with 69 students. The new building was inaugurated on November 4, 1963 in the presence of the Superior General Fr. Giulivo Tessarolo.

A group of religious students returned to Sacred Heart Seminary in 1964 and attended classes at the Maryknoll Seminary of Glen Ellyn, Illinois. The High School was accredited with the Catholic University.

In 1965, Fr. Visentin was assigned as Rector of Saint Charles Seminary in Staten Island, New York, and was succeeded by Fr. Armando Framarin. In 1969, also the students of high school were sent out for classes at the diocesan Holy Cross High School. One must point out that at this time Sacred Heart Seminary admitted only students from the Western Province since 1966, because another minor seminary had been opened in Staten Island in that year.

In 1970 there were 35 students: 22 in college and 13 in high school. Fr. Lawrence Cozzi was named rector in 1971. There were then 20 College students and only 7 in high school. Those in college attended five different schools. The 19 College students of 1972 frequented three different schools and the other 19 minor seminarians attended two High Schools. By 1973, the number of students had declined respectively to 13 and 8, while they were 11 and 12 in 1974. In 1975-1976, 11 College students began the academic year, but 6 left the seminary; 14 high school students started, but 7 left the seminary. In the beginning of the school year 1976-1977, there were 6 college students and 7 in high school.

Fr. John Di Vito was named rector in 1976 and then Fr. Luigi Gandolfi in 1977. In the same year, the novitiate was moved back to Stone Park for a while, with Fr. Agostino Lovatin, as Master of Novices.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PARISHES OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

#### CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF GUARDIAN ANGEL

In 1942, Fr. Ricardo Secchia was transferred to Cincinnati, Ohio, and his place was taken by Fr. Primo Beltrame who did his best to revive the parish in those critical years. In 1948 he was succeeded by Fr. Adamo Arduino Torresan and by Fr. Giuseppe Chiminello in the end of 1949, who did improvement work on church, rectory, and school. But the construction of new highways, the city renovation plan, and the expansion of the Chicago Campus of State University of Illinois forced plans for new parish structures. In 1958, Fr. Italo Scola, pastor in 1956-1963 purchased a property at the crossroad of Cabrini Street and Blue Island Boulevard, and gave start in March to work on building a Church, School and Convent combination. The construction was inaugurated on April 20, 1959. But already in 1960, and only two years after a plan had been approved for a residential redevelopment, the area of Halsted and Harrison was suddenly set aside by the same city government to become the Chicago Campus of the Illinois State University. All efforts were made to have this decision rescinded, but to no avail: the parish was suppressed in 1963.

#### CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF SANTA MARIA INCORONATA-ST. LUCY

As many Italians had moved to the southern sections of the parish, by 1942 the need was felt for opening a "mission" or subsidiary chapel for them about a mile from the Church of the Incoronata. The pastor Fr. Giuseppe Lazzeri (1934-1949) acquired a former protestant church with a sitting capacity for 450 people, and a spacious basement, located at 3022 South Wells Street. Decorated by painter Cangelosi, the mission church was inaugurated on Easter 1943. In January 1945 it was damaged by a fire, but immediately restored and reopened for worship for Christmas of the same year. Fr. Adamo A.

Torresan, pastor in 1949-1960, bought a house adjoining the chapel in 1951, and a priest began living there permanently in 1952.

The first one was Fr. Luigi Bolzan, who dedicated the chapel to St. Lucy and restructured it. He was followed by Fr. Primo Beltrame (1953-1961) first autonomous pastor.

Fr. Torresan's main concern was that of building a new school, but he could not obtain permission from the Chancery Office. In 1952, he added two classrooms to the old school: but the need for a new school was becoming ever more urgent. Finally, in 1960, the diocese gave its consent to build it, on condition that the church of Santa Maria Incoronata be surrendered to the Maryknoll Fathers for the Catholic Chinese of Chinatown. The Scalabrinians accepted the condition, but reserving the right to celebrate a Sunday Mass, the weddings and funerals of the Italians remaining in the neighborhood, and to keep the parish school open. The school remained open until 1969, when the remaining 100 Italian families could not support it any more.

In August 1960 a property was bought for the new school of St. Lucy. Work began in February 1961, and Cardinal A. Meyer inaugurated it on November 26, of the same year.

In August 1962, following the construction of new expressway which made difficult the separate administration of the two churches, the Chancery of Chicago joined them into one parish with residence at St. Lucy. The construction of the new expressway removed also the convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame, who were housed at the rectory of Santa Maria Incoronata.

Fr. Dino Di Zovi, who had been Pastor of Santa Maria Incoronata since 1960, in 1962, was named pastor of Santa Maria Incoronata – St. Lucy, and thus rector of St. Lucy, which in 1961 had been given to Fr. Lino Fongaro, the successor of Fr. Beltrame. In 1968, the parish had 2,210 people, against the 7,000 of 1954. As a 1978 it had 850 families, many of them Hispanic. The parish school had less than 300. Fr. Angelo Carbone was pastor from 1969 to 1978, followed by Fr. Luciano Morselli.

## CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF SANTA MARIA ADDOLORATA

Fr. Giuseppe Bernardi headed the parish for 19 years. He had to retire in 1947 because of ill health. He still did work in the Eastern Province where he was pastor of in Our Lady of Pompeii for a while, and then assistant in various parishes, until 1958 when in obedience to the superiors he returned to Italy, where he died on January 25, 1959.

He was succeeded for two years by Fr. Gregory Zanoni, followed in 1949 by Fr. Mario Albanesi who had the kindergarten rebuilt. In January 1952, Fr. Albanesi was transferred to the parish of Our Lady of Pompeii in New York. Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan replaced him temporarily until Fr. Alessio Peloso was appointed pastor in August 1952.

In 1957, church, school, and rectory were demolished to make room for the construction of a new expressway. The new school was built at 1337 West Ohio St. and was inaugurated on November 17, 1957; the new church was built at the corner of Ohio and Ada Streets and was dedicated on June 10, 1960. Fr. Pietro Tessaro was named pastor in 1967, and Fr. Peloso stayed on as his assistant, for the care of about 1,500 Spanish-speaking families: Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Peruvians and Guatemalans. By 1971 the number of Italian families had dwindled to 400, while the Hispanic ones had grown to 2,500. For these new and emarginated immigrants Fr. Peloso organized a Union of Hispanic American Workers and as well as a Credit Union.

Fr. Salvino Zanon became pastor on November 1, 1968, and Fr. Dino Dai Zovi a year later. Fr. Delizio succeeded him in 1978.

## CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL

In the last years of his tenure at St. Michael, Fr. Pietro Bianchetta, pastor since 1933, was often sickly. He was actually sick in the hospital when his dream of extinguishing the debt of the Church came true. He died in Italy on February 26, 1950.

The parish was headed by Fr. Luigi Donanzan from January 1949 to 1960. He gave new life to the parish by reviving the societies and the structures of the Parish. In 1951, he built the new rectory; in 1952 he purchased a property on which to build the school, and a house near the church, which became the convent for the Scalabrian

Sisters, to whom was entrusted the school, completed in 1954. The church was entirely restored in 1953. As we know, Fr. Luigi was one of the founding members of the A.C.I.M., and effectively devoted himself to the care of refugees and war orphans.

On September 30, 1962 he was succeeded by Fr. Silvano Bosi, who completely remodeled the church in 1967. The parish, however, declined because of the decrease of Italian families. Fr. Italo Scola was named pastor in September 1973, followed by Fr. Alberton in 1975. The parish became increasingly Spanish with over 400 families and with only a few Italian families were left by 1978. The school's attendance was at 200.

### CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

In the years 1932-1947, the parish was held by Fr. Remigio Pigato, who was also named Provincial Superior in 1946. In 1947, he was chosen to assume the same position in the Province of the East. In 1945, the parish was able to acquire, near Joliet, the land to be known as the Pompei Camp, for youth summer activities.

After the departure of Fr. Pigato, Fr. Danilo Zanon served as acting pastor for a year, until Fr. Luigi Riello was named pastor in 1948; but he too was transferred to the other Province after one year as pastor at Pompei and two more as assistant at Mount Carmel in Melrose Park. Fr. Salvatore De Vita succeeded him in August 1949 until 1952. He remodeled the school. In December he was followed by Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan, who renovated the parish hall, embellished the church and built a new convent for the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, who were teachers to about 600 pupils in the parochial school.

Fr. Giovanni Bonelli became pastor in September 29, 1961. Right after the convent was built, the parish was thrown into disarray by the new city renovation plans. By 1966, its population, 5,000 strong in 1954, had dwindled to 3,000. Such changes contributed in aggravating the huge debt due to the building of the convent. From 1965 to 1975 the parish was headed by Fr. Gino Dalpiaz, followed by Fr. Angelo Calandra. About 700 families were registered, with 300 pupils in the school.



**CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY**

Fr. Giuseppe Chiminello was pastor in 1935-1947. Fr. Adolfo Nalin succeeded him in January 1948. The parish numbered then more than 2,000 families, but only 220 students attended the parish school, an old and small outdated building. It was restored in 1948, but it was not enough. A new spacious wing was therefore built, and inaugurated by Card. Samuel A. Stritch on December 17, 1950. In 1954, a new convent was also built for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Lagrange. In that same year the students had grown to 660.

The church also had grown too small for a population of over 2,500 families. On Easter 1959 there was the groundbreaking and work began on a new church, rich with Italian mosaics and marble, inaugurated by Card. A. G. Meyer on August 20, 1961.

In 1963-1964 the parish was in the care of Fr. Emilio Donanzan, and Fr. Girometta was its pastor from October 1964 to 1978. Since then the demographic situation has changed dramatically: by 1975 the Italian families were reduced to 700, while the Hispanic surged to 400. A new type of pastoral care became imperative and it was courageously employed with the result of saving a parish that seemed destined to decadence like other ones in Chicago. In 1978 the responsibility of the parish was entrusted to Fr. Dino Dai Zovi. The liturgy was celebrated in three languages: English, Italian, Spanish.

**CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF ST. CALLISTUS**

Fr. Silvio Zanoni, pastor in 1938-1942, was succeeded by Fr. Luigi Bolzan until 1948, and by Fr. Lorenzo Dal Bon in 1949 - 1956. Fr. Bolzan improved the conditions of the parish and reduced the debt. The main enterprise of Fr. Dal Bon was the construction of the new school and gymnasium, inaugurated on October 15, 1955. In 1956, Fr. Pietro Sordi was made pastor. He embellished the church and enriched it with a main altar and with a new sacristy consecrated by Auxiliary Bishop C. F. O'Donnell, Vicar General of Chicago, on March 10, 1964. In 1960 he built the rectory, inaugurated on January 1, 1961.

Fr. Valerio Baggio became pastor in September 1964. The parish of St. Callistus was also encroached by a Medical Center; the number of Italians, besides, had markedly diminished in a few years, while the

Mexicans increased to over 60% of the population. Fr. Delizio Artico was assigned to assist them in May 1967. The parish school, directed by the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was still attended by 500 pupils.

Fr. Salvino Zanon was pastor from 1969 to 1973. Since 1973 Fr. Alessio Peloso took the parish which was then already 85% Mexican.

#### CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: PARISH OF ST. FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI

As we have mentioned before (cfr. Vol. V), the parish was founded in 1940 and headed by Fr. Antonio Cogo until 1953. In October 1940 work began on the church with sitting room for 800 people, which was inaugurated by Card. S.A. Stritch in 1942. At the same time the elementary school was opened with the first class in the convent of the Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart. In the following years other classes were set up in the basement of the church, in the rectory and elsewhere while ways and means were necessarily being studied for the construction of the parish school which was started in 1949 and inaugurated by Archbishop William O'Brien on November 25, 1951.

Fr. Fiorino Girometta was named pastor in September 1953. He remodeled the rectory, built the new Convent for the Sisters in 1957. He became Provincial Superior in 1958, but continued to administer the parish until May 1959. He was succeeded by Fr. Anthony Felicicchia, stricken soon afterwards with a serious heart illness which brought him to his tomb on February 10, 1960. Fr. Antonio Cogo had again been appointed pastor just a month before. The parish had already begun to decline. By 1961 1,800 Italian families had moved away, and 40% of the population was Puerto Rican. Fr. Aquilino Maganin was appointed to assist them, followed afterwards by Fr. Delizio Artico.

Fr. Joseph Scopa was pastor from September 1963 until April 1965, followed by Fr. Charles La Verde. In 1967 Card. Cody expressed the desire to take over the parish to make it a center of religious assistance to the blacks who had entered to occupy the zone. In February 1968 he decided that the parish be surrendered to the diocese. In April it was the center of riots provoked by the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. The parish was returned to the Diocese on July 1, 1968.

**MELROSE PARK, ILLINOIS: PARISH OF OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL**

Of all Scalabrinians, Fr. Beniamino Franch was the one who headed the same parish the longest, that is, for almost 50 years: from 1905 till 1954. In the forties the parish grew especially to the north and the need was felt for a new school, begun in 1950 and completed in 1951. The kindergarten had been built in 1946 and entrusted to the care of the Scalabrinian Sisters while the parish school was under the direction of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Lagrange, for whom a new convent was built in 1953.

Upon the death of Fr. Franch on Mary 26, 1954, Fr. Salvatore De Vita was appointed pastor. He added a large new wing to the school and made plans for a new church, which was actually built by Fr. Adamo A. Torresan, pastor in 1964-1973. The ground breaking took place on February 26, 1967; the cornerstone was laid on September 24; this modern construction of Church and rectory was inaugurated on June 9, 1968 by Card. John Cody.

The parish numbered then about 6,000 souls, 65% of them of Italian descent, with a remaining percentage of Lithuanians, Germans, Irish, Poles, Slavs, and Mexicans. In September 1973, Fr. Umberto Rizzi was named its pastor, but in 1975 he was appointed Provincial Superior, thus leaving his place to Fr. Albert Corradin, followed by Fr. Fiorino Girometta in 1978.

**MELROSE PARK, ILLINOIS: THE PARISH OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO**

In 1935 a group representing Catholics living on the west-side of Melrose Park and in Stone Park petitioned the Chancery of Chicago to have a church in their midst to be spared from going to the church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. The chancery's opinion was that there were not a sufficient number of families to support the church. In 1937 the Sacred Heart Seminary was built and the chapel was opened to residents on days of obligation.

In 1942, on a visit to the seminary, Card. S. Stritch took note of the increase in population of the surrounding area and commissioned Fr. Fiorino Girometta to make a survey, from which it was learned that there were 132 Catholic families; the archbishop gave permission for a provisional church. In May 1943, a building was bought from the

Chrysler Motor Car Corporation at the crossroads of 37th Avenue and Soffel, it was moved to the property of the church and adapted into a chapel. Archbishop O'Brien, Auxiliary of Chicago, blessed it in November 1943, naming it after St. Charles.

Fr. Fiorino Girometta was the first pastor, though, juridically speaking, it was not strictly a parish, but a mission of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, with all the parochial rights. Following the founding of the first associations, in 1945 a building was constructed to serve as provisional residence of the Mantellate Sisters of Blue Island, Illinois, and as school which was opened in the same year with 125 pupils. The residence for the priest and the convent for the sisters were built in 1948.

Fr. John Di Vito succeeded Fr. Girometta in 1953-1956. He began construction on the new rectory which was completed in January 1957 by Fr. Emilio Donanzan, pastor in 1956-1963. A month later a fire damaged the school which was immediately restored. All debts were extinguished in 1959 and thought was given to the construction of the definitive church for a community that had grown in the meantime to 800 families: its construction projected by Architect L. J. Germano, began in July 1960. Auxiliary Bishop A. J. Wycislo of Chicago laid the corner stone on March 26, 1961 and consecrated the three altars on November 22, 1961. Fr. Emilio Donanzan said the first Mass in it on November 25, in the presence of Card. A. Meyer.

In 1963-1965 the parish was directed by Fr. Thomas Carlesimo: by Fr. Pasquale Pavini 1965-1968, and again by Fr. E. Donanzan in 1968-1969, who was then appointed General Bursar.

Fr. Pietro Rigo was pastor in 1970-1975, and was succeeded by Fr. Angelo Moscato.

## CHAPTER IV

### PARISHES IN WISCONSIN, OHIO, MISSOURI, MINNESOTA, CALIFORNIA

#### MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN: THE PARISHES OF O. L. OF POMPEII AND ST. RITA

From 1939 to 1941 the parish of Our Lady of Pompeii was headed by Fr. Luigi Donanzan and from 1941 to 1948 by Fr. Luigi Riello, who in 1942 bought the house on North Jackson Street as rectory and re-decorated the church in 1944 and 1947.

Fr. Danilo Zanon was pastor in 1948-1954, and then Fr. Antonio Cogo in 1954-1959. In 1955 the city of Milwaukee had decided to demolish all buildings of the district around the church to make it a commercial center. Fr. Cogo and his parishioners succeeded in preventing the church, the rectory, and the convent from meeting with the same fate. By 1958, however, the population of the parish had already been reduced to 525 families, and so, Fr. Salvino Zanon, pastor of St. Rita, was named administrator also of the parish of Our Lady of Pompeii, already in complete decline; and so also Fr. Italo Scola, his successor in 1963-1967, covered both responsibilities.

The diocese itself, however, did not view with favor the existence in the city of two national parishes. The last Mass was said on July 30, 1967, and the church was torn down on October 9, 1967, after 64 years of service. The title of National Parish together with compensations passed over to the church of St. Rita. At first, Saint Rita was a "mission" of Our Lady of Pompeii, and became an autonomous parish on December 1, 1942. Its first pastor was Fr. Gregorio Zanoni who completed the construction of the part assigned to the school, increasing the number of the classrooms.

In September 1947, Fr. Zanoni left for Brazil, and Fr. Dante Orsi was called to succeed him. He extinguished the debt and brought improvements to church and school. Fr. Primo Beltrame was pastor from September 1949 to November 1950, succeeded by Fr. Salvino

Zanon, who purchased in 1951 two houses to the North of the church and in 1953 started work on a new building for the school that was completed in 1955. In 1960-1961, he built the rectory and the new convent for the Sisters of Charity of St. Joan Antida Thouret who had charge of the school. Both buildings were inaugurated on December 10, 1961, by Archbishop W.E. Cousins of Milwaukee. The parish numbered then 3, 000 souls. Fr. Italo Scola was its pastor in 1963-1973, succeeded by Fr. Giuseppe Vicentini.

### CINCINNATI, OHIO: THE PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART

Fr. Pietro Rigo was pastor in 1940-1942. Sister Blandina, foundress of St. Mary Institute died on February 23, 1941. In the years 1942-1953, the parish was under the direction of Fr. Ricardo Secchia, carrying on a difficult existence for the reason that only about 100 families scattered all over the city were registered in the parish. The fate of the small parish seemed sealed; but it regained vitality with the new pastor, Fr. Luigi Bolzan, who directed it from 1953 till 1972.

In 1954-1955 he completely renovated church and rectory, and revived the religious life in spite of all difficulties, some them created by the chancery office. In fact, in 1953 it tendered its support to a project of Procter and Gamble Company, which had proposed to buy Church and rectory. Fr. Bolzan gave proof that the church of Sacred Heart was actually the only actual national Church while the other two Italian churches were such only in name. The Chancery promised not to sell the church until the Italian community was able to support it. In 1969, however, the chancery accepted the proposal of Procter and Gamble, and requested the surrender of church and rectory within January 1, 1971, promising in their stead the church of the Sacred Heart on Massachusetts Avenue in the district of Camp Washington. The transfer took place on July 1, 1970. This church was wholly renovated in the same year; restoration work was done on school and rectory in 1971.

Up in years and sickly, Fr. Luigi Bolzan was named pastor emeritus in 1972, while Fr. Carlo Birarelli was appointed acting pastor to be succeeded in 1974 by Fr. Mario Rauzi. As of 1978 Fr. Angelo Bor-

dignon was its pastor. The parish was then in touch with about 300 Italians, but it was also a territorial parish. The school was closed.

#### KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI: THE PARISH OF HOLY ROSARY

In 1942, Fr. L. Franchinotti, who had been pastor for 21 years, was succeeded by Fr. Luigi Donanzan who immediately restored and enlarged the school and bought a building for the residence of the Sisters. He restored afterwards the interior of the church and the rectory and gave life to a radio program.

Fr. Giuseppe Chiminello was pastor in 1947-1949. He had to repair the damages brought on the church by a fire in 1948. The parish was directed by Fr. Emilio Donanzan in 1949-1952. He reduced the debt and completed the parish hall. During the tenure of Fr. Pietro Rigo in the years 1952-1961, another fire damaged the church in 1955. The parish numbered then about 3,000 souls.

Fr. Mario Rauzi became pastor in 1963. A definite decline in population was taking place at the time due to the construction of new super-highways and to the exodus of many a young family to more comfortable residential districts. By 1968 the number of parishioners had dwindled to 1,160, 75% of them of Italian. The school had 115 students, down from the 325 of 1954.

Fr. Delfino Pierazzo was named pastor in 1975, but he soon fell sick and had to be replaced in 1976 by Fr. Angelo Cugnodoro. The changes planned by the city in 1968 for that neighborhood did not take place, but still the parish continued to decline further, so much that the school had to be closed, and the few remaining students were attending St. John the Baptist school. Pastor since 1978 was Fr. Vincent Cutrara.

#### KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI: THE PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

The parish of St. John the Baptist, the sixth in order of time in the city of Kansas City, was created in 1883 with the growth of the catholic population on the northeast side. The church also was inaugurated in 1883, and its first pastor was Fr. James Phelan who built the school, which was entrusted to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Coronado, and then was closed when the school of Holy Rosary was built

and placed under the care of the same sisters. The parish was then directed successively by Frs. J. Griffin (1912-1914), C.J. Strasburger (1915-1931), and F. McArdle (1931-1942).

In 1942, in view of the 600 families residing in the district, Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara proposed to the Scalabrinians the opening of a mission dependent on the parish of Holy Rosary; but then he gave them the parish of St. John the Baptist and in January 1943 named Fr. Salvino Zanon pastor and Fr. Luciano Morselli assistant.

In 1944, Fr. Salvino Zanon acquired a property at the crossroad of Brooklyn Street and Independence Boulevard and built there the school, inaugurated in 1948. Fr. Silvio Zanoni became pastor in November 1950. In 1952 he bought another piece of land and enlarged the school adding to it also a gymnasium. In 1954 he purchased a house at 521 Garfield Street and made it the rectory. The old church was closed in the same year and services began to be celebrated in the school chapel erected in 1948.

After the demolition of the old church because of the construction of an expressway, the new pastor Fr. Giuseppe Bellan (1955-1959) turned the gymnasium built in 1952 into a church. The inauguration was conducted by Bishop J.P. Cody in May 1959. Two months later Fr. Valerio Baggio was appointed pastor. He bought the land for the new convent of the Sisters, but built it only in 1965. Fr. Pietro Rigo was pastor from June 1961 to 1970. By 1963 quite a few families began to leave because of the construction of a hospital and due to the city's new zoning plans. By 1968 the families were down to 600, and in 1978 to 400. Fr. Vincent Cutrara, pastor from 1970 to 1978, built the new rectory in 1972. He was succeeded by Fr. Angelo Carbone.

#### EVELETH, MINNESOTA: THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The first idea of founding a parish for Italian miners in Eveleth was launched by Mons. Giovanni Zarilli, who had already been working ten years among the Italian migrants of the North Eastern counties of the State of Minnesota. His appeal was taken up by Fr. Ercole Dominicus who went there from New Orleans. He soon built the church of the Immaculate Conception which was blessed on August 15, 1915 by Bishop McCobrick, and then declared a national parish.



For a period of 18 years following 1916, there succeeded one another numerous pastors, who could not give a proper organization to the parish because of the anti-clericalism and hostility of the Italians abused and exploited in the mines. Only Fr. Luigi De Stephanis succeeded in staying for a period of six or seven years. After his death in 1933, Fr. Giorgio Delia, was made pastor and he finally succeeded in quelling hostilities. He organized some associations, supported the rights of miners, and built the grotto of the Immaculate Conception.

When the Archbishop of Philadelphia offered to Fr. Delia in 1940 an Italian parish in his diocese, Bishop Thomas Welch of Duluth entrusted the parish of the Immaculate Conception to the Scalabrinians, by suggestion of the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop A. C. Cicognani.

In early 1941, the parish was taken by Fr. Luigi Bolzan. The parish had then a steady 200 families. At the close of 1942 he was succeeded by Fr. Silvio Zanoni, who was able to inject a renewed spiritual life into the small parish. By the end of 1950 he was followed by Fr. Giulio Gragnani, who remodeled church, parish hall, and rectory. Fr. Francesco Pasetto was pastor in 1958-1967; Fr. Antonio Cogo in 1967-1972; Fr. Angelo Cugnodoro in 1972-1976; Fr. Charles La Verde in 1976-1978. In 1978 the parish was returned to the Diocese of Duluth.

#### LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA: THE PARISH OF ST. PETER

The origins of the church of St. Peter go back to 1900 when Bishop Conaty of Los Angeles decided to establish a place of worship for the Italians of the Diocese. One first provisional building was constructed on North Spring Street, and Fr. Tito Piacentini was its first pastor. The first diocesan cemetery was closed down in 1915 and on July 4 of the same year its chapel, built in 1890, became the Italian parish church. It was destroyed by fire in June 1944. The present church was built in 1946 by Fr. Michele Cecere on design of Architect Armand Monaco.

The parish was held by diocesan priests from 1904 to 1923, by the Salesians from 1923 to 1932, by the Claretians from 1932 to 1955, and by the diocesan priest Fr. W.S. Vita in 1955-1961, who built the parish hall.

Before WWII, many Italians lived around the church, but later on they moved to the suburbs, and were replaced by the Chinese who created their Chinatown in the immediate vicinity to the south of the Church, while other Chinese and Mexicans settled down on the north side of it.

On January 1, 1961, Fr. Vita was named pastor of St. Michael, and Archbishop Card. McIntyre, who appreciated the work of the Scalabrinians with the Italian Catholic Federation in California, invited them to assume the parish of St. Peter.

The first Scalabrinian pastor was Fr. Giuseppe Chiminello, who took possession of the parish on March 29, 1961. The parish registered then only 250 Italian families, but being the only Italian church in Los Angeles, it soon became the center of attraction and activity of the Italian community, which at the time counted about 200,000 immigrants.

Fr. Luigi Donanzan was named pastor in 1962. In 1963, the Archbishop wanted that a mission dedicated to St. Conrad be opened in a small canyon inhabited by Mexicans. The Scalabrinian Sisters arrived there in the same year and opened a kindergarten. The Chapel of St. Conrad was assigned to the Claretians in 1966.

From the very start, Fr. Luigi Donanzan made plans for the construction of a great Cultural Center for Italians and a Home for the Aged. In 1968 he presented the projects for the Casa Italiana and a new rectory, because the old one had to be demolished to make room for a parking lot as required by law. The Casa Italiana was designed by Architect W. Brown. The ground-breaking took place on July 12, 1971, and it was inaugurated on February 13, 1972 by Auxiliary Bishop W.R. Johnson. A grandiose monument, by Sculptor Albert Biasi, in honor of the Italian Immigrants, had been erected in the lot between the church and the Casa Italiana. By 1972, the new rectory was also ready for occupancy. In 1977 construction began of the Villa Scalabrini nursing home, about which a report will follow later.

The 62 years old Italian Weekly *L'Italo Americano*, with 5, 000 subscribers, was bought in 1971. Fr. Mario Trecco became its director. Its office was moved to larger quarter in 1973, and four pages in English were added to the publication. As a 1978 the Scalabrinians own both

property and administration of the weekly, whose main objective is to lend support to the campaign for Villa Scalabrini.

### SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA: THE PARISH OF HOLY CROSS

The Italian national parish of Holy Cross in San José, California was born in 1906 as a mission of St. Patrick with the title of the Precious Blood and was served by the Jesuits who said Mass there on Sundays and Days of Obligation. In 1961 the Archbishop of San Francisco offered the parish to the Scalabrinians in consideration of the fact that the majority of the population was Italian. Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan, pastor, and Fr. Angelo Carbone assistant, took possession of it on September 10, 1961. The debt weighing on the church was extinguished and the church remodeled. Great importance was given to the teaching of catechism, which, with the lack of a parochial school, was attended by about 1000 children. For this purpose, the second pastor, Fr. Adolfo Nalin, who succeeded Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan in 1969, established a Catechetical Center, entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters in 1973. The students are mostly Mexican, and indeed the population of the parish was made up mostly of Mexican families, with a few and widely-scattered American and Italian families. In 1978 Fr. Mario Rauzi was named pastor.

### KING CITY, CALIFORNIA: THE PARISH OF ST. JOHN

The first Mass was said in King City in 1891 by Fr. Sorrentini in the house of a certain Brunetti family. In the same year the landowner C.H. King, after whom the city was named, donated the land for the construction of a chapel as a mission of Salinas. In 1911 it was raised to a parish. The first pastor was Fr. Patrick Smith. To the parish was aggregated as its mission the chapel of St. Lucas, built by Italian immigrants some 10 miles to the south.

The present church was blessed on August 4, 1949 and solemnly inaugurated on May 6, 1951. Begun in June 1952, the school was opened in October 1954 and entrusted to the Franciscan Missionary Sisters. The rectory was built in 1949. In 1968, Bishop Harry A. Clynch of the newly created diocese of Monterey offered the parish to the Scalabrinians. It is the only catholic church of the city.

Fr. Rino Spada took possession of it on October 18, 1968. About 40% of the catholic population was Mexican. There were also a good number of Italian speaking from the Swiss Canton Ticino, of Americans, and only a few Italians. About 1,600 were Mexicans, half of them permanent, and the other half seasonal: all "braceros", day laborers in the farms. Fr. Spada began in 1969 to celebrate Mass in Spanish every Saturday night. Upon the arrival of another missionary, masses began to be said on weekdays also in the countryside.

Fr. Salvino Zanon became pastor in 1973; the parish then numbered 500 and had over 100 students in the school.

## CHAPTER V

### PARISHES AND MISSIONS IN CANADA

#### NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.: THE PARISH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The parish had its beginning from a group of catechists directed by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate of the Parish of St. Pietro. In 1941, Fr. E. Malayter, of the Fathers of Mercy, took care of that poor suburb of Vancouver, founded the mission and built the chapel with room for forty people. In 1944, Fr. Patrick Branigan built the school and the parish hall. In the years 1950-1956 the following priests succeeded one another as pastors: G. Booth, R. Finichelli, J. Garrone, and T. McAvoy. In January 1956, Fr. Lorenzo Dal Bon went to Vancouver to open the first parish of the Province of St. John the Baptist in that diocese. For the first month he resided near the cathedral, a guest of Archbishop William M. Duke, who entrusted to him the parish of the Holy Spirit on March 19, 1956. Fr. Dal Bon restored the parish buildings and in 1959 he constructed the rectory as well. The parish numbered 175 families, 80 of them Italian. The school had 80 students. It was a very small parish with more than modest structures, but it represented a starting point for the religious assistance of the Italians in Vancouver numbering about 13,000 in 1956. In this same year, Fr. Dal Bon convinced the Archbishop to celebrate the Migration Day for the first time.

In May 1958, he assumed the chaplaincy of the Harney Correctional Institute for the rehabilitation of minors. In September 1964 he was succeeded by Fr. Salvino Zanon who was forced in 1967 to close down the school because of the decrease of attendance and the increase of expenditures. In 1968, the Sanitation Office prohibited the construction of new homes in the territory of the parish for hygienic reasons. Fr. Zanon assumed also the chaplaincy of the Oakalla Prison Farm. Fr. Lino Fongaro became pastor in October 1968, followed in October 1970 by Fr. Guerrino Ziliotto, who built the new church in 1978. By 1975, the parish had 165 families, half of them Italian, and the rest Portuguese, Polish, and Ukrainian.

## VANCOUVER, B.C.: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

The parish of Our Lady of Sorrows had its start in 1913 in the district then known as Hastings Park of Vancouver. Upon invitation of Archbishop T. Casey, Fr. Luigi Giambastiani, a Servite Father, arrived there from Chicago as an assistant of Fr. J. McNeill for the care of the 60 Italian families in the parish of the Sacred Heart. The Church of Our Lady of Sorrows was built in the same year. From 1914 to 1954, 10 Servite Fathers, all of them English speaking, served as pastors. In 1926 they built the school, entrusted to the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, for whom a new convent was constructed in 1953.

In 1954 the Servites left the parish which was then entrusted to the diocesan priest Fr. D. L. Campbell. He started in 1959 the construction of the present church. In the same year Archbishop Duke promised to give the parish to the Scalabrinians because half of 1,300 families were Italian. At the end of the year Fr. Antonio Cogo was sent there as an assistant in order to prepare the ground. On April 1, 1960, the Archbishop entrusted the parish to the Scalabrinian missionaries: Frs. Adamo Torresan, pastor, and Joseph Scopa and Gerolamo Angeli, assistants. Coming from Brazil, Fr. Angeli was to take care of the Portuguese, and in fact he was immediately appointed missionary to them, thus giving start to his work in the church of St. Paul in the same month of April.

The new church was inaugurated on June 12, 1960 and the old one was turned into a parish hall and gym.

In November 16, 1964 Fr. Pietro Sordi arrived as new pastor. He renovated the school in 1966, he concluded in 1969 the agreement with the diocese concerning the holding of the parish by the Scalabrinian Congregation *ad nutum sanctae sedis*, and built the new parish hall.

In 1970, Fr. Sordi was named Provincial Superior and was replaced by Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan. In 1972, a fire destroyed part of the old rectory built in 1912. Archbishop Carney gave immediate permission to build a new one. Fr. Rino Spada became pastor in 1973. In 1978 the parish had 1,800 families, 70% them Italian. The school had 200 students. A weekly radio program was in operation.

## VANCOUVER, B.C.: THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

As said before, the mission for the Portuguese of Vancouver began in April 1960 with Fr. Gerolamo Angeli. At that time, the Portuguese immigrants, mostly from the Azores, lived in the poorest sections of the city and were employed only in summertime in the construction of the railroads of the hinterland and in the Northern regions of British Columbia. Following the economic crisis of 1960-1962, they found employment in the city and their lot improved. On November 25, 1960, Archbishop Duke erected in Vancouver a mission for all Portuguese speaking Catholics in the diocese and he appointed Fr. Gerolamo Angeli as their missionary according to the norms of the Papal Constitution *Exul Familia*. About 200 Portuguese families lived in Vancouver.

Fr. Angeli was assistant to the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows and resided there; for the religious services of the Portuguese mission he used the church of St. Paul and had been given an office in its rectory where he received the Portuguese almost every night. He tried to build for them a hall and a church titled to Our Lady of Fatima, but he did not have the funds needed.

Fr. Delizio Artico replaced him from September 1962 to June 1965. Fr. Angeli returned and remained until May 1967. Fr. Aquilino Magagnin was put in charge of the Mission on June 1, 1967. Juridically, however, the pastor was still the missionary who headed the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows. Two houses and a piece of land were purchased in 1968 at 1423 East 13th Avenue, where to build church, hall, and rectory for the mission. By then the Portuguese of Vancouver were about 6,000, but many more were reached through the preaching of missions throughout the Province of British Columbia.

Fr. Magagnin began residing at the new property on October 20, 1968, but Masses for the Portuguese continued to be said in the church of St. Paul and, after Easter 1968, in St. Patrick. With sitting capacity for 400 people, church and parish hall were inaugurated on Christmas 1969.

Fr. Giuseppe Ponti became director of the mission in 1970. The rectory was built in 1971, and became independent of the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows. Fr. Firmo Mantovani became pastor in 1976.

The parish then had 700 families, and had jurisdiction over all the Portuguese speaking of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

#### **NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.: PARISH OF ST. STEPHEN**

In August 1971, Archbishop J.F. Carney of Vancouver asked the Scalabrinians to assume temporarily the parish of St. Stephen in North Vancouver, troubled by serious dissensions. The task was accepted strictly for the time needed to settle the situation and it was entrusted to Fr. Lawrence Sabatini who was named administrator. The parish numbered about 400 Catholic families. The parish rapidly regained its unity around Fr. Sabatini, but the Archbishop requested in 1974 that the Scalabrinians take it over on a permanent basis accepting another priest to be added to the pastor to take care of Italians of North Vancouver and West Vancouver. With these conditions an agreement was signed on July 1975 between the Archdiocese and the Province of St. John the Baptist. Fr. Livio Stella was sent as assistant and in charge of the pastoral care of the Italian immigrants of the district.

In January 1978, Fr. Sabatini was named Provincial Superior and in July of the same year he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Vancouver. Fr. Albert Corradin succeeded him as pastor on May 13, 1978.

#### **BURNABY, B.C.: THE PARISH OF ST. HELEN**

St. Helen is another parish neighboring that of Our Lady of Sorrows. It embraces the north side of the city of Burnaby between Hastings Street and Burrard Inlet. It was created in 1911. The church was built in 1956; the school in 1948; the rectory stands at 3871 Pandora Street, school and convent are in the hands of the Sisters of Charity of Halifax. It is a residential district inhabited by more than 1,000 families, half of them Italian. But the masses were said only in English and Italians felt like strangers. For this reason Archbishop Carney offered the parish to the Scalabrinians in the spring of 1973. Fr. Ermete Nazzani took possession of it on August 5, 1973; Fr. Adamo A. Torresan succeeded him in 1974 and was followed by Fr. Giuseppe Ponti in 1976. The new rectory was inaugurated on July 17, 1977.



**REVELSTOKE, B.C.: THE PARISH OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

The parish traces back to 1893 when the diocesan priest Fr. Accorsini, a resident of Kamloops began to take care of the few people living in Revelstoke and built a church at the crossroad of First Avenue and Mackenzie Avenue, which was dedicated on November 19, 1893. Fr. Thayer enlarged the church in 1900 and in 1910 Fr. McNeil built the rectory. The Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement arrived in 1943 and opened a kindergarten. The last diocesan priest was Fr. W.J. Harrison, who built the new church, inaugurated on April 27, 1964 by Bishop W.E. Doyle of Nelson, B.C.

Two months earlier, the same bishop had offered the parish to the Scalabrinians because a good portion of its 500 Catholic families were Italian. Besides, along the valley of the Columbia River there were several other Italian communities, each with between 50 and 200 families.

Fr. Lorenzo Dal Bon took possession of the parish as first pastor with Fr. Ignatius Militello as the first assistant. Fr. Dal Bon made the church a parish hall and the seat of the kindergarten. In September 1966, already affected by a heart condition, he went to Italy for a period of rest, but as soon as he arrived in Rome he was stricken with cerebral thrombosis and brought to Arco, where he died of pneumonia on September 10, 1967.

Fr. Albert Corradin became pastor on February 17, 1967. By 1968 the parish had doubled and numbered about 6,000 people. The Portuguese, too, had begun to arrive. There were also a number of Ukrainian Catholics, who follow the Greet rite. Fr. Daniel Lapolla became pastor on July 6, 1975.

**EDMONTON, ALBERTA: PARISH OF SANTA MARIA GORETTI**

On January 17, 1956, Fr. Armand Pierini, the Provincial Superior, paid a visit to Archbishop J.H. McDonald of Edmonton who expressed the desire that a Scalabrinian be stationed in the rectory of the Cathedral to start assisting the about 5,000 Italians of the city, in expectation of a permanent solution. Up to that time, the Salesian Fr. Luigi Massuero was providing for them the best he could.

Frs. Rino Ziliotto and Giovanni Bonelli arrived there on December 19, 1957. They took residence in the Bishop's house, and began to say Mass for the Italians in the basement of the Church of the Sacred Heart. On March 19, 1958, the archbishop erected the Italian parish dedicated to's Santa Maria Goretti. By the end of June a piece of land was purchased at the crossroad of 110th Avenue and 90th Street.

On the 7th of September the groundbreaking took place, and a complex embracing the church, the hall, and the rectory was ready within three months. The Archbishop dedicated it on December 21, 1958.

In 1965, when the Italian community had almost doubled, another piece of land near the church was bought where the rectory and the other facilities of the parish of the parish were built, inaugurated on July 3, 1966.

Fr. Delfino Pierazzo was pastor in 1963-1965, Fr. Giovanni Bonelli from September 1965 till 1974, Fr. Lino Santi from the end of 1974 to the close of 1975 when Fr. Raniero Alessandrini became pastor. One of the assistants, Fr. Olmes Milani, began to take care of the numerous recent refugees from South America, especially from Chile and Argentina.

#### ATIKOKAN, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. PATRICK

The religious care of the town of Atikokan, which originated as a station of the Canadian National Railway, was started by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate of Fort Francis in 1906, precisely by Fr. Costion, who was assisting the railroaders.

The first church, dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was built in 1930 on Mckenzie Street by Fr. Savoie and inaugurated in June 1931 by Bishop Beliveau of Fort William in June 1931. There were then only 30 Catholic families. In 1930 an iron mine was discovered at Steep Rock Range.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate began residing there permanently only in 1943, with Fr. Belanger, pastor until 1949, who built in 1948 the chapel of the Sacred Heart at Sapawee, 19 miles from Atikokan. The Oblates kept the parish till 1953, when they were replaced with diocesan priests. With the discovery of another mine, the Claland Ore

Mine, the population increased rapidly and it became necessary to build a larger church at Dumbar Heights. Begun in August 1953, it was blessed on September 1, 1954, by Bishop Jennings of Fort William and dedicated to St. Patrick. The school was built in 1954.

In 1958, Bishop Jennings entrusted to the Scalabrinians the parish together with the "missions" of Coldstream, 65 miles away, and of Sapawe. The parish was accepted in view of the opportunity for work among the Italians of the diocese and of Port Arthur and Ford William, now united in one city, Thunder Bay.

Its first Scalabrinian Pastor was Fr. Giulio Gragnani from March 1958 to May 1967. In 1959 he built the present rectory; in 1966 he remodeled the church of the Immaculate Mary and the parish hall, and began the construction of a chapel at Eva Lake, 25 miles East of Atikokan. He was succeeded by Fr. Mario Spada. The Oblate Sisters of St. Boniface arrived in 1967 to take charge of the school, and a house was bought for them. In 1968 there were 360 Catholic families, mostly of miners of French, Polish, and Italian extraction.

Due to the negligible number of immigrants in that district, the isolation of the missionary, and the apostolate well underway for the Italian immigrants of Thunder Bay, the Scalabrinian withdrew from the parish and returned it to the diocese on August 30, 1976.

#### **BAIRD, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. AUGUSTINE**

Another step closer to Thunder Bay was taken with the acceptance of the parish of St. Augustine at Baird. A school had been built there for the French families that had settled in the district. At first they attended church in Murillo, but a chapel was built in 1915 near the school, which Jesuit Fr. LaBelle moved later on to the station of Baird. The church was dedicated to St. Ann and it was a mission of the parish of St. Andrew in Port Arthur, directed by the Jesuits. In 1935 it was made a parish with the title of St. Augustine by Bishop Degan of Sault Ste-Marie, joining to it the Missions of St. Pius V at Harstone, founded in 1913, and of St. Philip the Apostle at Hymers, erected in 1931. The region belonged to the diocese of Sault Ste-Marie until 1952, when Fort William, presently Thunder Bay, was made a diocese.

Fr. McGivney was its first pastor in 1935-1936, followed by Fr. J. McHugh in 1936-1950, who built the rectory, Fr. Halpin in 1950-1951, and Fr. J. Cano in 1951-1959, who set up the parish hall and began to say Mass during the summer at Shebandowan, 60 miles from Port Arthur.

Bishop E.G. Jennings, first Bishop of Fort William, offered the parish of St. Augustine to the Scalabrinians in 1959, when they asked a parish for Italians in Thunder Bay. The bishop answered that he had no parish to give in the city for the time being, but that he would keep in mind their desire if they accepted the parish of St. Augustine.

Fr. Giuseppe Bellan was sent there in July 1959 succeeded in May 1960 by the Fr. Giuseppe Favotto. The basement of the church of St. Teresa in Kakabeka Falls was built in 1962, and the completed church was inaugurated on August 25, 1968. The church of Shebandowan was constructed in 1966. A variety of restorations was made at Baird by both Fr. Bellan and Fr. Favotto.

This territorial parish numbered about 150 Catholic families, mostly French Canadian, and others originating from Europe.

#### THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY

The parish of St. Anthony was created in 1912. The first pastor, Fr. F. Crociata, built the basement of the church, which was completed later during WWI, together with the rectory, by his successor Fr. D. Tomaselli, pastor from 1915-1940. Two pastors succeeded one another: Fr. P. Truffa, 1940-1949, and Fr. R. Venti, in 1949-1953, who did not attract Italians to the church. Fr. Gioacchino Bordignon, a spiritual confrere of the Scalabrinians, became pastor on April 18, 1953. The following Scalabrinians served as his assistants: Fr. Giuseppe Bellan from September 1960 until August 1964, followed successively by Frs. Mario Moscaritolo and Gaetano Nugnez. There were then 5,000 Italians in Port Arthur: a great number of them had arrived in 1954-1958, and St. Anthony was their national parish. For this reason it was hoped since 1960 that the parish might be entrusted by the Bishop to the Scalabrinians; but only in 1966 did he make a formal promise for when Fr. Bordignon, by then tired and sickly, would retire. In fact, the change of the guard took place only on February 23, 1969, when

Fr. Bordignon resigned. Fr. Umberto Rizzi took possession of the parish, and in 1971 he completely remodeled the church. Fr. John Di Vito was named pastor in 1973. He was succeeded in September 1976 by Fr. Mario Spada, who died suddenly on February 10, 1977. Fr. Di Vito became acting pastor until April 23, 1978 when Fr. Umberto Rizzi returned as pastor. By then the parish numbered about 900 families, in great majority Italian, along with a sizeable group of Portuguese and a few Spanish-speaking.

### SARNIA, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. PETER

The parish of St. Peter in Sarnia, in the diocese of London, was created in 1949, and Fr. A. Nolan was its first pastor. On September 14, 1949 Bishop J.C. Cody of London blessed the first church. The school, with four classrooms, was opened in the same month. The rectory was built in 1950. The parish then numbered 85 families, but by 1954 the number rose to 400. A fire seriously damaged the church on May 4, 1954, but it was quickly restored. By then, however, a much larger church to accommodate the increasing population was needed. The ground-breaking took place on July 4 of the same year, the cornerstone was laid in October and on February 22, 1955, Bishop Cody blessed the new church. A convent was opened in 1956 for the Ursuline Sisters of Waterford, arriving from Ireland to establish their first house in Canada. The other school of St. Helen was entrusted to the Sisters of St. Joseph.

On December 18, 1951, upon invitation from the Bishop of London, Fr. Angelo Calandra was sent to Sarnia to take care of the Italians of the city and began to offer Mass for them on Sundays in the churches of St. Peter and of St. Joseph. On June 27, 1959, Bishop Cody named Fr. Calandra pastor of the Church of St. Peter and pastor "ad personam" of the Italians of Sarnia. The rectory was remodeled in 1960, and baptistry and bell tower were constructed in 1966. In June of the same year the Sisters of St. Ursula withdrew from Sarnia.

Fr. Nicholas Marro became pastor on August 15, 1971. He remodeled the parish hall and the interior of the church in 1972. In 1959 the parish had 700 families increase in to 900 by 1968, 550 of them were English-Canadian and 350 Italian. By 1978 there were 1,300 families:

600 Canadian, 600 Italian, 100 Portuguese. Three schools are operating in the parish: St. Peter's, with 500 pupils; St. Helen, with 500 pupils; and St. Augustine with 200.

### WINDSOR, ONTARIO: THE PARISH OF ST. ANGELA MERICI

At the end of WWI only five or six Italian families lived in Windsor; that they increased to 34 in 1922, and 150 by 1929. They asked the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop A. Cassullo and Bishop Fallon of London for an Italian priest. The latter charged an English priest, a certain Fr. Domenico, who knew Italian, with the celebration of a weekly Mass for the Italians in Windsor. An Italian Chapel was officially opened on January 27, 1929 in the parish of the Sacred Heart on Ottawa Street under the direction of Fr. A. Page. On December 1, 1935, the Italian community of County Essex decided to build a national church. On December 22, 1938, Fr. Page was succeeded by Mons. Costantino De Santis who completed the church: Bishop J.T. Kidd of London blessed the cornerstone on October 29, 1939; the first Mass was celebrated in the basement on December 25, 1939; on March 7, 1940, the church, named after St. Angela Merici, was opened for worship. It was enlarged in 1959.

Fr. Fitzpatrick was pastor from September 1940 to December 1942. Mons. De Santis returned on Christmas 1942. In 1946 he began construction on the St. Angela Youth Center, which was inaugurated by Bishop Kidd on December 11, 1949. Mons. De Santis also bought a house near the church for the Convent of the Sisters. In 1960, at age 72, he expressed the desire to retire. Bishop J.C. Cody offered the parish of the Scalabrinians. It numbered 2,000 families most of them Italian. The Scalabrinians accepted it and Fr. Ugo Rossi took possession of it in October 1960. Fr. Guerrino Ziliotto succeeded him in September 1965, followed by Fr. Salvatore De Vita in October 1970, and by Fr. Giovanni Bonelli in 1974. Bishop G.E. Carter blessed the new altar of the church, completely restored, on June 8, 1975. The new rectory was inaugurated on December 4, 1977.

Windsor, Ontario: The Parish of St. Patrick

In 1975, Bishop G.E. Carter of London proposed to the Scalabrinians a new kind of presence, by offering them the position of “co-pastor” with charge over immigrants of the parishes of St. Mary in the city of London and of St. Patrick in Windsor. Fr. Luigi Gandolfi was “co-pastor” of St. Mary in London from August 10 1975 until June 1977.

Fr. Ermete Nazzani became “co-pastor” of the parish of St. Patrick in Windsor, on June 1, 1975. On January 1, 1978, the parish was entirely committed to the Scalabrinians. It was a territorial parish, located in the South Western side of Windsor at a distance of about four miles from St. Angela Merici. It numbers 900 families, half of them Italian. The south side of where the church, the rectory and the school are, was then newly settled almost exclusively by Italians.





## CHAPTER VI

### OTHER WORKS AND INSTITUTIONS

#### NORTHLAKE, ILLINOIS: VILLA SCALABRINI

In the years 1935-1945, the activities of the Italian communities of Chicago, especially of the parishes directed by the Scalabrinians had their center of interest at Sacred Heart Seminary of Stone Park. After WWII, the Scalabrinians decided to direct their attention to the parishes. On October 12, 1945, "Columbus Day", a group of missionaries and lay people met at Sacred Heart Seminary to discuss and decide on whether to build a high school or a home for the aged. The latter proposal prevailed, an idea long supported especially by Fr. Armand Pierini and by the laymen J.M. Cangelosi and L. Senese, Jr. It had been forty years various groups had tried in vain to establish a home for the aged.

With the support of the various parishes assured, a committee was formed that in December 1945 called on Card. Stritch to ask for the authorization. The Cardinal answered: "I do not want a diocese within a diocese. Build the institution but let it be the property of the Archdiocese". Later on the Archbishop called together all pastors of the Italian churches and urged them to lend their support to the project; but it was actually entirely left in the hands of the Scalabrinians. Besides Fr. Pierini, the following fathers distinguished themselves in soliciting the funds needed: Giuseppe Lazzeri, Giuseppe Chiminello and Luigi Donanzan. They organized carnivals, festivals and banquets. The first banquet took place at the Stevens Hotel on March 9, 1947, attended by the Archbishop.

The clubhouse and the land of the Westward-Ho Golf Course were purchased in December 1948. But it was commuted later on with the Wolf Road Golf Course in Northlake, not far from Melrose Park. The project of architect F.J. Serpico was chosen and on July 11, 1949, work began on the construction of the first section for 90 beds, which was dedicated by Cardinal Stritch on July 1, 1951. The assistance services were entrusted to the Scalabrinian Sisters.

The campaign for funds for the second phase was launched in 1949. It brought the number of beds to 150 and it included the church. The beds were ready in 1968, and the chapel in 1969. By the mid-1970s plans were underway for phase three, the last one, to add another 120 beds for the home's capacity.

Fr. Armand Pierini has been the director of the home since its beginning. He was also taking care of the weekly Italian Catholic Hour broadcasted first from W. G.E. S. station, Oak Park, Illinois, and then from W.O.P.A. of Chicago. He started it in July 1946. He was named honorary president of the Italian National Center of the Sacred Heart of Regnum Christi, founded in Chicago by Fr. Matteo Crawley-Boevy with the collaboration of Miss Mary Mugnaini. The Center was set up at the Church of St. Peter and Fr. Pierini was appointed its chaplain. In 1953 it was moved to the parish of Guardian Angel, and then to the old rectory of Santa Maria Inconornata, and finally in 1961 to a location of its own at 2116 West Cermak Road. By 1968, 25 years after its founding, ten thousand Italian families had made the enthronement of the Sacred Heart in their homes.

Fr. Pierini founded also the Scalabrini League, made up of lay people with the purpose of supporting the charitable institutions of the Scalabrinians, and the Lady Auxiliaries of Villa Scalabrini. The monthly *Fra Noi* was born in 1961 as an expression of the Scalabrini League with an actual circulation of 40, 000 copies.

#### LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA: VILLA SCALABRINI

As mentioned above, the plan for the construction of a home for the Italian aged of Los Angeles was launched in 1962 when Fr. Luigi Donanzan became pastor of the church of St. Peter in Los Angeles. In 1967-1973, his commitment in the construction of the Casa Italiana commanded all his attention. In January of 1973, the Provincial Superior, Fr. Peter Sordi, asked the General Administration for the required authorization, and then, on May 1, 1973, he asked for that of Cardinal T. Manning, the Archbishop of Los Angeles. In December of the same year a piece of land was purchased at Sun Valley, a suburb of the metropolis.

A grandiose campaign was launched in 1974 for raising the funds needed for a construction designed by architect G. Kirkpatrick with capacity for 150 beds with all comforts. On October 3, 1976, the ground breaking took place in the presence of Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles. The cornerstone was laid on October 9, 1977, and by the end of 1978 the building was close to completion.

### THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC FEDERATION

The idea of a Catholic Organization for Italians was first launched by a young man from Chiavari, Luigi Providenza, immigrant to California since 1914. After finding work as a promoter of the only Italian Catholic weekly "L'Unione" of San Francisco, he often found Italians slamming the door in his face. In 1923 he made a survey of 10,000 families and discovered that 92 percent of the Italians had abandoned the practice of their faith. He discussed the project of a Catholic Association of Catholic Action with Fr. A. Durantini, pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church of San Francisco, with Fr. A. R. Bandini, pastor of St. Michael parish in Stockton, and some lay people, among who was the noteworthy Mrs. Serafina Canessa, who placed her home at the disposal for the first meetings. Fr. Bandini wrote the Constitutions and the By-laws of the Italian Catholic Federation, whose first branch was founded on June 15, 1924 in the parish of the Immaculate Conception. A Central Council of 24 members was created that received the ecclesiastic approval of Archbishop E. J. Hanna of San Francisco and was incorporated on November 29, 1924. Their monthly publication *Il Bollettino* in Italian and English began in March 1925. The first annual congress was celebrated in San Francisco on June 14, 1925.

The organization is basically parochial: a branch must have no less than 25 members and is usually assisted by a priest of the parish. In 1957-1958, a group was also formed of missionaries attached exclusively to the Italian Catholic Federation for the preaching of missions, forming new branches, and other activities proper to the Federation, especially the family Apostolate. The first three missionaries were Fr. Vincenzo Bonomi, a Josephite of Asti, Fr. Giacinto D'Urso, a Dominican, and Fr. Antonio and Dal Balcon, who began working for

the Federation in February 1958. By then the Federation numbered 110 branches: 102 in California, 5 in Chicago, 3 in Reno, Nevada, with about 11,000 members. Back in May 1950, John J. Savant had held meetings in the Scalabrinian parishes of Chicago, and had called on the Provincial Superior, Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan, and then on Cardinal R. Stritch. The first branch of Chicago was constituted in the parish of St. Michael, and Fr. Luigi Donanzan was appointed diocesan director by Cardinal Stritch.

The staunchest supporter of the Italian Catholic Federation in Chicago was Luigi Bracchi, who insisted with the General Administration that the Scalabrinians enter the organization, but with no result. It was only in 1957 that Mr. Luigi Providenza made an official request for a Scalabrinian. And in fact, Fr. Dal Balcon was then assigned to this task for which he was transferred from the Eastern Province. Fr. Rino Spada was added in January 1959. They were the guests respectively of the parishes of St. Rita and St. Francis in San Francisco. Also Fr. Salvino Zanon worked with I.C.F. from November 1963 to August 1964. In October 1964, Fr. A. Dal Balcon returned to the Eastern Province as pastor of the parish of Our Lady of Pompeii, New York, and his place was taken by Fr. Angelo Bordignon for about a year. Since October 1963 Scalabrinian chaplain of the I.C.F. was Fr. Silvio Zanon who worked in the first years especially in the dioceses of Chicago and Joliet and since February 1964, was Fr. Giovanni Favero. Fr. Augusto Feccia worked with the I.C.F. from 1965 to 1970.

In 1965 the Scalabrinian chaplains were finally able to have a house of their own near the Scalabrinian church of Holy Cross in San José, at 653 North 16th Street. Later, however, their official residence became the rectory of the same parish at 580 East Jackson Street. In 1975 the I.C.F. numbered 215 active branches.

From November 1962 to the summer of 1964, Fr. Mario Spada served as assistant of the parish of St. Gertrude in Stockton, made up entirely of Mexicans and Italians, and in 1963-1964, Fr. Vincent Cutrara was assistant in the parish of St. Ann in Lodi, California. The bishop of Stockton had promised to give the Scalabrinians a parish in his diocese, which would have become the permanent residence of the I.C.F.: but the two fathers were never actually dependent from the Federation.

By 1978, Fr. Giovanni Favero's residence was the rectory of Holy Cross in San José, and Fr. Silvio Zanoni's was in Northridge, California.

#### STONE PARK, ILLINOIS: ITALIAN CULTURAL CENTER AND LATINO CENTER

The Italian Cultural Centre began in 1970 in the original building of Sacred Heart Seminary in Stone Park, was run by Fr. Augusto Fecchia, who was granted by the Chancery of Chicago the faculties for the religious assistance of the 150,000 Italians of the metropolitan area. Besides the religious apostolate of its director, the center gave life to various initiatives for Italian-speaking immigrants: a museum of Italian and Italian – American Art, an Italian American library, courses of Italian and English, painting, sculpture, music, and an hour-long weekly radio program from station W.E.A.W.

In the same building, a "Latino Centre" was set up for Spanish-speaking immigrants, founded in October 1972 and directed by Fr. Pietro Corbellini, who, in addition to his activities in the Centre, was devoting himself to the assistance of Latin-Americans in the parishes of Santa Maria Incoronata and Santa Lucia in Chicago, of St. Alexius in Bensenville, and of Sacred Heart in Melrose Park. In 1974, a Committee named "Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre", was constituted for Cuban immigrants.

#### SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA: THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

In 1968, James Visceglia, a former marine officer and a member of the committee for the Apostleship of the Sea's in Los Angeles, directed by Mons. G. Scott, asked the Scalabrinians to extend their activity to the seamen, in great part Italians, passing through the ports of San Pedro and Wilmington in California. Fr. Dante Carbonari, of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions, the only priest who did real work for the seamen of the two ports, died in 1974, and the diocese of Los Angeles asked the Scalabrinians for a chaplain. On December 19, 1972, the Chancery named the Scalabrinian Fr. Pietro Gandolfi assistant chaplain of the port of San Pedro with residence at the Fermin Lausen High School with charge also of assistant of the Stella Maris parish. Mons. George Scott retained the title of chaplain of the port

and pastor of the parish. But the whole work for the seamen was actually on the shoulders of Fr. Pietro Gandolfi. The port of San Pedro had then a movement of 5,000 ships a year. With the help of Brother John Montagna, Fr. Gandolfi gave new life to the Catholic Club of the Seamen at 440 North Avalon Boulevard. He was called away in June 1976, because it was not possible to obtain for him the position of chaplain of the port, while Brother Montagna remained on as director of the Club. The Club was then frequented by 1,000 seamen a month of all nationalities and religions.

### **PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA: THE CATECHETICAL CENTER**

On September 1, 1973, Brothers John Montagna and James Napolitano were given the task to open an experimental Catechetical Center in Palm Springs in the diocese of San Diego, in view of organizing the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine at the service of the four Catholic parishes of the city, which numbered 20,000 inhabitants, among them 450 Mexican families. They had a humble residence in the parish of Our Lady of Solitude. The experiment lasted only until June 1974.

### **CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: THE CHAPLAINCY OF MOTHER CABRINI HOSPITAL**

In 1909, St. Frances X. Cabrini had purchased a property near the Scalabrinian Church of Our Lady of Pompeii, and built on it a small hospital to provide free medical assistance to Italians; expenses were met by the Columbus Hospital. Before dying, she decided to build a larger hospital, which was eventually built and inaugurated in 1924. New sections were built in 1962, which increased the capacity of the hospital to 250 beds.

The chaplaincy of "Mother Cabrini Memorial Hospital" was almost constantly held by the Scalabrinians. The first chaplain was Fr. Giacomo Gambera from January 28, 1924 to April 1928, when he became assistant of Our Lady of Pompeii in New York, where he died, age 78, on August 12, 1934. From 1928-1934 he was succeeded by an American priest, but the assistance was actually provided by the Scalabrinians of the parish nearby.

Fr. Michele Favero's was appointed chaplain in June 1934. Fr. Vincenzo Maselli, an associate of the Scalabrinian Congregation, re-

placed him in August 1936 but died a few months later on January 26, 1937. Fr. Cesare Molinari was chaplain from March 1, 1940 until August 1949 and was succeeded by Fr. Arnaldo Vanoli, who died on January 9, 1957 at age 75. Fr. Giuseppe Chiminello succeeded him from 1957 to 1961, and was followed by Fr. Martino Bortolazzo from 1961 to 1963, by Fr. Raffaele Larcher from 1963 to 1964, by Fr. Primo Beltrami from 1964 to 1965, by Fr. Anthony Carrano from 1965 to 1976, and by Fr. Giuseppe Bolzan from June 1976 to January 10, 1977, when the Scalabrinians suspended the chaplaincy.





PART XI

PROVINCE OF SAINT RAPHAEL  
SWITZERLAND - GERMANY



# CHAPTER I

## PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

### PROSPECTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PROVINCE

Directly dependent on the General Administration	1939-1946	
Missio Sui Juris	Fr. Enrico Larcher, Superior	1946-1947
Missio Sui Juris	Fr. Giuseppe Zanatta, Superior	1947-1949
Missio Sui Juris	Fr. Giovanni Favero, Superior	1949-1958
Missio Sui Juris	Fr. Angelo Ceccato, Superior	1958-1961
Provincial Superior	Fr. Angelo Ceccato	1961-1964
Provincial Superior	Fr. Livio Zancan	1964-1970
Provincial Superior	Fr. Ferruccio Aguggiaro	1970-1976
Provincial Superior	Fr. Loreto De Paolis	1976-

### Opening Up and Closing of Missions

Switzerland		Germany	
Italian Cath. Miss. of Geneva	1942	Italian Cath. Miss. of Essen	1956
Italian Cath. Miss. of Basel	1946	Italian Cath. Miss. of Duisburg	1958
Italian Cath. Miss. of Bern	1947	Italian Cath. Miss. of Oberhausen	1958
Italian Cath. Miss. of Sankt Gallen	1952	Italian Cath. Miss. of Koln	1960
Italian Cath. Miss. of Rorschack	1952	Italian Cath. Miss. of Wuppertal	1961
Italian Cath. Miss. of Naters (closed in 1966)	1953	Italian Cath. Miss. of Munich	1963
Italian Cath. Miss. of Solothurn	1954	Italian Cath. Miss. of Stuttgart	1965
Italian Cath. Miss. of Delemont	1955	Italian Cath. Miss. of Bad Cannstatt	1965
Italian Cath. Miss. of Liestal (closed in 1966)	1962	Italian Cath. Miss. of N. Munich	1967
Italian Cath. Miss. of Lausanne	1962	Italian Cath. Miss. of Solingen	1973

Italian Cath. Miss. of Thun	1965	Italian Cath. Miss. of Ludwigs- burg	1978
Italian Cath. Miss. of Freiburg	1965	Young Community of Koln	1978
Theological Seminary of Freiburg	1970		

## THE YEARS BETWEEN 1941 AND 1961

Fr. Enrico Larcher, who had arrived in Geneva as coadjutor of that Italian Cath. Miss. on August 38, 1939, was joined by Fr. Giovanni Casaril at the end of 1942 and by Fr. Pietro Corbellini in 1945. They depended directly on the General Administration. When plans were being made in early 1946 for the taking over of the Miss. of Basel, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, with decree of February 2, 1946, constituted the Scalabrinian Missio Sui Juris of Switzerland and named the same Fr. Larcher as superior of the mission on July 16, 1946. The Mission of Basel was thus entrusted to the Scalabrinians in August of the same year and that of Bern in October 1947. These three missions had been up to then under the direction of Bonomellians. Italian immigrants had increased by then from the few thousands before WWII to 48,808 in 1946 and 105,112 in 1947. They continued with 102,241 units in 1948, declining to less than 30,000 in 1949-1950, and climbing up again to over 60,000 in the following years. Hence the great request for missionaries, either diocesan or religious. Up to 1949 their director was Msgr. Costantino Babini, who, since 1928, had been in charge of all missionaries for Italian emigrants in Europe. Following the institution of the National Directories of Emigration Chaplains, on March 7, 1949, the Scalabrinian Fr. Giovanni Favero was named director of Italian missionaries of Switzerland; in July 1949, the same Fr. Favero was named religious superior of the Scalabrinians in Switzerland, succeeding to Fr. Giovanni Zanatta, who had filled that post since the fall of 1947. As councilors he was given Fr. Enrico Larcher, replaced in 1953 by Fr. Giuseppe Vigolo, and Fr. Giuseppe Zanatta. Fr. Favero set his residence in Bern. His first three years were devoted to strengthening the missions of Geneva, Basel, and Bern.

In 1952, about 100,000 Italians lived in Switzerland, with as many seasonal workers. From 1948 on, only migrants who had obtained

individual labor contracts, except for free professions and commerce activities, were allowed entrance. They were mostly young and unmarried: 50,000 of them girls.

Religious assistance, and mostly also the social one, was provided in 1952, by 24 priests: 13 diocesan, in twelve Italian Cath. Missions (Luzern, Lausanne, Naters, Freiburg, Baden, Winterthur, Schaffhausen, Neuchatel, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Ennenda, Sulgen, Rorschach), 3 Salesians at the mission of Zurich, and 8 Scalabrinians.

The Italian Cath. Mission was the center of the religious and social activities of a given territory on behalf of Italians who did not ordinarily frequent the local parishes because of difficulties with language and culture. The Italian Cath. Mission began to enjoy in Switzerland a juridical status consequently to the Apostolic Constitution "Exul Familia" of 1952. In 1953, Bishop F. von Streng of Basel made the Italian Cath. Missions of his diocese "Missiones cum cura animarum". His example was soon followed by Bishops F. Charriere of Lausanne, N. Adam of Sion and C. Caminada of Chur.

During the next three years of Fr. Favero (1952-1955), the Scalabrinians were entrusted with the missions of Sankt Gallen and Rorschach in 1952, Naters in 1953, Solothurn in 1954, and Delemont in 1954. In the third three-year term (1956-1958) the pre-existing missions were further developed: in 1956 there were 8 with 16 Scalabrinians, so that the total of Missions for Italians in Switzerland had grown to 27 with 38 priests to care for them.

In September 1958, Fr. Angelo Ceccato succeeded Fr. Giovanni Favero in the double task of Religious Superior of the Scalabrinians and of Director of Italian Missionaries. His provincial Councilors were Frs. Livio Bordin and Giuseppe Zanatta, the latter replaced by Fr. Antonio Secchi in 1960.

#### FR. ANGELO CECCATO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1961-1964)

On September 7, 1961, the "Missio sui juris" of Saint Raphael was raised to a Province. Frs. Angelo Ceccato, Livio Bordin, and Antonio Secchi were confirmed in office of Superior and Councilors. There were at the time in Switzerland 392,060 Italian immigrants, 88,970 more than the previous year: 217,535 permanent and 160,645 with

yearly contracts. To these workers monitored by Police, one must add about another 150,000 Italians with residency permit. There was for some time a decrease in the number of farmhands and domestic workers, while those employed in industry and construction had increased. Seasonal workers could not be joined by their families, while instead the year-long workers were allowed after three years of uninterrupted presence.

As a whole, the religious situation had worsened in proportion with the increase in percentage of immigrants from Southern Italy which had also caused an increase of Italian emigration. So also the number of priests had increased: 56 priests, 21 of them Scalabrinian. The missions were 37. In 1962 the Scalabrinians assumed those of Liestal and Lausanne.

Meanwhile, the Scalabrinians had returned to Germany in 1956, where they had been working in 1941-1945 as chaplains to Italian workers, who were brought to Germany during WWII. The first Scalabrinian mission was opened in Essen by two former workers' chaplains, Frs. Gino Macchiavelli and Luigi Zonta. Card. A.G. Piazza, Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, had received in 1956 a request for two or three Scalabrinian missionaries from Msgr. Aldo Casadei, Director of Italian missionaries of emigration in Germany and Scandinavia, and from the Cologne Chancery. In the spring of the same year 13,000 Italian farmers were expected to arrive in Germany, along with 16,000 industrial workers. The Superior General Fr. Francesco Prevedello asked Fr. Ugo Cavicchi, Superior the *Missio sui juris Regina Mundi* of Belgium to negotiate a deal with Msgr. Casadei for the first two missionaries, who arrived in Essen in July 1956. In 1958 the Missions of Oberhausen and Duisburg were opened, in 1960 that of Cologne, where Fr. Giuseppe Zanatta was transferred after he succeeded Msgr. Casadei in February 1960 in the office of Director of the Italian Missionaries in Germany. The mission of Wuppertal was opened in 1961 and that of Munich in Bavaria in 1963. With decree of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation of September 7, 1961, the Scalabrinian missions of Germany were constituted into the autonomous "*Missio sui juris Saint Pius X*", with Fr. Giuseppe Zanatta, Superior, and Frs. Giuseppe Vigolo 's and Gino Macchiavelli, Councilors. In

the years 1946-1961, 274,599 Italians immigrated into Germany, and 117,177 had repatriated.

In 1962 more than 90% of them were from Southern Italy. Families were still few due to lack of lodgings. Italians lived in small scattered groups, so that it was difficult to unite them in associations, or even only to call them together for encounters for lack of adequate premises. The Italian Missions, that had to devote themselves actively also to social and recreational assistance, were 37 in 1962, with 37 missionaries, 10 of them Scalabrinians.

#### FR. LIVIO ZANCAN, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1964-1970)

With decree of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, on May 14, 1964, the Scalabrinian Missions of Germany were incorporated into the Province of Saint Raphael. On the June 1 Fr. Livio Zancan was appointed Provincial Superior, with Councilors Frs. Rino Frigo, Ferruccio Agugiaro, Antonio Secchi, and Romano Pallastrelli. On July 23, 1967, Fr. Zancan was confirmed in office for second term. The new Council was formed by Frs. R. Pallastrelli, F. Agugiaro, Francesco Dal Bon and Enzo Moretto. Since January 5, 1965 the seat of the Provincial Administration was located at 26 Rheinfelderstrasse, Basel in Switzerland. The missions of Thun and Freiburg in Switzerland, and of Stuttgart in Germany were opened in 1965; those of Liestal and Naters in Switzerland were given up in 1966, while a subsidiary mission was opened in North Munich in 1967.

In 1969 the number of Italian immigrants in Switzerland was believed to be 642,000 and in Germany 340,000; 149,000 of them were entrusted to the 10 missions with 32 Scalabrinians in Switzerland and 100,000 of them to the 18 confreres in the 7 missions of Germany. They celebrated 127 masses on Sunday in 117 different churches; 2,000 pupils attended the catechetical centers, 540 children attended the four parish schools, and 1,045 were in the 20 kindergartens, 1,507 took evening classes and 437 migrants were housed in 11 shelters

The missionaries were assisted by 68 Sisters and by 170 permanent lay coworkers. The 17 missions had opened 35 missionary centers and therefore points of reference for the emigrants were not just the residences of the missionaries, but also other centers opened in

places of greater concentration of Italians. These too had a more or less complex structure: a locale for the missionary and personnel, the church or chapel, meeting and recreation rooms, the cafeteria, school classes, the kindergarten and social assistance office.

#### FR. FERRUCCIO AGUGIARO, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1970-1976)

Fr. Ferruccio Agugiaro was named Provincial Superior on July 10, 1970, with Frs. Giancarlo Cardani, Davide Angeli, Loreto De Paolis, and Sandro Curotti as Councilors. He was confirmed for second term on May 30, 1973, with Frs. Enzo Moretto, Loreto De Paolis, Sandro Curotti and Ermenegildo Baggio as Councilors. In September 1970, a theological seminary was opened in Freiburg, under the jurisdiction of the Italian Province for the first year, but then, in 1971, it was placed fully under the responsibility of the Swiss-German Province. The mission of Solingen in Germany was opened in 1973. In 1974 the Province had 57 priests in 20 religious houses and 8 religious students of theology.

In 1972 Switzerland had 544,903 Italian immigrants, plus 122,408 seasonal ones. In 1973 Germany had more than 400,000 of them. Their average age was 35 years. 26% of them attended the missions in Switzerland and 15% in Germany. Though perhaps on a lesser scale, Italians still formed some kind of social ghetto because of their scarce scholastic and professional formation that confined them almost to the lowest level of the occupation scale. The problem of housing was still acute, but more so the challenge of the schools for the children of the second generation was looming quite serious. The religious assistance was faced with the usual difficulties: dispersion, geographic mobility, poor schooling, and overanxious concern for a sure economic position.

In those years various Missions were restructured with the school in mind: junior high schools were opened in Bern and Cologne; junior high school night classes were organized in Lausanne; the grammar schools of other missions, especially of Sankt Gallen and Thum were strengthened; in 1971 a boarding school for the children of migrants was opened in Crespano del Grappa, Treviso, Italy. In 1974, in cooperation with the Scalabrinian Secular missionary women, the



Province began with Fr. Gabriele Bartolamai the experiment of a “basic community” to assist and evangelize the most marginalized migrants living in collective lodgings (“Wohneime”) in the district of Bad Connstatt in the Stuttgart Mission in Germany.

#### FR. LORETO DE PAOLIS, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR (1976- )

Fr. Loreto De Paolis was named Provincial Superior on March 26, 1976. On May 18, 1976, Frs. Antonio Muraro, Pasquale Viglione, Lorenzo Scremin, and Ermenegildo Baggio were appointed Councilors. The so-called “Young Community” of Cologne was founded in 1978 in a district at the outskirts of the city with three missionaries in charge. In the same year the Scalabrinians were given charge of the Italian Cath. Mission of Ludwisburg north of Stuttgart.

The Province of Saint Raphael remained totally committed to the assistance of Italians, due to the fact that the migratory flow into Switzerland and Germany continues to make up the largest number of the Italian migrants, precisely 45% to Switzerland, and 22% to Germany. Between 1946 and 1976, 2,330,230 Italians emigrated to Switzerland and 1,935,210 repatriated with an active balance of 394,990; the expatriates to Germany were 1,137,810, and the repatriates were 868,255 with an active balance of 279,555. To these numbers one must add those with permanent residence and the seasonal workers.

On the other hand, if we keep in mind that the annual average of migrants to Switzerland were 104,496 between 1956 and 1965, and 62,126 between 1966 and 1975, and those migrating to Germany during the same time period were respectively 63,677 and 46,822, albeit with a decreasing number of returnees increased, we can understand why the Missions were then undergoing a change from first aid and social assistance stations to centers of the evangelization and catechesis, with greater attention to the problems of the second generation, and why they focused on the question of their integration into the pastoral life of the local church.

We were then witnessing a new phase of the pastoral care of migrants. In the first decade after WWII, when the missionaries were still few and the migrants were mostly young people without families, they were sought out in barracks, in collective lodgings, in pen-

sions, by means of “flying missions”. The second decade between 1955 and 1965 gained greater stability, though still relative, with an increase of young family units. The mission residence was growing into a pastoral center with permanent structures, which allowed for a regular religious assistance and social, cultural, and recreational activities. In 1965, the pastoral method was revised and preference was given to elite groups within which the action of the laity was planned in cooperation with the missionary to gain access especially into the world of the workers, the poor, and the marginalized. Later on pastoral councils were set up, as instruments of collaboration with the local church, which already for some years had been taking an increased interest in the pastoral care of immigrants. The cooperation with the local church became even more urgent in view of the growing phenomenon of the second generation: the number of young Italians born in Switzerland and in Germany, or brought there when still children, who were caught between their ethnic and adopted culture.

#### THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF FREIBURG

The 1969 General Chapter authorized the General Administration to start experimenting with allowing religious students to frequent theology courses in places outside of their Province of origin in order to enhance their formation through contact with the migratory milieu and to offer them the opportunity to learn other languages. In April 1970, after a first probe into the London Missionary Institute, the General Administration authorized the sending of a group of Italian religious students to Freiburg, a bilingual city famous for its University. The authorization was granted *ad experimentum* for a year, during which time the new community of students was to depend on the Italian Province. The first ten students arrived in Freiburg on September 15, 1970. They were housed at the Marianist Seminary “Regina Mundi”. Fr. Pasquale Viglione was named their rector. On September 27, 1971, after the experimental year, the Scalabrinian Theological Seminary of Freiburg was placed under the direct dependence on the Province of Switzerland and Germany. In September 1972, the students took up residence in the new seat of the Mission of Freiburg in 23 Rue du Nord; Fr. Tino Lovison was put in

charge, succeeded by Fr. Antonio Muraro in 1977. In 1975, the Italian students were joined by three Brazilian religious students assigned to the assistance of the Portuguese in Europe.

### CSERPE (CENTER OF STUDY AND RESEARCH ON THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS)

CSERPE began as a pastoral center, and in grew into a center of studies on the occasion of a survey conducted by the Centro Studi Emigrazione in Rome, among the Scalabrinian Missionaries of Switzerland and Germany, their institutions of assistance to migrants, and the migrants themselves.

The new Provincial Vicar, Fr. G. Cardani had been given charge of organizing the survey and at the same time establishing the Pastoral Center. In the fall of 1972, Fr. Gildo Baggio was given full responsibility for setting up of the center with the help of Fr. Tarcisio Pozzi. Fr. A. Rossi also worked for a year with CSERPE, especially in the field of catechesis. In its early years the center worked mainly within our missions and the local churches. The pastoral dimension of the Center was noticeable from the initiatives it engaged in at the time: a project for the organization of the Catechesis of the Missions, a Catechism for the children of migrants, preparation and conduction of meetings of the Fathers, Formation courses in the Missions. Later on CSERPE began involvement in labor unions, took in initiatives and encounters, and started influencing public opinion with documents, reports, and interviews on radio and television. In collaboration with the CSER of Rome and the CIEMM of Paris, it gave life in 1975 to the Dossier Europa.

In 1978, Fr. Angelo Negrini took the place of Fr. Gildo Baggio as director of CSERPE. The projected theology course for pastoral workers started operating in the end of the same year, with the approval and financial support the Swiss Episcopal Conference. The course lasted three years.

The sensitizing of public opinion to the problems of the second generation was a decisive turning point for CSERPE which, beginning with 1977, it began publishing various works in Italian and Ger-

man, with frequent conferences, and contributions during conventions on the subject.

By 1978 the specific task of CSERPE was formation: school for social workers of the German Charitas; courses for youth group leaders in Germany and Switzerland; marriage preparation courses and courses for pastoral workers.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MISSIONS OF SWITZERLAND

#### GENEVA: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The opening of this mission was already dealt with at the beginning of volume.

Msgr. Adolfo Dosio died on October 14, 1942 and the responsibility of the whole mission passed on to the shoulders of the young Scalabrinian Fr. Enrico Larcher who up to that time had charge only of the Catholic Action groups's, of the teaching of catechism to children, and of the visitation to the families. On October 17, 1942, he was named Director of the Mission. The most serious challenge was the support of the three institutions: the orphanage in the Grand-Saconnex, the Home for the elderly in the Petit-Saconnex, and "La Provvidenza" of Carouge with kindergarten and house for elderly ladies and unmarried young ladies. Fr. Larcher was generously helped by the Franciscan Sisters of the Third Order of Susa and by the Society of the Italian Chapel, which held the title of ownership of the Institutions of the Missions. From September 1943 until the end of WWII, the mission did whatever it could to come to the help to the thousands of Italian refugees; it secured permission from Swiss authorities to enter their concentration camps to bring them moral and material assistance and organized a system for the communication of news between Italians separated by national borders.

In 1945, the Monthly Bulletin of the Mission, which had been founded in 1933 with the title *La Buona Parola* (changed in 1942 to *Bollettino Missionario* for the Italians of the Mission of Geneva), began publication under the title of *Il Vincolo*. It aimed at bringing harmony people torn asunder by the war and by the consequences of the strife that had lacerated Italy since 1943. In 1973 it assumed the format of a newspaper and it was decided to mail it to all addresses of the Italians of the city and Canton of Geneva.

The second Scalabrinian, Fr. Giovanni Casaril arrived there in December 1942, replaced in 1945 by Fr. Pietro Corbellini. In 1964, also

the elderly Fr. Giovanni Costanzo gave a helping hand. Fr. Livio Bordin arrived as a permanent assistant in 1947. The new works for the enlargement of the orphanage of the Grand-Saconnex were inaugurated by the end of 1947, allowing its capacity from 30 to 70 beds.

A veritable flood of new immigrants flowed into Geneva in the immediate years after the WWII. In 1948, there were already 3,000 domestic workers. The Mission became an open “sea-port”: the secretariat was given new life to help the new arrivals in taking care of all kinds of paperwork. In 1950, the Mission celebrated its 50th anniversary. On November 12, 1950, Bishop Zaffonato of Vittorio Veneto consecrated the new altar of the chapel of St. Margaret. Authorization was granted in the same year to enlarge the “Casa-famiglia” of Carouge. The new wing, inaugurated on July 6, 1952 by Bishop G. Ferretto, Assessor of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, and by the Superior General Fr. Francesco Prevedello. It gained space for 47 rooms for women and girls and a chapel for 100 people dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi. On June 4, 1953, Bishop F. Charrière of the diocese of Lausanne – Geneva – Freiburg, conferred on the Mission all the rights of a *Missio cum cura animarum*. On May 30, 1954, the Vicar General Msgr. H. Petit, inaugurated the recreation hall and the St. Pius X hall, which can connect with the chapel of St. Margaret, grown insufficient for the crowds. The Italians residing in the city were about 12,000, and an equal number were the seasonal workers.

Two dormitories had been set up at the Home of the Petit-Saconnex in which some 20 seasonal migrants had found their lodgings. In 1957, the Charitas of Geneva purchased three barracks for 70 workers, set up near the same home, which had been endowed in 1958, with a new chapel, to serve also the Italians of the region, which had been enlarged to double its capacity. The new facilities were inaugurated on June 8, 1958.

On August 19, 1958, Fr. Enrico Larcher was appointed Superior of the French Province; he took leave of the Mission on October 26, and was succeeded by Fr. Livio Bordin as Superior of the Mission, while Fr. Davide Angeli was entrusted with the direction of the institutions of charity. Fr. Francesco Tironola arrived in Carouge in October 1959, and spent the last years of his life assisting the children and the old people of “La Provvidenza”, and there he died on April

21, 1962. The new wing of the orphanage and the new chapel of the Grand-Saconnex were inaugurated on May 29, 1960, increasing its capacity for 120 children. On April 1, 1963, an office of assistance and the "Unilastra" for the health insurance of workers, were opened in a house at 19 Rue de la Mairie, which had been purchased in 1962. The fully updated "La Provvidenza" was dedicated on November 10 of the same year. Thus completed, the Institution included a kindergarten for 100 day and 90 boarding children, a home for 70 old ladies, a guest house for 40 girls, and a cafeteria for 180 workers. The chapel too was enlarged. Fr. Bordin was named Director of the Italian missionaries for Emigrants in France and Luxemburg, and on the June 26 left his post in the hands of Fr. Luigi Bocciarelli, who served as Superior of the Mission for about a year and half, and then had to withdraw because of ill health. Fr. Angelo Ceccato succeeded him on February 20, 1966, while in October of the same year Fr. Pietro Segafredo became director of the charitable institutions. In 1972 Fr. Segafredo assumed both tasks. Fr. Enzo Moretto succeeded him in 1976. At the close of 1976 the assistance to elderly immigrants was centered at "La Provvidenza"; the home of the "Petit-Saconnex" ceased operating and was to be sold. Such forms of assistance were by then undergoing a crisis as the Italian immigrants has settled down and had integrated into the local parishes and the second generation was growing. In 1968 the religious services offered were 12 and by 1978 they had dwindled down to 9. The number of Italians in the Canton of Geneva had stayed constant at 35,000 during the ten years.

#### BASEL: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Basel, one of the necessary crossroads to the North, has been a switchyard for Italian workers on their way to Germany, to the French regions of Alsace and Lorraine, and to Luxembourg since the second half of the 19th century. By the late 1890s, the Italian community of Basel numbered just a few hundred Italians, and it reached 1,000 in the beginning of 20th century. Some years earlier some religious assistance had been offered by Fr. Casanova, a priest from the Canton of the Grisons, and by Fr. R. Fei a Dominican from the University of Freiburg. In August 1900 Bishop Bonomelli visited Basel and re-

alized the need for establishing there a secretariat of the "Opera of Assistance to Italian Migrants in Europe" which he had just founded. The first four Sisters of St. Joseph of Cuneo arrived on November 11, 1900, to help of Fr. Casanova; they resided at first near the missionary on Feierabendstrasse, but they moved to Herrengsabenweg soon afterwards. Bishop Bonomelli opened the secretariat in 1901, and in 1903 he sent Fr. Giuseppe Bottassi as permanent missionary, who turned an old storage building at 14 Ruemelinbachweg into a place of residence, thus beginning the Italian Catholic Mission of Basel. The Sisters came to reside there, and a kindergarten, a dormitory for itinerant Italians, a savings bank, a mutual benefit society, and a small guest house for girls were opened. Fr. Bottassi was succeeded by the Stigmatine Fr. Scotton in 1904, and by Fr. Zavattaro soon after. In 1908, Fr. Bernardino Caselli came and then Fr. Giuseppe Bergamo in 1912, who, when war broke out, sent the Sisters back to Italy and gave assistance to the Italian community during the hard years of WWI. In 1922 he was followed by Fr. Alessio Caucci, who called the Sisters back in 1923 and died in 1926. Next came Fr. Alessandro Tagliaferri, Fr. Arnaldo Luera in 1930, Msgr. Luigi Ridolfi in 1940, who decided to retire in 1946.

The Sacred Consistorial Congregation entrusted then the Mission of Basel to the Scalabrinians who assigned to it Fr. Giuseppe Zanatta in August 1946. By then the new inflow of Italian emigration after WWII began and the Mission, after the stormy years of Fascism and the war, resumed its function of religious, social, cultural, and recreational assistance to the Italian community. After reviving the Catholic Action groups and all other institutions initiated by the predecessors, plans were made to enlarging the headquarters. Work began by the end of 1951; on February 24, 1952, the Bishop of Basel blessed the cornerstone; the hall and the theater were inaugurated on February 22, 1953. The *Missio cum cura animarum* was erected on April 1, 1953. A chapel with room for 200 seats had been built but several hundred people had to attend Sunday mass standing out in the street. The project for the new church was undertaken by Fr. Pietro Segafredo, who had succeeded Fr. Zanatta in March 1960. Work started in August 1961; on August 19, 1962, Bishop Von Streng blessed the corner stone; on November 16, 1963, Archbishop F. Carpino,



Assessor of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation blessed the church, named after St. Pius X, and consecrated its main altar. The following day he inaugurated the new premises of the kindergarten, the residence of the missionaries, the convent of the sisters, and the cafeteria.

In November 1966, the Mission was entrusted to Fr. Davide Angeli. A building, bought in 1965 at 6 Feldbergstrasse, served as a recreational center and a kindergarten for 70 children was opened in June 1967 in Little Basel; another kindergarten was opened in 1969 at 16 Rüttimeyerstrasse, in a house rented in 1967, that was also the seat of the Center of the Italian Press.

On May 13, 1975, the Italian language Catholic Parish of St. Pius X was erected at the Italian Catholic Mission. It was a regular parish, like the other eleven territorial parishes of the city, but also a special one with jurisdiction over the French-speaking, and over the Italian speaking Catholics from Italy and from the Canton Ticino throughout city. This was a first for Switzerland and it marks the recognition and the integration on an equal basis of the Italian community in the local church. However, the levying of compulsory cult taxes for being an integral part of the church of that Canton has created various difficulties and problems: 8,000 Italians have declared that they do not belong to any religion. Fr. Davide Angeli was the first pastor. Fr. Sandro Curotti became director of the mission in September 1976, and on November 28 took possession of the parish. The main concern was the catechesis of both young and adults. The monthly parish bulletin *La Buona Parola* reached 5,000 addresses. The Association "Italian Catholic Mission of Basel", owner of the building at 14 Rümelinbachweg, continued operation of the three kindergartens, the cafeteria for workers, and the recreational center on the weekends.

## BERN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Among the secretariats for Italian workers instituted in 1901 by the Opera Bonomelli, there was also one in Bern. But the actual beginning of the Italian Catholic Mission of Bern goes back to 1927 and Fr. Ireneo Rizzi, a former Bonomellian, is considered its founder. In 1946, because of his old age, Fr. Rizzi turned to Fr. Enrico Larcher for help. In February 1947, the Scalabrinian General Administration

accepted the proposal to send Fr. Giuseppe Vigolo, who arrived in Bern in April and worked together with Fr. Rizzi. Fr. Vigolo, however, took up residence in the rectory of the church of the Holy Trinity, because the old missionary had only a small apartment on the fourth floor of a tenement building.

The Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Filippo Bernardini, upon noticing the increasing numbers of Italians and their response to the summons of the missionary, pledged his support to the Scalabrinians' project of setting up a true Mission Center as a point of reference and encounter for the 3,000 Italians then living in the city. In October 1947, Fr. Vigolo was named director of the Mission and in January 1948, Fr. Rizzi retired. Fr. Vigolo could not take over the small apartment of Fr. Rizzi, and so he rented another one, and with the help of the Missions of Basel and Geneva he was able to buy in April 1948 a small house at 11 Sulgenkeinweg, in the district of Mattenhof. A few months later he was joined by Fr. Rino Frigo. This way, besides the religious assistance to the Italians of the city, for whom three Sunday masses were said in the basement of the church of Holy Trinity, the range of action could be widened to reach the smaller cities around the federal capital on a radius of 30 kilometers. The first Catholic Action group for women was born in 1948. Plans had soon to be made for a larger residence, which, after many attempts, was found and purchased at 22 Alpenstrasse in the Kirchenfeld ward in May 1951. Another building nearby at 24 on the same street was bought in 1953. Three Sister Apostles of the Sacred Heart arrived in March 1955 and a kindergarten was then opened in it together with a guest house for girls. Meanwhile, on April 27, 1953, the "Missio cum cura animarum" was erected. In that same year the director of all Italian Missions in Switzerland, Fr. Giovanni Favero, had established his residence in Bern. From the Mission of Bern came progressively the autonomous missions of Neuchatel, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Tavannes, Burgdorf, Langentahl, Solothurn, Delémont and Thun. The last three were entrusted to the Scalabrinians.

Fr. Tarcisio Rubin arrived in 1953, and Fr. Luigi Bocciarelli in 1954. On October 24, 1955, Fr. Frigo succeeded Fr. Vigolo in the direction of the Mission in the city and Fr. Bocciarelli was given charge of the activities of the Canton of Bern. The increase of the number of chil-

dren, the complaints of the local residents, who could not bear with the noisy behavior of Italians and the scarcity of space, forced the missionaries to look for another location better suited for the growth of the mission. In February 1957, an old chalet with a 2,700 square meters piece of land was bought at 22 Frideckweg in the Mattenhof ward, and there the present project was developed with a church of its own. In 1959, after finally securing permission from the authorities and the loans from the banks, the new Mission was built facing Bovetstrasse and inaugurated on September 4, 1960. The church was built later. On April 15, 1962, the Apostolic Nuncio blessed the corner stone and on March 30, 1963, Msgr. G. Lisibach, Vicar General of the Diocese of Basel inaugurated the church with the consecration of the Altar. Suspended in 1957, the kindergarten was reopened in 1962 with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cuneo. The elementary school was added in 1963 and the junior high school in 1968. Fr. Giuseppe Miele became director of the mission in June 1964. He had given life in 1961 to the weekly *Il Corriere degli Italiani*, whose direction and editorial staff remained in the Mission until 1967. The mission of Thun was made autonomous in 1965, while that of of Zollikofen was open on October 28, 1966 with a kindergarten.

Fr. Loreto De Paolis became the director in March 1967. The pastoral Council was instituted in 1969 and the Mission gained greater religious awareness, though giving much attention to the school, as it offered the possibility for the catechesis of both children and their parents. The school was legally recognized by the Italian government on March 11, 1978.

Fr. Pasquale Viglione became director in 1976. The monthly bulletin *Presenza* had been published since 1976 with 6,000 subscribers. As of 1978, the Bern Mission was providing assistance for 13,000 Italians in the city and in the neighboring towns of Zollikofen, Ostermundigen, Belp and Worb. In each place "faith communities" were established under the leadership of the missionaries. In 1978, there were 125 children in kindergarten, 350 pupils in grammar school, and 162 in junior high.

## SANKT GALLEN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The "Opera Bonomelli" opened one of its secretariats at Sankt Gallen in 1901 for the Italians working on the railroads of the Rhine Valley. Fr. Giuseppe Crivetti was the first Missionary followed by Fr. Pietro Micheli in 1905, and in 1910 by Fr. Alessio Caucci, who remained until 1922.

In 1910, Fr. Luigi Valletta had founded a "Casa-famiglia", called the "Little Venice" with room for sixty young women workers, assisted by nuns. By 1911 the guests had doubled. But then WWI dispersed the emigrants. In 1922, the "Opera Bonomelli" withdrew from Sankt Gallen, and the remaining Italians were occasionally assisted for 25 years by some visiting priest. Msgr. Babini too was going there sometimes from Paris to preach the missions to them. In 1947, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation sent to the Canton of Sankt Gallen Fr. Fermo Rota, who fixed, however, his residence at Rorschach, from where he visited regularly the Italians of Sankt Gallen. Fr. Rota had to retire in 1952. The Scalabrinians were then offered the proposal of establishing a Mission each at both Sankt Gallen and Rorschach. In September 1952, the General Administration and the Sacred Consistorial Congregation authorized acceptance of the two missions, and on October 1, 1952, Fr. Mario Raccanello began work at Sankt Gallen, taking residence in an attic of the Hotel Casino. The beginnings were hard. With great difficulty Fr. Raccanello was able later on to rent a poor apartment of three rooms at 7 Bankstrasse and save some money in view of the purchase of a residence of his own.

On July 24, 1954 Fr. Cesare Fogal succeeded him, who was able to buy in October a small house at 67 Teufenerstrasse. This was the first location of the Mission for Italians, canonically erected by the Bishop of Sankt Gallen on April 26, 1955, and inaugurated in May after completion of the remodeling works. The boundaries of the Mission's territory were extended in December 1961 to include, besides the city of Sankt Gallen, the town of Reketobel, Speicher, Teufen, Buehler, Antwil, Engelburg, with about 6,000 Italians. On December 8, 1963, the seat of the Mission was moved to 13 Heimatstrasse, where, besides the residence of the priests and the offices, were also found the grammar school (1966), the junior high school (1973), legally recog-

nized by the Italian government on March 11, 1978, the kindergarten, a mess hall, a small chapel, the direction of the monthly *Comunità* (6,300 copies) a guest home with room for 30 women, and an office of social assistance for Spaniards. Two more kindergartens were opened in 1968 at Sankt Fiden and Bruggen. The Scalabrinian Sisters are in charge of the latter since 1965, after their arrival in Sankt Gallen in 1963. In 1968 they took residence at Bruggen, where they ran the pastoral care of the young Italians living in the region. The grammar school had a location of its own at 12A Rosenbergstrasse since 1972, as also the junior high school at 8 Martinsbruggstrasse since 1974. Fr. Cesare Fogal directed the Mission until November 9, 1965, except for the period September 1957-July 1958, when he was substituted by Fr. Mario Lazzarotto. Fr. Francesco Dal Bon succeeded him for nine years. Fr. Luigi Liber became director in September 1974.

Fr. Albino Michelin was also a member of the Scalabrinian community of Sankt Gallen, but was working since 1972 at the Mission of Uster, not under the direction of the Scalabrinians, together with other missionaries of emigration. Fr. Michelin cared of the 4,500 Italians of the district, in addition to 500 Spaniards and Portuguese.

#### RORSCHACH: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

A few days after the opening of the Mission of Sankt Gallen, and precisely on October 18, 1952, the Scalabrinians assumed the Mission of Rorschach, in the same Canton, with Fr. Antonio Secchi. Many Italians had arrived in the years 1880-1890 in that town on the shores of Lake Konstanz (Bodensee) to work on railroads. In 1904, the "Opera Bonomelli" opened for the Italians working in the Canton of Sankt Gallen, outside of the city, a secretariat with residence at Arbon. It included also the one thousand Italians who resided in Rorschach. The mission was served by Fr. T. Tresoldi, by Msgr. Zaccaria Priori in 1909-1911 and by Fr. Annibale Cristini in 1911-1916. In the period between the WWI and the end of WWII the Mission of Turgau-Arbon remained closed, and the religious assistance was intermittently offered to Italians by local priests or by missionaries passing through. In September 1947, the Mission was reopened by the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, which, through Msgr. Babini, sent to it Fr. Fermo

Rota for the Italians of the Cantons of Sankt Gallen and Appenzel. Fr. Rota exercised his ministry in some 50 localities of the two Cantons on behalf of about 4, 000 Italians. In 1952, Fr. Rota went to the Missions of Belgium and that of Rorschach was given to the Scalabrinians at the same time when, as said before, the Mission of Sankt Gallen was made autonomous for the city and neighboring towns. The missions of Wil, Schaan in the Principality of Liechtenstein, Mels, Rapperswil, and finally of Heerbrugg were dismembered later on from the territory of the mission that in 1952 numbered 25,000 Italians. In 1978 the *Missio cum cura animarum* of Rorschach, canonically erected on April 26, 1955, extended also to the towns of Goldbach, Rheineck, St. Margrethen, and Heiden, where religious assistance was provided regularly, and other towns of the deanery of Rorschach, and partly of the Cantons of Theintal and Appenzell. The beginnings were hard also for Fr. Secchi. For the early five years he had to be contented with a provisional residence at the Restaurant Casinò, in Kirchplatz owned by the Kirchgemeinde. On January 8, 1957, the Scalabrinian Province acquired a location at 7 Rosenstrasse and in July Frs. Secchi and Livio Zancan, moved in.

At this location a kindergarten was opened in 1958 which was entrusted to the Worker Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth. This school was closed in 1973, and a chapel was built in its place, dedicated on January 31, 1975, for small groups. On Sunday the Masses were always celebrated in various churches. In November 1971, following an agreement with the firm Feldmühle, the Mission opened at 46 Washingtonstrasse, another kindergarten was set up and officially opened in 1972 by Cardinal Pappalardo, Archbishop of Palermo, for about 40 children of various nationalities. The Worker Sisters, who by virtue of their vocation had worked for a number of years in a factory, besides caring for the kindergarten, devoted themselves also to the pastoral care of the families and the sick, and cared for the liturgy and the catechesis.

In 1963, by initiative of Fr. Secchi, the Lowengartenbraure of Rorschach built and rented to the Mission the "Ristorante Torino" at 3 Rosenstrasse, that became the main meeting point of the Italians. Besides the restaurant, the Sisters' chapel and living quarters were set up together with a guest house for young women workers. The

restaurant was given up in 1978, and the Sisters were living in the kindergarten building since 1973.

On December 18, 1964, Fr. Antonio Secchi was transferred to Cologne in Germany and was succeeded by Fr. Giovanni Dalla Presa, who fell seriously ill and was replaced by Fr. Carlo Campiglia from November 1969 until October 1970. Fr. Danilo Guarato directed the Mission from 1970 to 1977, when Fr. Angelo Priore succeeded him.

#### NATERS: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

In connection with the start of the construction of the railroad tunnels of the Simplon and the Lötschberg, the Opera Bonomelli founded a secretariat at Brig in 1901, and two more in 1907 at Kandersteg and Goppenstein, directed respectively by Fr. Pasquale De Vita and Fr. Giuseppe Bottassi, with the help of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cuneo, who took care especially of the hospital and the school. As at Kandersteg, so also at Goppenstein, the Mission and all its offices were stationed in a large wooden structure which was moved to Naters in 1912 by Fr. Pasquale De Vita. Here too a school was opened in 1912 for the children of Italian workers. In 1928, Fr. Giuseppe Bergamo became director of the Mission. He transferred in 1932, the property of the Mission, until then under his name, to the Society of the Italian Catholic Mission of Basel. Fr. Gaudenzio Trombotto succeeded him in 1934, followed in turn, in 1941, by Fr. Luigi Florida, who extended his activity to the Italians of the Canton Valais and kept open the Italian school till 1943, and then opened a kindergarten. As Fr. Florida needed to retire, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation conducted in 1952-1953 negotiations with the Scalabrinians to give them the Mission of NatersBrig. Fr. Gregorio Zanoni took temporary possession of it on August 14, 1953, followed in September by Fr. Ettore Trevisi, who directed it until August 1957, when it was providing assistance to the Italians of Upper Valais, 4,000 strong in the busy season. From August 1957 to March 1960 the Mission was directed by Fr. Pietro Segafredo who, beginning in 1958, to take care of the Italians of the whole Valais. Fr. Romano Pallastrelli headed the Mission from March 1960 to September 1962. The Bishop of Sion placed at his disposal a church in downtown, which became de facto



the most frequented point of religious assistance. From October 1962 to April 1965 the Mission was in the hands of Fr. Giacomo Battaglia, followed by Fr. Vittorino Molon, who surrendered the mission to the Jesuit Fr. Girolamo Pasi, following the decision of the Bishop of Sion to divide its territory into three Missions. The other two were given to the Capuchins.

### SOLOTHURN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

In 1910, the Opera Bonomelli founded a Secretariat at Olten and another at Grenchen. Until 1914 the Italians of Solothurn were assisted by the Missionary of Frenchen, and then, until 1910, by that of Olten, that is, by Fr. Luigi Mietta (1910-1914), Fr. Paolo Fabbriani (1914-1918), and by Fr. Alfredo Polidori in 1918-1920. Closed in 1920, the Mission of Olten was reopened in 1952 by Fr. Giuseppe Dal Pozzo, but under the Mission of Baden. In the meantime, the Italians of Solothurn and surrounding area were periodically visited by the Capuchin Fr. Teotimo of the monastery of Olten, and by Fr. Ireneo Rizzi, missionary in Bern (1940-1945). With the arrival of the new immigrants, Msgr. Zaccaria Priori formed the new mission of Aarethal, with seat at Mensingen. But the Italians of Solothurn were actually assisted in 1946-1952 by the Capuchin Frs. Bonaventura and Günther from the monastery of Solothurn, and by the Scalabrinians of Bern in 1952-1954. On December 14, 1954, the Bishop of Basel, F. von Streng, erected the *Missio cum cura animarum* for the Italians of Solothurn, excluding the district of Olten, and the Scalabrinian Fr. Tarcisio Rubin opened it on the 19th of the same month, with residence in two small rooms in a modest building at 5 Rossmarktplatz. Another missionary was sent ten months later. It became thus possible to organize a regular religious assistance at the Solothurn Jesuit church, in the towns of Grenchen, Klus Balsthal, Gerlafingen, and Wangen. In other 16 localities the Sunday Mass was said once a month. In early 1957, the Römische Katholik Kirchengemeinde of Solothurn bought a whole building at Rossmarktplatz and a social secretariat was opened in it. At the end of September 1957, Fr. Livio Zancan succeeded Fr. Tarcisio Rubin. A small building was rented in 1958 near the church of the Jesuits, which constituted the first meeting place for the



Italians. On November 1, 1960, the Hotel Adler Center at Berntorstrasse was opened and entrusted to the Worker Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth, with a restaurant and a meeting hall, an office of social assistance, a kindergarten, an entertainment hall, and a guest house for some 30 young women. A social secretariat was instituted on November 1959 at Grenchen on Joseph-Girardstrasse, which in 1963 moved to larger quarters on Kirchstrasse, where a kindergarten was also opened. A missionary center was inaugurated at Balsthal in September 1962, and placed in the hands of four young ladies of the Secular Institute of the "Spigolatrici della Chiesa" ("Gleaners of the Church"), with a kindergarten, an office of assistance, and a recreation hall. Fr. Gabriele Bortolamai was named director in June 1964. The fourth missionary center was opened in July 1965 at Gerlafingen and given to the care of the Scalabrinian Secular Missionary Women, it too was endowed with a kindergarten, an office of assistance, and a recreation hall. To these permanent centers were gradually added other offices or places of religious, social, and scholastic assistance, periodically visited by the Missionaries or their cooperators, at Densingen in 1966, Biberist in 1966, and at Berendingen in 1968. Fr. Pasquale Viglione was director of the Mission in 1971-1976, succeeded by Fr. Davide Angeli. When the Mission was entrusted to the Scalabrinians, the Italian community numbered about 5,000 people. By 1968 it had climbed to 14,000. By 1978 there were about 12,000 Italians with permanent residence permit and over 3,000 seasonal migrants. As seen above, the Secular Institute of Scalabrinian Missionary Women began taking form at Solothurn in 1961-1962 and obtained the approval of the diocese on May 14, 1967 under the title of "Pia Unione delle Missionarie Secolari Scalabriniane". They still continue to devote themselves to various activities of the mission: social service, catechesis, formation of youth groups, etc.

#### DELÉMONT : ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Italian immigration into the district of Delémont began in modest proportions after WWII, and had its religious assistance at first from the missionaries of Bern, and in some localities from those of Solothurn. On July 4, 1955, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation autho-

rized the founding of an autonomous mission for the 1,500 Italians of Delémont, Moutier, Porrentruy, and Laufen. Fr. Mario Lazzarotto was assigned to it on September 11. He fixed his residence in a rented apartment at 2 Route de Rossemaison. On November 3, the Bishop of Basel erected the "Missio cum cura animarum". From September 1956 to October 1958, the Mission was under the responsibility of Fr. Davide Angeli, who organized the religious and social assistance with the cooperation of the Catholic Action groups. Fr. Enzo Moretto succeeded him until 1966. A six story building was begun in 1963 by the "Bellevoie Society"; the Mission was to buy two floors of it, and private families would occupy the others; but construction was suspended in 1964. In September of the same year the seat of the Mission was transferred to "Chemin des Bâtes", where a hall for the Italians was set up on the first floor, and the residence of the missionaries on the sixth. In May 1965 the Hôtel du Soleil, in downtown Delémont was bought, and thus in June the Mission was able to make use of larger rooms for the residence of the Missionaries, a kindergarten, a small chapel, and entertainment hall and a cafeteria for workers. This center was opened on November 24, 1965. In October 1966 the Mission was placed in the care of Fr. Valentino Ziliotto. The Mission of Moutier had been dismembered from Delémont in 1963. A third Mission was founded in Laufen in 1967. In spite of all this, the Italians dependent on the Mission of Delémont were still about 4,000. From September 1973 to September 1974, the Mission was directed by Fr. Angelo Marcato, followed by Fr. Angelo Ferraro. Due to changes concerning the mentality and the aspects of emigration, the Hôtel du Soleil was rented out at first, and then sold in 1976. In August 1977, the missionaries rented residence of their own at 16 Avenue de la Gare. In September 1978, Delémont became the capital of the new Canton of Jura. In the same year the territory of the Mission of Porrentruy was rejoined to it. As a whole, the Italians of the Missionary circumscription of Delémont were then about 3,500.

#### LIESTAL: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

In 1947-1961 the Italians of the Canton of Baselland (Basel-Champagne) whose capital is Liestal, were assisted occasionally by the

missionaries of the city of Basel. Though residing in Basel, in 1961 Fr. Giancarlo Cordani began taking regular care of the immigrants of the Baselland. At the end of the same year, the territory was divided into three Missions: MuttENZ, Aesch, and Liestal. In early 1962, Fr. Cordani fixed his residence at Frenkendorf, two kilometers from Liestal, in a rented apartment. On March 29, 1962, the Bishop of Basel erected the Italian Catholic Mission as “mission cum cura animarum” of Liestal for a territory that embraced 57 townships: Italians were mainly concentrated in Liestal (3,000), Sissach (1,200), Gelterkinden (750), and Oberdorf (550). Two social services’ offices were opened at 20 Theinstrasse in Liestal, and at 57 Hauptstrasse in Sissach. A kindergarten for 50 children was inaugurated on August 15, 1963, directed by the Secular Institute of the Humble Franciscan Family.

In October 1965, Fr. Angelo Ferraro assumed the direction of the Mission. Difficulties stemming from the relationship with the local committee of the Landeskirche, that did not leave the missionary free in the administration of the institutions of the Mission (kindergarten, social service office, and recreation hall), combined with the scarcity of personnel and the uncertain health of Fr. Ferraro, induced the Scalabrinians to surrender the place to a Passionist priest. The change-over took place on October 23, 1966.

#### LAUSANNE: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Italian immigration to Lausanne and to the Canton of Vaud began in the 19th century. The Opera Bonomelli opened a Secretariat at Lausanne in 1901, and in 1903 it sent there, with permanent residence, Fr. Luigi Crivetti, who was part of the parochial services of Notre-Dame de Lausanne, as vicar cooperador in charge especially of Italians. He was followed by Fr. Tagliaferri, who opened a kindergarten-orphanage for Italians in 1915, in the ward of Rumine, transferred afterwards to Avenue de la Rasude, and entrusted to the Sisters of the Precious Blood of Monza in 1924. Then came Frs. Brero, Gérard, Bertalmio (1932-1938), Caminada, the future bishop of Santa Agata dei Goti, and the Friar Minor Fr. Cucchi (1941-1962). All depended on the pastor of Notre Dame. The first missionary officially in charge of the care of Italians was Fr. Valentino Fabbro (1941-1962) who set

up an independent residence in 1943 at 5 Rue du Valentin, near the church of Notre Dame. Ten years later, the headquarters were moved to the 4th floor of the new "Foyer Notre Dame", at 9 Rue du Valentin. In 1962, Fr. Fabbro decided to retire and the Vicar General of the Diocese asked the Scalabrinians to take over the mission with two priests. There were about 15,000 Italians just in the city alone. Fr. Romano Pallastrelli was sent there on October 1, 1962 and was joined a month later by Fr. Martino Serraglio. Fr. Fabbro retired to the Center of Renens, and returned to Italy in September 1964. That center too, on the outskirts of the city, was assumed by the Scalabrinians, who purchased a house at 1 Rue des Colleges in September 1966 for the works of assistance; but the occupants of the building left only in 1969 and the activities could be started only in 1969, with residence and offices for the missionary, three class rooms for school and catechism, and a recreation room. Concerning the Mission of the city, there were all along serious shortcomings due to insufficient space. A property was purchased on December 28, 1967, at 42C Rue de Tivoli to establish on it a center proportioned to the number of Italians, who were then 25,000 and declined to 20,000 later in the 1970s; urban and financial difficulties allowed only for a remodeling of an existing building that included three offices, a meeting and recreation hall, a library, and the residence for the missionaries. This center was dedicated on June 20, 1970. A kindergarten was reopened for 30 children in 1968 in a rented building at 12 Rue du Valentin. The Capuchin Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Sisters of St. Ann cooperated in the activities of the Mission. The Chapelle des Terreaux was placed at the disposal for worship by the Italian Community in 1977. Fr. Martino Serraglio was given charge of the Mission in the summer of 1971.

#### THUN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

As said before, the "Missio cum cura animarum" of Bern was created in 1953. At that time it embraced the whole Canton: the Italians of the Oberland of Bern, part of the deanery of Thun, were occasionally cared for by the Missionaries of Bern. In 1955, the care of the Italians of this Canton was actually in the hands of Fr. Luigi Bocciarelli, who, besides the geographic difficulties of about 30,000 Italians scat-

tered over a territory of several hundred square kilometers, found a closed environment especially because of the overwhelming majority of the Protestant population. Fr. Bocciarelli was officially the “quasi-pastor” since May 6, 1957, of the Italian Catholic Mission of the German speaking Canton of Bern until June 24, 1964, contributing to the flourishing of Italian communities in 38 localities of the Canton. He resided at Bern. On initiative of Mr. and Mrs. Schmid, supported by the Mission, the Italian Embassy, and the local authorities of Thun which offered the former Hôtel du Pare, a boarding kindergarten was started on July 17, 1961, for 50 children of foreign workers. The Institute “Du Pare” was placed under the jurisdiction of the Mission and entrusted to the Oblate Sisters of St. Louis of Alba. An Italian grammar school had its beginning in October 1952, which in 1964 had an attendance of 131 students.

In July 1964, Fr. Bernardino Corrà took the place of Fr. Bocciarelli. Since 1963 an opportunity was sought to open in Thun an autonomous mission for the Oberland of Bern, embracing 9 different unconnected valleys, with 44 townships where numerous groups of Italians lived employed in construction and hotel industries. There were 3,000 Italians in Thun. On February 3, 1965, Fr. Corrà took his permanent residence at 8 Merkurstrasse in Thun. The following year, the seat was moved to the Italian Center of 4 Steffisburgstrasse, inaugurated on November 26, 1966. Regular activities and social service offices were organized also at Interlaken, Frutigen, Gstaad, Brienz, Meiringen, and Spiez. Fr. Romano Pallastrelli took charge of the mission in 1971. A celebration was held on February 28, 1973, when the Italian government officially accredited the Italian school of the Mission: the “Du Pare” school numbered then 110 boarding and about 82 day students. But the Mission was forced to close the school in June 1975 under pressure from a political xenophobic group; only the kindergarten, with 40 children, continued to operate in a building owned by the Wildi family. The Italian immigration decreased greatly in later years. As of 1978 the Mission of Thun assisted about 5,000 Italians.

## FREIBURG: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The Italians of Freiburg had their early religious assistance from 1900 to 1946 by the Dominican Fr. Reginaldo Fei. Two Capuchins and a Franciscan followed him. On September 2, 1951, Msgr. Antonio Bassetti-Sani arrived at Freiburg sent by the Consistorial Congregation with the task of founding there the Italian Catholic Mission. He took temporary residence at the Grand-Seminaire, and began visiting the Italians of the city and the Canton: 1,100 of them residents and 400 seasonal migrants. In January 1952 he was given the use of the Chapel of the "Albertinum", a university guest house of the Dominicans at 1 Rue de L'Hôpital, where he was able to use also an office and a recreation hall. Fr. Alfredo Giampaoli succeeded him on August 14, 1953, who moved the seat of the Mission to 42 Rue de Villars and his residence to 34 Place de la Gare in September 1955. He retired in the end of March 1965. The Mission was then given to the Scalabrinians on April 1, 1965, when Fr. Martino Serraglio was appointed director, assisted by Fr. Tino Lovison. The Italians had grown in the meantime: 3, 200 resided in the city, and an equal number in the Canton of Freiburg. A more appropriate location was needed: the so called Château de Pérolles, an old 34 room building at 39 Avenue du Midi, was rented in August 1965. After the remodeling and restoration, which made room for a residence of the missionaries, a kindergarten for about 30 children, a guest house for young people, a mess hall, the recreation room, and the office for the social services, the new facility was inaugurated on July 4, 1966, by Bishop F. Charrière. The missionaries, however, had been living there already since October 25, 1965; the kindergarten had opened on January 31, 1966, and the guest house on the March 20. The place of worship was at first the Church of the Ursuline Sisters, and then that of St. Michael's College.

In 1972, the owner of the "Château de Pérolles" rescinded the lease. A building was then bought at 23 Rue du Nord, big enough also to host the religious students of the Scalabrinian Seminary of the Province. The transfer of the Mission took place on July 1, 1972, and the dedication was the following November 4 in the presence of Bishop Mamie. Fr. Gabriele Bortolamai directed the mission from September 1971 to September 1973, continuing on for another year

as quasi-pastor of the Italians, while the direction of the Mission had been entrusted in 1973 to Fr. Valentino Ziliotto.

By the late 1970s the Italians of the territory of the Canton numbered about 7,000, of who 3,000 lived the city of Freiburg. The churches of 10 different towns were being used as places of worship. The care of a kindergarten with about 30 children was entrusted in 1971 to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd of Reggio Emilia. About 40 adult migrants attended night classes at the upper-grammar school of the Mission. The religious students of the seminary were helping in such activities as the boy-scouts.





## CHAPTER III

### THE MISSIONS OF GERMANY

#### THE WORKERS' CHAPLAINS OF WORLD WAR II

30,000 Italian farmers and 6,000 industrial workers migrated to Germany in 1938 to replace the Germans engaged in preparing for the war. At first the religious assistance was provided by Msgr. Costantino Babini, director of the missionaries of Italian migrants in Europe. But it was entrusted afterwards to the Italian Military Ordinariate, and precisely to Msgr. Antonio Giordani, central inspector of the "Gioventù Italiana del Littorio", who charged the Redemptorist Fr. Giacomo Salza with the task of coordinating the priests gathered for this purpose from various Italian dioceses. In 1940 the missionary of Berlin, Msgr. Zaccaria Priori, was made its director.

In February 1941, in view of the imminent transfer to Germany of 200,000 Italian workers, Msgr. Giordani turned to the Scalabrinian Congregation to secure some missionaries; at the same time the Military Ordinary Archbishop Bartolomasi was asking for army chaplains.

Cardinal Rossi chose the first request. On March 23, 1941, Fr. Francesco Tirondola gave the missionary cross to Frs. Antonio Ferronato, Remo Rizzato, and Giuseppe Zanatta in Cermenate. On April 8, Fr. Ferronato left from Verona on a train filled with Italian workers directed to Berlin, his destination. He was assigned, later on in February 1942, to Munich. In this same month, Msgr. Giordani solicited reinforcements and on April 12 the missionary crucifix was given to Frs. Vittorio Michelato, Guglielmo Ferronato, Aristide Pagani, Gino Macchiavelli and Luigi Zonta. On April 14, Fr. Michelato left for Salzgitter, Fr. Luigi Zonta for Eberswalde, Fr. Guglielmo Ferronato for Kassel; shortly afterwards Fr. Pagani departed for Magdeburg and Fr. Macchiavelli for Munich.

From a report of April 15, 1942, we gather that there were 42 workers' chaplains, Scalabrinians included, distributed throughout 37 residences, under the direction of Fr. Pietro Lazzari, successor of Msgr.

Priori. The chaplains wore a uniform similar to that of the secretaries of the "Fasci" abroad, but with a clergyman's collar and a red cross over the heart. The Italian workers assisted by the 42 chaplains were 300,000, 250,000 of them employed in industries. They were lodged in lagers, and the chaplain was allowed to visit them only upon previous notification to the German authorities and Italian commissars. Each chaplain was given the care of 40-50 groups of industrial workers, and of numerous other smaller groups of farmers. Workers markedly increased in 1944, with the arrival of demilitarized soldiers and of workers forcibly recruited in Italy. At Frankfurt, for instance, there were only 3000 or 4000 of them in 1942, but they increased to 15,000 in 1944. On June 13, 1943, the missionary cross was also given to Frs. Luigi Casaril, assigned to Saarbruechen, Martino Bortolazzo, assigned to Magdeburg and Adolfo Centofante, appointed to Frankfurt.

In October 1942, Fr. Antonio Ferronato had to return to Italy because of poor health provoked by air raids. His place was taken by his brother Fr. Guglielmo. In 1943, Fr. Rizzato had to return to Piacenza. Fr. Martino, who had been all the while in Magdeburg, returned to Italy in July 1944, because of poor health. Fr. A. Pagani, who was chaplain at Salzgitter, became seriously sick with tuberculosis, and was repatriated on doctors' orders and died in a sanatorium in Basano on November 20 of the same year. Fr. Zanatta remained chaplain in Munich, and returned to Italy in August 1945. Fr. Centofante, who had carried on his ministry always in Mannheim, returned in the fall of 1945. Fr. Luigi Zonta had resided in a number of cities: Eberswalde, Dresden, Essen, Berlin, Linz in Austria, and reentered in Italy in July 1945. Fr. Macchiavelli, after spending 4 months in Munich, was transferred in September 1942 to Brüx in the Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia) where he assisted the miners, and then the Italian prisoners. In May 1945, the region was occupied by the Russians, and there remained only a few hundred sick Italians. Fr. Macchiavelli was named a Delegate of the Italian Red Cross for the Italians of Most and surrounding towns, and left for Italy only on April 1, 1946, arriving after a fifteen day trip with the last group of 190 Italians. After a short stay at Salzgitter, Fr. Michelato was named missionary of the Italian community of Metz, dependent on the Sacred Consistorial

Congregation. He arrived at Hayange on October 10, 1942, and was joined soon afterwards by Fr. Attilio Bersani. At that time Hayange belonged to the Westmark, which had been annexed by Germany. Fr. Luigi Casaril was also assigned to the Westmark. There he gave start to the chaplaincy of Algrange in July 1943. In 1944 he moved to Hayange. To give an idea of the difficult mission of the workers' chaplains we quote in part from a report sent in by Fr. Guglielmo Ferronato upon request by Card. R.C. Rossi:

"My field of work was Kassel in the territory of Essen. I began in April 1942. My district was not very extended. Its 2,000 workers were almost all grouped near the city; only a few small groups lived at distances not more than than 30 kilometers. Besides assisting the Italians, here I was able to do some good also to other foreigners, such as the French and Polish workers. It was indeed heartbreaking to witness these poor civil prisoners, men and women, most of them young, without a priest, whom they frequently asked for but were not permitted to have. Those persecutors denied the priest even to the dying and we could expose ourselves to the most serious dangers if we, the missionaries, were to care for these derelicts. In spite of so many threats and fears something could be done for them. I entered secretly the barracks where I knew the seriously ill were dying and hastily administered them the sacraments while a trusted friend stood guard at the entrance. Once I was able to administer the sacraments to as many as 8 dying prisoners! They were poor souls who had been operated upon more for the doctors to gain experience than to make them well again. In fact, after the operation they had been left there with their open incisions.

I will always remember how, on living a room, a Polish young man, who had been hiding behind the door, came up to me and with tears in his eyes asked: "Holy Communion! Holy Communion!" I assured him that I would give it to him, but it was better for him to flee for the time being, because his daring might cost him dearly. Besides saying mass in lagers, I visited periodically various hospitals doing my best to console and bring the comforts of the faith to the poor wretched lying in them. In general they received with joy the priest is on, who often wanted to know about their sickness, acted as their

interpreter with the doctors, and helped also materially those who were in need.

I remained in Kassel until November 1942, when I moved to the zone of Frankfurt-on-Main. Here the field of work became wider. The district, that extended North to Kassel, South to Kaiserlautern and Speyer, East to Koblenz, and West to Wuerzburg, numbered more than 6,000 workers.

Besides the ordinary religious assistance, there were many hospitals to visit with no less than a hundred sick persons usually, and various prisons, where some of our fellow countrymen could also unfortunately be found. There were tears and weeping, and their sorrows helped them to find their way back to God! Some of them were sentenced to many years of reclusion. I cannot describe the scenes that took place when I succeeded in obtaining entrance to those prisons. Here I brought my small help of money, food, clothing, and whatever charity suggested. But our greatest sufferings and sorrows began for us with the air raids. The city of Frankfurt saw all its artistic monuments fall in ruins under the mines and incendiary bombs, and what was most horrifying, thousands upon thousands of victims. But the one who carried the brunt of turmoil was often the poor persecuted and deathly hated foreigner. The foreigners were forbidden to enter the public air shelter and bunkers, and each raid meant victims upon victims among them. Resentment reached such a pitch as to chase them out into the open during an air attack while the bombs were falling.

I have never left the field of work and I have always remained with my workers and soldiers; I preferred to die with them rather than leave, and I was convinced that there was nothing more glorious for me than to die with them, should they perish. They were hours of true agony. Right after the air raids, I ran, as though besides myself, around the city in search of the lagers and I did not return in peace until I could see all those whom I called my brothers. I did not even mind my house in flames twice, and once half in ruins, as long as I could bring help to my Italians. I comforted the wounded and had them immediately sheltered, after dressing their wounds the best I could, I gave the last rites to the critically ill, conditionally absolved and anointed the still warm bodies of the dead, just dug out of the ru-

ins, cried over them as their mothers would do, and before leaving I laid them out in the slumber of death. At times I had to look around in search of dismembered parts of their bodies scattered around: arms, legs! I knelt before those mortal remains, I blessed them, I sought to identify them.

All along the chaplain remained with his workers and soldiers, while those who should have stayed with them, such as consuls and company, fled by car to the mountains. They spent their time there in merry groups, smoking and reading funny newspapers or novels, within the walls of heated rooms. I was a witness to things that cannot be told! When I invited authorities to visit the lagers where the victims of bombings still lay, they answered that they did not know what to do, and for fear of another air raid fled helter-skelter the city. Still greater sorrows came, when the victims had to be buried. I was often alone, or maybe at times together with some subdelegate of the so-called Authorities, while those who had the direct responsibility seldom appeared at the scene, so much so that we Italians drew upon us the commiseration of the Germans themselves, who more than once told me that they had never seen more uncaring authorities than the Italian amongst the so many representatives of other nations in Germany. The bodies we buried were not always those of the victims of air raids, but also those sometimes who had died in prison or in concentration camps, and one could see in their faces the marks of the terrible sufferings they had been subjected to: hunger, blows, and other unheard of barbarities. I took pains that the funeral be as dignified as possible. I had a cross raised with their first and family name, with dates of birth and death, if possible, printed on it by their fellow workers or by some good person of the cemetery administration itself. And I always kept remembering my beloved deceased sons with masses or me community celebrations.

But the assistance of workers both in industry and in farming does not match the immense field of work that opened wide, for me at least, with the deportation of our soldiers to Germany. The capitulation of Italy on September 8, 1943, marked for us Italians the beginnings of a veritable odyssey of sorrows. Those few privileges that the Italian worker enjoyed because they were allies were turned soon into the blindest hatred not only against the deportees, but also

against Italians in general. Having lost all rights of protection on the part of Consuls and other authorities, reduced to even worse conditions than those of the civil prisoners of Poland, Russia and France, we had become the object of scorn and derision not only on the part of the Germans, but of the former political enemies as well. We were spat upon, chased out of public stores like dogs or worse with threats, always singled out by the unjust remarks of traitors and Badoglians (General Badoglio had taken power from Mussolini). Since the men were all at the war front, the women and the children were throwing rotten potatoes and snowballs at our workers and soldiers, and jeered and shouted at them! It looked as though it was all over for us! I remember that one day a German, made aware from the accent of my being Italian, as he passed by me, he insulted me and spat on my face. I reminded myself that I was a priest and I was there for the love of God and I refrained myself. Should I have reacted it would have been much worse, it would have cost me a gunshot. Another time on a train, an army officer, in a most violent manner and with a gun pointed at me had me get up from my seat and handed me to the Gestapo accusing me as an Italian spy! Good for me, that this time the Gestapo had better sense than the officer and after a few questions set me free. Another day I asked for a train ticket, as always with the written permission of the police, because we were otherwise absolutely forbidden to board the trains, and instead of the ticket I found myself taken away by two guards of the SS and confined in a small room, where they wanted me to confess at all costs that I was an Italian spy at the service of the Allies. They did not want to believe me when I repeatedly stated that I was a humble missionary who had the task of the religious assistance of the Italians. They examined all my documents, and because I did not have the right ones, so they said, I was put under arrest. As I perceived the seriousness of the situation, I recommended myself to the Blessed Mother and insisted that I was not a spy and that they should telephone so and so. Thank God, among my papers they found a holy picture of the Blessed Mother; they gave a good look at it, they exchanged despising glances, and then one of them said: "Let him go, he is just a harmless priest!" And so I got off the hook!

There were three concentration camps in my district: Limburg am der Lahn, Bad-Orb/Spessart, Ziegenkeim/Kassel. All three could hold between 35,000 and 45,000 inmates. When I saw the arrival of those poor people in such miserable conditions I could not find peace! If I enter their lagers, I thought to myself, I will be able to help them also materially. And in fact I began immediate negotiations: I started with Bad-Orb. I actually had to deal with SS major! I presented myself to him, made known to him my requests and found him kindly enough. He right away granted me permission to say Mass and preach. Later on I soon discovered the reason for his generosity: he wanted me to urge our Italians to join the SS as volunteers, but I on wanted no part of it. The following Sunday I was at the camp surrounded by Italians soldiers, about 10,000 of them. I preached with the German interpreter at my side, who was there to hear what I was saying. There, in line in front of me, were no less than fifty high ranking Italian officers. I gave Holy Communion to many of the men. After the Mass I visited the sick, who were quite numerous, and administered the last rites to those in imminent danger of death. That was a most unforgettable day for me! At the Gospel I spoke of the "Our Father" thus seeking to give comfort to those poor souls in sorrow!

I continued this way for a few months and when I found out that there were other military chaplains in the camp, I turned my attention to that of Limburg where other prisoners began arriving. Here there were 12,000 interns, also in very pitiful conditions. I found a way to visit them right away. I immediately took care of the many affected with tuberculosis, trying to assist them the best I possibly could. I said Mass and preached in the open, as it was impossible to do so inside, and administered the Sacraments. Here I had the joyous satisfaction of giving as many as 1,000 communions in one day! After the mass for the healthy, I said another one in the hall where about 300 sick were sheltered. Sometimes I said Mass also for those with infectious diseases. When our internees were taken out of concentration camps and distributed in little groups as employees of small firms, I assisted them by going from place to place with my portable altar. I visited them in their barracks, I was staying with them, I took care of the sick, hidden from the eyes of the police, I brought them food and clothing for the weaker ones and the sick, I gave them money to buy



a piece of whole bread. I said the Mass mostly in the evening, because they had to work during the day, even on Sunday! In the meantime, the military chaplains had been given a certain degree of freedom and were allowed to exercise some functions of their ministry: one of them was assigned to the camp of Limburg, and another was given the care of the internees scattered here and there in the province. This arrangement was a big help to me. Radiating from the concentration camp of Ziegenheim/Kassel, I was able to bring assistance to various large lagers located in different towns: Allendorf, Neustadt, and above all Lollar/Giessen. Generally, the internees responded well and proved themselves to be able to behave also in the midst of corrupted companions much better than the workers, who were much less responsive to the care of their chaplain. It is easy to understand how the religious assistance met up with enormous difficulties of all kinds on the part of German authorities, such as would often amount to a veritable persecution in its most different and forms and expressions. The priest had become the object of the deepest hatred and spitefulness. And if this was true for priests in general, much worse was it in regard to foreign priests, continuously under the scrutiny of the Gestapo and the SS, who under any pretext might arrest, abuse, and imprison them. Luckily, I well knew what kind of people they were and I kept on guard! I never spoke to anyone, I was minding my business, and if spoken to, and I always gave prudent and brief answers. When subjected to scorn and humiliation, I bore it patiently in silence, always mindful that I was not in Germany for my interests, after all, but exclusively for the salvation of souls, and that all things could serve to reach this high and most noble scope.

My fiercest persecution was by the man in charge to supervise foreigners in Frankfurt am Main. He rarely received me, and, when he did, I had to wait hours and hours in the waiting room. While there, I could hear their loud bursts of laughter at their disparaging comments on priests, religion, and priestly celibacy, especially Catholic.

When this man was moved elsewhere, another one, worse than he, came to replace him. I presented myself to him and I was so ill-treated that on exiting from his presence I could not refrain from crying. Besides, he was also Gauobmann (a federal officer). His first words when he saw me were: "Mister Pastor we cannot get along!



Your Church and Your Pope have declared an all-out war on the Nazi Party and we will do all we can to eliminate with force all these enemies of ours. There will never be peace negotiations between us: to us has been given the kingdom of this world and to you that of the next one, any accord between us is thus impossible." "No, I answered, the Church does not wage war against any one and much less its Pope, because the Church is the Mother of all peoples, it does not persecute, but it is the Church that is persecuted, instead!" In the end the Gauobmann said: "Since all Italians, or most of them are Catholics, I allow you the religious assistance so that the worker may produce more in his work by the tranquility of his spirit."

#### ESSEN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

As said above, in 1956 the Scalabrinians returned to Germany, assuming again their activities precisely in Essen, where Frs. Gino Macchiavelli and Luigi Zonta arrived in July. Then the Essen zone was detached from the much larger one of Cologne, headed by Msgr. Aldo Casadei, director of the Missionaries of Emigration in Germany and Scandinavia.

A secretariat of the "Opera Bonomelli" had been established by Fr. Costa in the spring of 1908 at Bochum for the 40,000 Italians employed in the mines and industries of Westfalen. Fr. Zaccaria Priori was missionary there from 1911 to 1913. Later on the Italians of the regions of Westfalen and the Ruhr were assisted by the mission of Cologne.

In 1956, the Italian migrants of the territory of the Mission of Essen, embracing the diocese of Essen, Muenster, and Paderborn, were 7,000 and 2,000 of them were new arrivals, scattered over a region of a radius of 250 kilometers. The earlier emigrants were suffering the consequences of the neglect in which they had been left and of the high percentage of mixed marriages or just civil ones. Their children did no longer Italian. The new ones were faithful to the religious practice, but almost all of them were without families, did not know the German language, were without religious assistance, and could not defend their rights. They tended to band together in lagers or camps, with lodging for anywhere between 20 and 200 people.

Frs. Macchiavelli and Zonta could not find a residence of their own because of the shortage of houses caused by the war, and for the first two years they were the guests of the Franciscans in a monastery at 69 Franziskanerstrasse., who placed at their disposal two rooms and other premises for the activities of the Mission. They organized their early religious assistance by gathering together periodically the Italians of the farms and of the lagers in various places, and by celebrating the Mass every month in the industrial cities of Essen, Oberhausen, Hamborn, Gelsenkirchen, Wanne-Fickel, Dortmund.

In May 1958, they succeeded finally in renting a rather run-down house owned by the chancery office at 63 Klosterstrasse. Frs. Zonta and Giuseppe Vigolo moved into this house, which had been used as a hospice by the Franciscan Sisters, while Fr. Macchiavelli fixed his residence at Oberhausen-Sterkrade. That old house was cleaned out and remodeled in 1959. The new addition at 61 Klosterstrasse was built in 1963-1964. In 1965, work was started on a radical renovation of the old house that was finished in 1968 with the construction of the kindergarten. In 1963 a new chapel and a new recreation hall were inaugurated by Bishop Claudio Colling of Passo Fundo, Brazil.

Meanwhile, in November 1962, Fr. Luigi Zonta, stricken with an eye sickness, had to return to Italy and was replaced by Fr. Pietro Rubin, while Fr. Vigolo became director of the Mission until January 28, 1963, when Fr. Ferruccio Agugiaro was named to that post. On November 29, 1962, there had arrived in Essen the Sisters of the Divine Will of Bassano del Grappa: it was their first missionary experience among migrants. On Christmas 1963, the first of the seven issues of the Bulletin Vita della Missione was published in mimeographed copies. In November 1964, the place of Fr. Rubin was taken by Fr. Angelo Priore, who was to take care especially of the Italians of Mülheim and Duisburg, the city where he fixed his permanent residence in 1966, and by Fr. Luigi Canesso in 1966-1971. In 1968 the Mission was giving assistance to about 6,000 Italians in the cities of Essen, Bochum, Hattingen, Gladbeck and Wattenscheid: their number had decreased following the mines crisis. Besides the chapel and the recreation hall, the Mission could dispose of an office for social service, a conference room, a library, and a kindergarten which took in 35 children day and night from Sunday evening to Friday afternoon, while

another 10 attended it only during the day. The Sisters staffing it took care also of a number of small flying oratories and kindergartens in various places far from the Mission where they gathered the children for a few hours a week.

In July 1970, Fr. Agugiario was appointed Provincial Superior, and in October the direction of the Mission was entrusted to Fr. Carlo Campiglia until the end of 1978. When he left, the structure of the Mission was almost identical with that of 1968. The diocese of Essen, however, had normalized the juridical status of the missionaries of emigration by placing them on the same level of "pastors". On that occasion Bochum was made an autonomous center, which, on January 1, 1974, was declared a "Missio cum cura animarum" and entrusted to Fr. Lorenzo Scremin, who was succeeded by Fr. Vincenzo Armotti in September 1974, and by Fr. Macchiavelli in 1978, who also fixed his residence there.

#### DUISBURG AND OBERHAUSEN: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

Duisburg and Oberhausen were one mission for a long time but eventually became 2 distinct missions, although served by the one religious community of Duisburg.

As mentioned above, in May 1958, Fr. Gino Macchiavelli began residing permanently at the Mission center of Oberhausen, dependent on that of Essen, in an apartment with an office and a hall, owned by the local German parish. In 1958-1961 the Mission gave assistance also to the Italians of Duisburg, Moers, Mülheim, Walsum, Neunkirchen, Fleiyn, Bottrop, Bocholt: all centers with numerous families of miners. In November 1961, Fr. Luigi Zonta was given charge over the Italians of Duisburg, whose number had increased significantly since 1960. The Caritasverband (Caritas Germany) had placed at his disposal a locale near the station at 26 Oststrasse. Actually, Frs. Angelo Bontacchio and Mario Nalin were the ones who took possession of it in November 1962. The Mission was officially inaugurated in July 1963, but, because of disputes with the Caritasverband, the two missionaries had to be replaced in November 1963 with Fr. Giuseppe Callovi: but he too was unable to smooth out the difficulties and the Mission was abandoned in September 1964.

Fr. Macchiavelli resumed negotiations in 1965, but had to give up four months later, even though on May 20, 1965, the region of Duisburg-Mülheim-Oberhausen had been erected into a mission "cum cura animarum" by the bishop of Essen. Such occurrence, however, supplied the opportunity for opening on June 15, 1966, a Mission independent of the Caritasverband in premises offered by the Kolpinghaus of Duisburg Ruhrort, at 30 Fürst-Bismarkstrasse, and inaugurated by Msgr. Angerhausen on October 8, 1966. Fr. Angelo Priore was named director, assisted by Fr. Macchiavelli, who continued to take care of the Italians of Oberhausen, whose seat thus became a dependency of the Mission of Duisburg.

And in fact, Fr. Macchiavelli was followed by Fr. Carlo Marzoli, who, though charged with the care of the migrants of the region of Oberhausen and Mülheim, resided at Duisburg. 3,500 Italians were living at that time in this city; another 1,500 lived at Mülheim, and 2,500 more at Oberhausen. These last two places together with Bottrop constitute again an autonomous Mission since January 1976. The new director, Fr. Orazio Bonassi, moved the seat of Oberhausen to 24 Boicherstrasse. Fr. Vincenzo Armotti succeeded him in October 1978, but with residence at Duisburg. In the meantime, in 1969, the seat of the Mission and the residence of the Missionaries of Duisburg were moved to 7 Dellplatz, in downtown. In August 1974, Fr. Angelo Priore was succeeded as director of the Mission by Fr. Cesare Fogal, who in February 1977 transferred the seat of the mission and the residence to 12 Goldstrasse. In the same year the Diocese of Essen acquired the new seat of the institutions of the mission at 29 Dellplatz.

The Scalabrinian Sisters had been present in Duisburg since 1971, as co-workers in the pastoral care of migrants both in the district of Duisburg, with about 4,000 Italians, and in that of Oberhausen, with just as many.

## THE SCALABRINIANS IN COLOGNE

Between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, many Italian workers were employed in Cologne in the construction of roads and railroads. The great majority of them lived at Sülz – Cologne. Much later on, Msgr. Josef Koenen, diocesan dele-

gate for the care of the migrants, remembered having given religious assistance, in the years immediately preceding World War II to people of the "Italian Colony", made up of about 5,000 descendants of the earlier workers and tradesmen, and having also worked during the war together with the Italian "workers' chaplain" who had the care of the workers employed in the factories of Cologne. After the war was over, these workers were grouped together in the former Benediktiner Kloster of Brauweiler, and Msgr. Koenen was appointed to their care by Cardinal Frings, because the Italian priest was no longer acceptable because of his ties with Fascism. By the end of 1945 these Italian workers were finally repatriated. The members of the early "Italian Colony" remained in Cologne. In virtue of a German Italian treaty, envisioning the employment of Italian workers in the mines and in the farms, other Italians joined the community, but they proved inept for the heavy work in the mines and for the isolation in the farms. Then there came along in 1956 the great migrating inflow under the direction of the Recruiting Office of Verona!

In December 1950, the Sacred Consistorial Congregation entrusted the Italian community to Fr. Vincenzo Mecheroni, who resided, until April 1955, first at 217 Merheimerstrasse, and then at 16 Ursulagartenstrasse, in Nippe-Cologne, near the railroad station; since 1953 had been given the Maria-Abluss Kapelle, to be used for Italians, which Card. Frings had assigned as the "Church for the Italian migrants of the city and as point of reference for religious matters and Christian morality of all migrants of the region Nord-Rhein-Westfalen." The director of the Missionaries of Germany and Scandinavia, Msgr. Aldo Casadei succeeded him in 1955. He obtained in 1959 from the Chancery of Cologne the two lower floors of a building under construction at 18 Ursulagartenstrasse as the seat of the Mission. In February 1960, when Fr. Giuseppe Zanatta was named director of the Missionaries of Emigration in Germany, he succeeded Msgr. Casadei also in the office of Director of the Mission of Cologne. He secured from the Diocese that the whole building under construction be designated as the seat of the Mission! Works began in November 1960, the missionaries moved in on December 30, 1961, and its inauguration was celebrated on March 3, 1962. Fr. Zanatta was joined by Fr. Ferruccio Agugiario in the month of May of 1960, and by Fr. Pietro

Rubin in summer of 1961. The Sisters of the Divine Will had arrived on November 29, 1961.

From April 1962 till January 1963, the Mission was directed by Fr. Agugiaro, who was later transferred to Essen. He was succeeded by Fr. Angelo Priore, who, a few months later, was officially named director. At that time, the mission was operating a kindergarten, a school of German for Italians, social service offices, and a recreation room. The Italians of Cologne numbered 5,000 and the facilities of the Mission appeared insufficient. Construction on a new building, a second wing, was begun in November 1964. Fr. Antonio Secchi became director of the Mission in the following month of December. From January until September 1965 Fr. Giuseppe Fabbian directed the Casa Italiana, an institution founded by the Caritasverband of Cologne, where the kindergarten had been moved to. The Sunday Mass for the Italians of Cologne, which from the Chapel of Maria-Ablass had been successively moved to the crypts of the churches of St. Andrews, of the Friar Minors and of St. Gereon, was finally transferred in 1966 to the splendid church of Mariahinelfahrt in the immediate vicinity of the railroad station, which became known as the official Church of the Italians. Two Masses were said there, and several others in the suburbs of Mülheim, Kalk, Ehrenfeld, Nippes, Bayenthal and Porz. Every month a mass was said at Bergisch-Gladbach, Engelskirchen, Gummersbach. Other localities were aggregated in 1967 to the new Mission of Frechen entrusted to Fr. V. Mecheroni. As a whole, following the economic crisis of 1967, the Italians of the territory of the Mission of Cologne numbered 15,000, who by 1978 increased to about 20,000. Fr. Luigi Zonta succeeded Fr. A. Secchi in 1967-1972, followed in September 1972 by Fr. Giancarlo Cardani as director.

The most innovating work of the Italian Catholic Mission of Cologne in the seventies was centered on culture and studies, that gave life to the "Italian Scalabrini Scholastic Institute" (ISIS) and to the Association for Culture and School in Emigration. (ACSE).

In March 1970, Fr. Zonta placed some rooms of the Mission at the disposal of a small group of young men, who by migrating from Italy had to interrupt their studies and desired to prepare themselves to take the graduation exams, as private students, of the Scuola Media (junior high school) or of the Maturità Magistrale (Teachers' School).

As the number of students increased, the need was almost immediately felt to set up regular Night Courses for Adults. In August 1972, the new Mission director, Fr. Cordani, assumed their direct supervision and structured them in accord with the official programs of the school system of Italy. A Trade School had also its beginnings in the school year 1974-1975. The pastoral choice for an involvement in the field of culture and studies was prompted by the need to form the adults in view of their human promotion and integration in the host country and of the consciousness of their own cultural and personal identity in relation to other immigrants: necessary prerequisites for an effective evangelization.

The Teachers' School was aimed at preparing teachers who through their experience as migrants might be in a position to teach the children of immigrants in German schools. The Trade and Teachers' Schools and, officially accredited by the Italian government, with night courses for adults, and day classes for younger students, were located at the mission until September 1977, when the archdiocese of Cologne offered a four story building at 11-13 Steinkopkstrasse in Mülheim-Cologne, officially inaugurated by Card. J. Hoeffner on December 3, 1977. At the same time the ISIS Institute passed under the direct administration of the Diocese, while the Mission offered advice and supervision, promoting the initiative within the Italian community, and ensuring the religious and pastoral care of the students. The scholastic institution of Cologne grouped together all the Italian missionaries of the diocese into an Association (ACSE) in 1975. The "Associazione Cultura e Scuola in Emigrazione" (ACSE) was directly engaged in cultural and scholastic activities of various kinds and worked together with the ISIS to carry out scholastic initiatives organized in the territory of each Italian Catholic Mission. Besides, it was also involved in the creation of cultural structures by seeking points of direct cooperation with German institutions while representing the Church in the midst of the social forces that operate for the cultural promotion of emigration.

In agreement with the missionaries of the region of Nord-Rhein-Wesfalen, Frs. Gabriele Parolin, Valerio Lanzarini and Innocenzo Cardellini, gave life in March, 1977, to a new form of presence among migrants, without living and directly operating within institutionalized



structures such as are all the Italian Catholic Missions of Germany. They rented an apartment in a popular ward for a more direct witnessing of prayer, poverty, and work. This residence at 19 Nördlingenstrass in Kalk-Cologne was named "Comunità Giovanile" and was religiously and pastorally bound to the downtown mission of Cologne with which it formed one community.

#### WUPPERTAL: ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

The beginnings of the Mission of Wuppertal carry the date of September 8, 1961, when Fr. Angelo Marcato arrived there to work among the emigrants of the Deaneries of Wuppertal, Solingen, Remscheid, Wipperfuerth, and Mattaman in a territory which numbered 27,000 Italians. The seat of the mission was a small room on the fifth floor of the Augustinusstift, an institution for abandoned children at 25 im Ostersprien in Wuppertal Eberfeld. In the beginning Fr. Marcato had the help of three German priests who knew Italian and cooperated in hearing confessions and visiting the sick: one of them insured the Sunday mass at Solingen. Fr. Danilo Guarato arrived to help in August 1962. He was given residence at the monastery of the Fathers of the Holy Cross of Holland in Wuppertal-Elberfeld and took care especially of the 5,000 Italians of Solingen. After a first temporary accommodation in a barracks of Italians near the station of Wuppertal-Eberfeld, in March 1963, thanks to the collaboration of the local Caritasverband and the Demberg Firm, the two missionaries found a temporary residence on the fifth floor of the Meckenstockhaus at 99 Höhestrasse, in Wuppertal-Barmen, but with no chapel or office where to receive the emigrants. Finally, Msgr. P. Hanisch, director of Caritas, helped by buying and placing at their disposal of the missionaries the premises of the Theresienheim at 26 Normannestrasse, where the Fathers moved in on January 5, 1965.

Following the necessary works of remodeling, the Italian Center was inaugurated on May 25, 1965. The *Missio cum cura animarum*", separated from that of Cologne, was canonically erected on December 15, 1965. The Missions of Remscheid and Düsseldorf were also created at that time. The Mission of Wuppertal-Barmen remained with 15,000 Italians in the deaneries of Elberfeld, Barmen, Solingen,



and Mettman. The new center was endowed with a chapel, offices, and conference rooms and recreation hall.

Appointed director in 1965, Fr. Angelo Moscato was followed by Fr. Sandro Curotti and in 1976 by Fr. Ferruccio Agugiaro.

Once the Solingen mission was made autonomous in June 1973, the mission of Wuppertal was left only with the deaneries of the city 13 km long with about 8,000 Italians. The Sisters of the Divine Will assisted the Mission in its pastoral work.

### THE SCALABRINIANS IN MUNICH IN BAVARIA

The "Opera Bonomelli" founded a Secretariat in Munich in 1901. In 1910, there were 20,000 Italians in Bavaria, half of them employed in the Munich brickyards. During World War II, as seen above, Fr. Macchiavelli had worked in Munich, followed by Fr. Zanatta in 1942-1945. Fr. Julius Valentinelli, a chaplain of the American army, took care of the Italians after the war, followed from 1954 until about the beginning of 1963, by Fr. Edoardo Borgiagli, who was residing in a small apartment at 23 Bauerstrasse.

In February 1963 the Mission of Munich was entrusted to the Scalabrinians. Fr. Giuseppe Vigolo occupied the apartment at 6 Roccusstrasse, which could not afford him any possibility for gathering the Italians. Fr. Carlo Campiglia also arrived in August 1963, followed in November by Fr. Mario Nalin. In the meantime, the previous September the location of the mission had been somehow set up in a barracks at 40 Falkenstrasse, but the chapel and appropriate premises were still lacking. The new director, Fr. Cesare Fogal arrived on November 9, 1965, and in March 1966, the facility was moved to 1 Leonhardstrasse, where it became possible to open a meeting hall for the Italians; at the same time they were also given the use of the Bürgersaal. By the close of 1967, Card. J. Doepfner gave order for the purchase of a building at 143 Lindwurmstrasse, in downtown Munich, and on May 1, 1968, he created the "Missio cum cura animarum". The main center of worship for the Italians of the city turned out to be the beautiful church of the Blessed Trinity at 6 Pacellistrasse. By decision of the chancery of Munich, which wanted all Italians of Munich entrusted to the Scalabrinians, another missionary center was opened

in the North side of the city. Fr. Antonio Secchi fixed his residence there on March 15, 1967, at 24 Peklovenstrasse, which became 30 Bunzlauerstrasse. There were 17,000 Italians in Munich in 1964; 23,000 in 1966; 21,000 in 1968; 28,000 in 1974; and 27,000 in 1978. To them one must add about another 10,000 residing in the neighboring towns. Fr. Lorenzo Scremin became director in 1974. A variety of activities were developed: the Youth Group, a drama club, and above all the Documentation Centre (CEDOM), which started on December 12, 1975 and was directed by Fr. Angelo Negrini, followed by Fr. Carlo Marzoli. It is a center for gathering documentation and information on migration issues and problems, and influencing public opinion by means of cultural initiatives and through the monthly publication "Cedom Selezione" (Digest), intending to insert a Christian presence in the places where the local migration policy was being elaborated.

As in other Missions of Germany and Switzerland, there was then a tendency to the gave rise to basic communities of Christians able to organize autonomously, and to giving particular attention to the catechesis of all, children, young people, and adults as well.

#### THE SCALABRINIANS IN STUTTGART

In July 1964, the Chancery of Rottenburg invited the Scalabrinians to assume the direction of the Stuttgart Italian Center at 8 Böheimstrasse, founded by the Caritasverband, as a unit independent of the "Italian Catholic Mission" directed at that time by Fr. Battista Mutti since 1956. The Scalabrinians accepted to go to Stuttgart on condition that another Mission could also be opened. The Sacred Consistorial Congregation was also pressuring the Chancery of Rottenburg in the same direction. Fr. Rino Frigo arrived in Stuttgart on April 12, 1965, and had a meeting with Msgr. Hufnagel, in charge of migrants in the diocese. He still insisted for an acceptance of the Italian Center, and charged Fr. Frigo on a temporary basis, with preparing the Italians of Waiblingen, 14 kilometers from Stuttgart, for their Easter duty. On April 21, the Chancery of Rottenburg accepted in general terms to open another Mission for the South-East side of the city and for the valleys of the Rems and Murr Rivers, the deaneries of Bad Cannstatt and Waiblingen. On September 3, 1965, Bishop J. Leiprecht official-

ly erected this Mission, detaching it from the Mission of downtown Stuttgart.

Fr. Frigo had been temporarily lodging since May at Bad Cannstatt at 2 Posenerstrasse: on October 27, 1965, together with Fr. Alessandro Rossi, he moved into a rented apartment at 113 Neckarstrasse. The seat of the mission's activities was fixed at the end of 1965 on the ground floor of a building at 27 Koenig Karlstrasse in Bad Cannstatt. Thus began the first regular contacts with the Italians both at the seat which began to function on February 17, 1966, and in parish halls of the districts with larger concentration of migrants. The former Hotel Bahnhof was purchased on November 18, 1966 at Fellbach, which was remodeled into a social and cultural center with room also for a kindergarten. The "Casa Scalabrini" of Fellbach was inaugurated on July 4, 1968 by Bishop Leiprecht. Plans were made in 1967 for the construction of a huge missionary center that was to house a chapel, a grammar school, a kindergarten, and a night school for adults. A property was rented near the rail station. The project was permanently abandoned in March 1972 because of high costs, scarcity of personnel and the uncertainty of the migration flow into Germany. Two smaller centers were opened in 1967 with offices and meeting rooms at 4/2 Küderlistrasse in Waiblingen, and at 17 Göppingenstrasse in Schorndorf.

The residence of the missionaries was moved in 1969 to 29 Daimlerstrasse, and then in 1978 to 22 Volkerstrasse, in Stuttgart. In September 1974, the Scalabrinian Mission of Stuttgart that embraced the deaneries of Bad Cannstatt, Waiblingen, and Backnang, was divided into two sectors: the central seat at Bad Cannstatt, with the new director Fr. Luigi Canesso, Fr. Florenzo Rigoni, and Fr. Enrico Romanò; and the branch house of Waiblingen, with Fr. Alessandro Rossi.

The Mission of Bad Cannstatt embraced a region with a very high concentration of industries employing mobile and generally skilled workers. A good portion of the Italians of Stuttgart does not have families and lives in huge tenement buildings (Wohnheime). The territory of the Mission includes now the deanery of Bad Cannstatt with about 10,000 Italians, and the two zones of Ditzingen and Münchingen on the outskirts. The Scalabrinian Lay Missionary Women had been operating the social services from 1968 to 1977. When the

Fathers showed a preference for the pastoral care on behalf of the families, in October 1974 they withdrew to their basic community on 65 Markstrasse, opened for the most marginalized immigrants of the Wolnheime, the hospitals and the prisons, and then in 1976 they moved to 71 Neckartalstrasse. Fr. Gabriele Bortolamai shared in their work for the social services and evangelization, which was then carried out directly by the Chancery of Rottenburg until 1978, when he was appointed director of the Mission of Essen. Three Sisters of the Divine Will arrived in Stuttgart on September 1, 1977. In 1975 the Mission meant to give it a well-organized and dynamic ecclesial community, offering migrants the opportunity to be free of their isolation and find themselves in an environment where they may live out their own human and Christian identity in conditions of equality in dialogue with the local church. On October 16, 1975, the mission of Waiblingen was canonically made a "Missio cum cura animarum" for the 9,000 Italians of the region of the "Rems-Murr" valleys, covering the deaneries of Backnang and Waiblingen. The Italian community scattered throughout the 25 parishes of the two deaneries was made up mostly of relatively well-formed families of 10 to 20 years, in demographic expansion, with growing phenomenon of the second generation." Fr. Rossi was joined in 1976 by Fr. Gino Troetto, replaced in 1977 by Fr. Giuseppe Cervini. A community of Sisters of the Holy Family from Bordeaux came to the Mission in August 1, 1978.

The pastoral action of the Mission of Waiblingen was characterized by a form of evangelization aimed at the establishing of diaspora of Christian communities, in close collaboration with paid or volunteering lay people, with the German parishes, and with other groups of foreigners.

Fr. Rino Frigo was also a member of the Scalabrinian religious Community, although, since 1975, he was directing the "Italian Catholic Mission" of Reutlingen, not entrusted to the Scalabrinian Congregation. By appointment of the Chancery of Rottenburg, Fr. Frigo had founded a school which awarded double diplomas in Italian and in German.

### SOLINGEN: THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

As said above, the Italians of the city and surrounding area of Solingen had been assisted by the Missionaries of Wuppertal since 1961. Fr. Danilo Guarato took particular care of them in 1962. On June 6, 1973, the Mission of Solingen was detached from that of Wuppertal with Fr. Antonio Muraro as director and Fr. Innocenzo Cardellini as assistant. He was succeeded in 1976 by Fr. Enrico Romanò, who in 1978 was joined by Fr. Pietro Rubin. Since 1973 the Scalabrinian Sisters were sharing in the pastoral activities of the Mission. The seat of the Mission was on 2 Hackhausenstrasse, near the parish church of Ohligs, where the Sunday Mass for Italians was celebrated. Weekly masses were also celebrated at Wald and Wasserturn. By 1978, the Italians of the Deanery of Solingen numbered over 6,000. In addition to catechesis and evangelization, a youth group was also started along with an upper grammar school, courses of Italian language and culture, a tailoring shop, a library, etc. The social services were assured by the assistants of the Caritasverband.

### LUDWIGSBURG: THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

In February 1978 the Chancery of Rottenburg presented a program of formation for foreigners, which until then had been carried on outside of the German structures. Within this frame, it asked the Provincial Superior to place two Scalabrinians at their disposal. One would have directed the Italian Catholic Mission of Ludwigsburg, and the other was to have charge mainly of the formation of Italians. In July 1978, the General Administration authorized accepting the Mission. At the end of 1978, Fr. Carlo Campiglia was assigned as director for the Mission, and Fr. Florenzo Rigoni was given charge of the formation of adults.



## CHAPTER IV

### INSTITUTIONS IN ITALY

#### THE “CASA SCALABRINI” OF CRESPANO DEL GRAPPA, TREVISO

Confronted with the problem of the education of the children of migrants, the Province of Germany-Switzerland sought to open a school for them that should not be far from the borders, and therefore from their parents, who were working in these two countries. Setting aside the idea of making use for this scope of the former Scalabrinian Seminary of Cermenate, Como, thought were given to make use of the former Novitiate House of Crespano del Grappa, which had been empty for a number of years. In April 1971, the Italian Province surrendered the use of the House of Crespano, which thus came under the direction of the Swiss German Province. The house welcomed to their first school year about sixty boarding students from 5th grade of grammar school up to the professional courses, who attended public schools. The official inauguration of the “Casa Scalabrini” for the children of migrants took place on May 27, 1972. In the second school year there were 72 boarding students. At the end of the academic year 1975-1976, the “Casa Scalabrini” was closed for lack of personnel, the decrease of applications for admission, and the difficulties rising from the distance of the House from the Missions of the Swiss –German Province of St. Raphael. The house had been under the direction of Fr. Giovanni Saraggi in 1971-1972, followed by Fr. Luigi Zonta in 1972-1973, Fr. Emilio Bernardini in 1973-1974, and Fr. Angelo Marcato in 1974-1976.

#### PORLEZZA: SAINT AMBROSE COLLEGE

In early 1973, the Archdiocesan Chancery of Milan expressed the intention to entrust the St. Ambrose school of Porlezza, Como, run by the Oblates of Rho to the Orientation Center for Migrants (COI) of Milan, founded by the Honorable Franco Verga. The latter who intended to found a school for children of migrants, in turn, passed on

the proposal to the Scalabrinians. It was a building with capacity for 300 boarding students, in rather run-down conditions and a casualty in the general crisis affecting private schools.

The General Administration of the Scalabrinians showed itself willing to accept the institution for the beginning of the school year 1974-1975, setting it aside for the children of emigrants in Switzerland. Its proximity to the borders would have made it possible for parents to visit them even every week. In view of the steady evolution of the problem of the schooling for children of migrants and of the questioning of the validity of boarding schools, the Congregation assumed the institution for a period of only six years, through an agreement, renewable by common accord, with the chancery of Milan, signed on December 21, 1973. Its direction and administration was entrusted to the Swiss-German Province in April 1974. The Italian Province had to contribute by assigning a priest. Considering the heavy financial burden the remodeling of the institute would place on the province for assuring proper lodgings for the students, the General Administration proposed to the Chancery of Milan that the institution be donated to the Congregation "for the purpose of providing for the moral, cultural, and professional education of the children of migrants, of commuters, and of the local people who should need it." But soon afterwards the negotiations with the Region of Lombardy, which seemed willing to rent part of the building to open a professional school, broke down, thus negating all hopes for the financial support of the institution. For these reasons, the General Administration served notice to the Chancery in 1974 that it was forced to give up the direction and the administration of St. Ambrose School. The Chancery did not accept the renunciation and seemed instead in favor of the donation. The only option then was to follow through with the commitment accepted with the first agreement. The 1974-1975 school year began with 27 students under the direction of Fr. Rino Frigo, assisted by Fr. Gino Macchiavelli and Fr. Bernardo Zonta, who was appointed director in 1976.

In 1975, the Chancery of Milan consented that the six-year contract be reduced to three. The College was thus returned to the archdiocese on September 26, 1977.









The sixth volume of the History of the Scalabrinian Congregation runs from 1940 to 1978. It deals with almost 40 years of important development of the Congregation, both in terms of membership as well as missionary expansion. The opening of the mission to all migrants and the new Rules of Life stand out as two fundamental moments, providing the Institute with a very broad missionary perspective and a very solid ideal basis, which is reconnected to the Founder and welcomes the inspiration that emerged from the Second Vatican Council.

This volume, which documents the development of all missions, is very rich in the details it offers and makes it possible to follow the constant transformation of mission in order to respond to the changes of migration.

Fr Mario Francesconi, cs (1919-1989), archivist and postulator of the cause of canonization of Blessed G. B. Scalabrini, dedicated the last twenty years of his life to deepening the knowledge of the Founder and to the study of the history of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles. In addition to the six volumes of the history, in 1985 he published the most complete biography of Bishop Scalabrini and other studies on the figure and spirituality of the great bishop of Piacenza.